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SUNDAY POST

HERE . NOW



PARENTING IN PIXELS

COVER STORY

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Satyajeet Jena first discovered his bond with music at five, singing at a school event with innocent wonder. Seeing the spark in his eyes, his father nurtured it through Hindustani classical training, where discipline met dream. Recognition followed on Voice of Odisha Junior, but 2016 changed everything on Sa Re Ga Ma Pa Lil Champs on Zee TV. Today, beyond the applause, he walks his own path—an independent artist shaping sound, silence, and soul into music that feels deeply, unmistakably his



Art never takes breaks

As an independent artist, there is no fixed off day for me. Whenever work comes, I embrace it, because every single day contributes to my creative journey.

Sundays are for sound

Sundays are mostly dedicated to music for me, as I spend extended hours in my studio experimenting with sounds, composing new pieces and refining creative ideas.



With Bollywood singer Udit Narayan

No pressure, just passion

My ideal Sunday is productive and creative, not chaotic. I enjoy uninterrupted hours to make music freely, without meetings, deadlines, or any external pressure.

Music: Work and worship

Music is both my profession and my greatest passion. Even when I am not officially working, I spend time exploring new sounds, learning music production technology and planning future projects.

From studio to streaming

Sometimes I work for hours without stopping. When I feel exhausted, I take a short break to relax by watching a film or a web series on Netflix.

Foodie at heart, amateur chef

I enjoy food a lot and love trying different dishes, especially street food and home-cooked meals. Though I can't cook properly, I manage basic cooking, including making Maggi and ginger tea.



With sister Subhashree

ANISHA KHATUN, OP



WhatsApp This Week

Only on **Sunday POST!**

Send in your most interesting WhatsApp messages and memes at: features.orissapost@gmail.com And we will publish the best ones

THE BEST MEMES OF THIS ISSUE

- Teacher: "Name a bird with wings but can't fly." Student: "A dead bird, sir."
- Don't underestimate me, that's my mother's job.
- I always wanted to be somebody, but now I realize I should have been more specific.
- How many animals can jump higher than a skyscraper? All of them, skyscrapers can't jump.



The 'K' impact

Sir, Korean dramas, popularly known as K-dramas, have significantly influenced Indian youth over the past decade. What began as a niche interest has grown into a mainstream cultural wave, driven by streaming platforms and social media. Young viewers are drawn to the emotional storytelling, high production quality, and relatable themes of friendship, ambition, love, and family values. Fashion and beauty trends are among the most visible influences. Many Indian youngsters experiment with Korean-inspired outfits, skincare routines, and hairstyles. The rise of "glass skin" beauty standards and minimalist fashion aesthetics reflects this cultural crossover. Language and food habits have also been impacted. Words like "oppa" and "saranghae" have entered casual conversations, while Korean dishes such as ramen, kimchi, and tteokbokki are increasingly popular in urban India. Beyond lifestyle, K-dramas have reshaped perceptions of relationships and emotional expression. The portrayal of respectful romance, strong female leads, and hardworking protagonists resonates deeply with Indian youth. Ultimately, Korean dramas have not just entertained but broadened cultural awareness, encouraging young Indians to explore global content with open minds.

MANOJ SAMANTRAY, KHURDA

LETTERS



A word for readers

Sunday post is serving a platter of delectable fare every week, or so we hope. We want readers to interact with us. Feel free to send in your opinions, queries, comments and contributions to

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PARENTING IN PIXELS



Long before children learn to write their names, they now learn to tap screens, scroll endlessly and recognise digital symbols of approval. In living rooms filled with glowing devices and bedrooms illuminated by mobile screens, childhood is being rewritten in pixels and notifications. Parenting, once guided by instinct, tradition and shared experiences, is steadily being reshaped by the invisible hand of social media.

Today's mothers and fathers are not just caregivers; they are silent spectators in a world where parenting advice arrives in fifteen-second videos and emotional validation comes through vir-

CHILDREN TODAY LIVE BETWEEN TWO WORLDS: THE OFFLINE REALITY THEIR PARENTS ONCE KNEW AND THE DIGITAL UNIVERSE THAT NOW SHAPES THEIR IDENTITY, RELATIONSHIPS, AND FUTURE. IT IS NO WONDER THAT MANY PARENTS FEEL OVERWHELMED, WONDERING HOW THEY CAN PROTECT THEIR CHILDREN IN A WORLD THEY DON'T FULLY UNDERSTAND

ap- Lullabies are replaced by playlists, bedtime stories by short clips and heartfelt conversations by hurried glances between scrolling fingers. In this fast-moving digital theatre, comparison has become routine and perfection is portrayed as mandatory.

Social media promises connection, yet often delivers distraction. It offers guidance, yet breeds doubt. Parents find themselves measuring their efforts against curated lives and filtered realities, wondering if they are doing "enough" or doing it "right."

Amid this whirlwind of trends, hashtags and viral ideals, the essence of parenting risks being diluted. Love remains constant, but attention is divided. Care is sincere, but time is fragmented. As screens grow brighter, emotional spac-

es grow quieter. Understanding this transformation is vital, and to explore it further, Sunday POST spoke to several experts who shared their perspectives on safeguarding the fragile bridge between generations in an era that never pauses.

'Children follow what parents practice, not what they preach'

Dr Nidhi Garg, Senior Consultant Psychologist at Kalinga Hospital Ltd, says constant exposure to social media is deeply influencing children's emotional growth and their relationship with parents. "Children today are growing up in a world driven by likes, comments, and online validation, and this is shaping their emotional responses," she explains. Since observation is the dominant form of learning in childhood, whatever children see online becomes a major influence on their behavior.

"They absorb everything from the outside world, and slowly their personality gets molded by digital content."

Dr Garg adds that meaningful interactions between parents and children are gradually disappearing. "Family conversations, storytelling and cultural exchanges are getting replaced by screen time," she says. As emotional bonding weakens, children may feel disconnected despite physical closeness. "When emotional security is missing, children become insecure and lose trust in relationships."

She also highlights the impact of parents' own screen habits. "Children learn through modeling, so when parents are always on their phones, children feel emotionally ignored," she notes. This

emotional unavailability affects attachment patterns. "Rejection and lack of attention slowly turn into low self-esteem, anxiety, and frustration." Over time, children start evaluating themselves through online approval. "They begin to believe they are worthy only when others like them," she adds.

Addressing the influence of online parenting trends, Dr Garg says, "Perfect parenting shown on social media is a myth." Every child has a unique personality and emotional background. "One rule cannot fit every child," she emphasises. However, constant exposure to idealised parenting content creates self-doubt. "Parents start questioning themselves and feel guilty, thinking they are not doing enough." This confusion weakens parental confidence and affects decision-making.

To restore balance, she recommends practical steps. "Create phone-free time during meals, bedtime and family interactions," she advises. Parents should engage in co-viewing and encourage critical thinking. "Children follow what parents practice, not what they preach," she says. Understanding emotions before correcting behavior is crucial. "First recognise what the child is feeling; frustrated, insecure, or lonely, then respond." A predictable routine also provides emotional comfort and reduces screen dependency.

She warns that excessive phone use by parents can harm emotional regulation and sleep patterns. "When parents are emotionally unavailable, children experience stress, anxiety and behavioral problems," she explains. Poor family interaction disrupts sleep hygiene and increases stress hormones.

Dr Garg concludes, "Balanced digital use, emotional availability and open communication are the foundations of healthy parenting today." She believes mindful screen habits and strong emotional connections are essential for raising confident and emotionally secure children in the digital age.



'We must raise a generation that commands technology'

Dr Silpi Sahoo, Chairperson, SAI International Education Group, says, "Social media is one of the most defining influences on this generation of children. It has the power to educate, to inspire innovation, and to connect young minds to global ideas and opportunities.



When used responsibly, it can become a meaningful extension of learning and self-expression. However, we must address its challenges with clarity and conviction. Our children are navigating an age of over-information, where they are constantly exposed to an overwhelming volume of content. Within this flood, wrong information and misleading narratives spread rapidly, often shaping beliefs before truth is examined. Without guidance, discernment becomes difficult."

Sahoo further shares, "There is also the growing concern of what is commonly referred to as brain rot, a gradual weakening of attention span, focus, and deep thinking caused by excessive and passive scrolling. Continuous digital stimulation can reduce patience, critical reflection, and the capacity for sustained engagement. Equally concerning is the culture of comparison that social media fosters. Curated portrayals of success, beauty, and achievement can create unrealistic benchmarks. When children measure their self-worth against filtered realities, it can lead to diminished confidence, anxiety, and in some cases, depression."

She continues: "As educators and parents, our responsibility is not to react with fear, but to respond with leadership. We must establish boundaries, promote digital literacy, and cultivate critical thinking. We must teach our children to verify before believing, to reflect before reacting, and to value authenticity over validation. Our goal is clear. We must raise a generation that commands technology rather than being controlled by it. With structured guidance, open dialogue, and strong value systems, our children can navigate the digital

world with intelligence, resilience, and integrity," she signs off.

'Technology is not the enemy'

Subham Jena, 37, an IT professional and father of a seven-year-old daughter in Bhubaneswar, reflects on how social media is steadily reshaping modern parenting. "I've seen firsthand how social media is influencing parenting norms," he says. "It has become a major source of information and emotional support for parents. We can easily access advice, experiences and expert opinions. However, at the same time, it floods us with endless trends, ideas, and comparisons that simply did not exist a decade ago." According to Jena, this constant exposure often creates unrealistic expectations. "Many parents feel pressured to appear perfect online or to follow every new 'expert tip' they come across. Over time, this leads to self-doubt and makes us question our own instincts," he adds.



Jena believes that the impact of social media goes far beyond advice and trends. "Its influence enters our daily family life," he explains. "Mobile phones and notifications have become default distractions, even during precious family moments. When parents keep scrolling while talking to their children, it creates a subtle emotional distance." He notes that children are extremely observant and quickly pick

up such habits. "They learn by watching us. If we are always on our phones, they will naturally copy that behavior."

To counter this, Jena has made conscious efforts to set boundaries at home. "I try to practice balanced tech use and be more present when I am with my daughter. It's not only about limiting her screen time; it's about improving my own habits," he says. He emphasises the importance of shared conversations, playtime and emotional availability.

"Technology is not the enemy," Jena says and added that "But parenting cannot be guided by screens alone. Genuine bonding happens through attention, patience and understanding. In today's digital age, staying emotionally connected is the greatest gift we can give our children."

'We must evolve with technology thoughtfully'

Jyoti Mohanty, 38, a marketing professional and mother of an 11-year-old son Cuttack, says, "Social media has changed parenting rules in ways that go beyond comparison and screen distraction. One major shift I notice is how early children are exposed to adult-like content and opinions. Earlier, information was filtered by age and environment. Today, children come across global news, beauty standards, political debates, and lifestyle trends far before they are emotionally ready to process them.



As parents, we now have to explain complex topics much earlier than previous generations did. Another change is the growing influence of peer validation through digital platforms. Friendships are no longer limited to school or neighbourhood interactions; they continue online. Group chats, gaming platforms, and social media comments shape social hierarchies. Sometimes exclusion or online teasing happens silently, and parents may not even be aware of it. This has made digital literacy and emotional resilience equally important as academic education."

Mohanty further explains, "I also feel that social media has increased the culture of performance among children. Birthdays, achievements, vacations, everything feels like it must be documented and shared. Children start associating experiences with how 'post-worthy' they are. As parents, we must consciously teach them that not every moment needs public validation and that privacy is a strength, not a weakness. There is also the issue of data privacy and digital footprints. Our children's identities are being shaped online from a young age. As parents, we now carry the responsibility of protecting their digital presence and teaching them about cyber safety, misinformation, and online boundaries."

"At the same time, social media has opened conversations about mental health, inclusivity, and awareness that were rarely discussed earlier. The rule now is not to completely restrict technology but to guide children to use it responsibly. Parenting today requires us to be digitally aware, emotionally intelligent, and proactive. The rules are no longer fixed; they are evolving with technology, and we must evolve with them thoughtfully," she adds.

ANISHA KHATUN, OP



Whether sipping coffee in Paris, meditating in Kyoto, watching football in Rio, or hiking in Sydney, people worldwide carve out time to pause, recharge, and enjoy moments that might otherwise be lost in the week's rush

Sunday rituals around the world

The European Café Culture

In cities like Paris, Vienna, and Rome, Sundays are synonymous with leisurely mornings in cafés. Families and friends gather to sip coffee, read newspapers, or watch the world go by. In Paris, the aroma of fresh croissants mingles with the chatter of sidewalk conversations, while in Vienna, old-world cafés host classical music recitals alongside espresso and pastries. Here, Sundays are less about productivity and more about presence—slowing down, savoring, and reconnecting with people. It's a ritual that blends relaxation with social bonding, proving that rest can also be communal.



In a world that rarely stops moving, Sunday stands as a pause button—a chance to rest, reflect, and reconnect. Across continents, cultures, and communities, Sundays are marked by rituals that reveal what people value most: family, creativity, leisure, and tradition. While some observe the day in quiet contemplation, others fill it with food, music, sports, or adventure. Let's take a journey through the Sunday rituals that define lives around the globe.

Quiet reflection in Asia

In Japan, Sundays are often a time for calm introspection. Many people visit shrines or temples, offering prayers and enjoying the peaceful surroundings. Zen gardens, tranquil parks, and tea ceremonies help individuals center themselves before the start of a busy week. In rural parts of India, Sundays may be spent visiting temples, practicing yoga, or sharing meals with extended family. Here, the ritual is as much spiritual as it is social, emphasizing mindfulness, gratitude, and balance.



Food, family, and football in the Americas

For many in the United States and Latin America, Sundays revolve around food, family, and sports. Families gather for big breakfasts or brunches, often followed by barbecues, picnics, or shared lunches. Football (soccer in Latin America, American football in the U.S.) dominates afternoon rituals, with friends and neighbors bonding over games, snacks, and friendly debates. Sundays in this context are a mix of celebration and rest—a day to recharge emotionally while enjoying the pleasures of companionship and tradition.

Markets, music, and movement in Africa and the Middle East

In many African and Middle Eastern countries, Sunday markets are central to community life. Families stroll through open-air bazaars, buying fresh produce, textiles, or handmade crafts. Street musicians, dancers, and performers add rhythm to the day, blending commerce with culture. For some, the ritual extends to physical activity—cycling, walking, or group exercise in public parks. Sundays become a fusion of movement, music, and social connection, emphasizing shared life experiences over solitude.



Coastal leisure in Oceania

In Australia and New Zealand, Sundays are synonymous with outdoor leisure. Beaches, hiking trails, and riversides see families and friends enjoying picnics, swimming, surfing, or cycling. The ritual celebrates nature, freedom, and relaxation, reflecting the region's deep connection to the outdoors. Even in urban areas, rooftop gardens, parks, and lakes become destinations for quiet reflection or group activities. Here, Sunday is about embracing both physical activity and mental rest, blending exercise with serenity.

The common thread

While Sunday rituals differ, a few themes unite them: presence, rest, connection, and reflection. Whether sipping coffee in Paris, meditating in Kyoto, watching football in Rio, or hiking in Sydney, people worldwide carve out time to pause, recharge, and enjoy moments that might otherwise be lost in the week's rush.

These rituals remind us that productivity is not the only measure of a life well-lived. Leisure, mindfulness, family time, and cultural traditions are equally important. Sundays, in their diversity, show us that rest is universal, even if expressed in myriad ways.

“Sundays are not for catching up, they are for catching yourself.”



KAREENA'S warm gesture

A heartwarming exchange between Kareena Kapoor and Shabana Azmi recently caught attention at a Mumbai industry gathering also attended by Karan Johar, Vicky Kaushal, Ishaan Khatter and Imtiaz Ali. Though simple and unassuming, the moment reflected genuine warmth and mutual respect between the two actors.

For the evening, Kareena turned heads in a maroon off-the-shoulder, floor-length gown, complemented by statement jewellery and classic makeup. Shabana, meanwhile, embodied timeless grace in a pink sari paired with a contrasting blue blouse. In a clip from the event, Kareena noticed that Shabana was waiting for her car and immediately walked over to her. Greeting her with a warm hug, Kareena expressed concern about the delay and assured her, "I won't leave you alone." The two shared a brief conversation as they waited together.

Soon after, Kareena was informed that her own car was causing traffic outside the venue. Before stepping away, she checked once again to ensure Shabana would be comfortable, then excused herself to resolve the situation.

On the professional front, Kareena will next be seen in *Daayra*, an investigative crime drama directed by Meghna Gulzar and co-starring Prithviraj Sukumaran.

AGENCIES

Shraddha tops Saina's wishlist

Badminton champion Saina Nehwal has once again addressed conversations around her 2021 biopic *Saina*, but this time the spotlight is on who she would choose if her life story were retold.

Without hesitation, Saina named Shraddha Kapoor as her preferred choice for the role.

Shraddha was initially signed to play Saina before stepping away from the project due to dengue. Speaking warmly about her, Saina shared that they remain in touch and have met several times over the years. She described Shraddha as "a very sweet girl" and expressed admiration for her sincerity and commitment when she had first agreed to take on the film.

While

the eventual biopic featured Parineeti Chopra in the lead, Saina made it clear that her appreciation for Shraddha remains strong. She acknowledged the efforts made to bring her journey to the screen but reiterated that Shraddha continues

to be her personal favourite for portraying her life if the opportunity arises again.

Despite renewed social media chatter surrounding the film, Saina maintains a balanced stance, expressing gratitude to everyone involved while candidly sharing her preference. For

the Olympic medalist, the connection and comfort she shares with Shraddha make her the ideal choice to revisit her inspiring story on screen.

AGENCIES



Perfect relationship is a myth: Barun

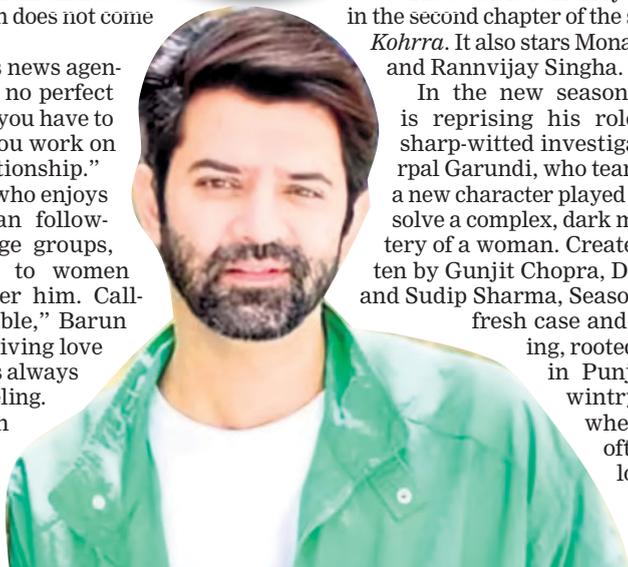
Popular television actor Barun Sobti believes that the idea of a "perfect relationship" is a myth and says that it is something partners need to consciously build together over time.

Speaking about relationships, Barun shared that perfection does not come ready-made.

He told this news agency: "There is no perfect relationship; you have to work on it. You work on a perfect relationship."

The actor, who enjoys a massive fan following across age groups, also reacted to women swooning over him. Calling it "adorable," Barun said that receiving love from people is always a beautiful feeling.

"It's an adorable thing. Any human being, for that



matter. Being loved is better than being hated. Of course, it's a nice feeling," he added.

The actor is currently seen in the second chapter of the series *Kohrra*. It also stars Mona Singh and Rannvijay Singha.

In the new season, Barun is reprising his role as the sharp-witted investigator Amarpal Garundi, who teams up with a new character played by Mona to solve a complex, dark murder mystery of a woman. Created and written by Gunjit Chopra, Diggi Sisodia and Sudip Sharma, Season 2 brings a fresh case and a new pairing, rooted once again in Punjab's bleak, wintry terrain where silence often speaks louder than a confession. IANS

Navya on dealing with online hate

Navya Naveli Nanda, granddaughter of Amitabh Bachchan, has opened up about navigating online criticism and the realities of being a public figure in the digital age. Acknowledging that she has faced her share of negativity on social media, Navya shared that she consciously chooses not to let hate shape her self-worth. She explained that her presence online is intentional and closely tied to her work, particularly in the development and non-profit sector.

According to Navya, social media serves as a platform to amplify the initiatives she is involved in and the causes she supports.



Since her work is centered on creating impact for communities, she believes it is important to remain receptive to feedback. Constructive opinions, she noted, help her improve and better serve the people she aims to support.

However, she is equally firm about maintaining personal boundaries. Navya emphasised that while she values meaningful dialogue, she avoids letting online commentary alter her perception of herself. She also keeps her private life largely off social media, choosing instead to focus on sharing her professional journey.

Addressing generational stereotypes, she described Gen Z as one of the most misunderstood generations, often judged without understanding their intent or impact. AGENCIES



SHAHNAZ HUSAIN

Unfiltered beauty

bedtime with a herbal facial that's suited to your skin type to get rid of the dust and pollutants. Overwashing can make your skin dry and irritable, causing it to look worse rather than better. Develop a skin regimen for your face and stick to it. The CTM routine that is cleansing, toning and moisturising is imperative for healthy skin. A good facial massage every other day can reduce the appearance of fine lines, tighten your skin and make it appear more radiant. Besides, it also makes you feel relieved from stress and rejuvenated.

Face packs play a vital role in skin care because they are rich in nutrients, moisturizers, vitamins and minerals that are beneficial for the skin. The regular use of packs lets your skin soak up the mask and let you absorb all the goodness that is found in the ingredients and help you achieve a glowy and youthful look and delay aging signs. Based on your skin type, prepare a mask that fits your needs, put it on and relax! You can use ingredients like honey, aloe vera, gram flour, yogurt, oatmeal, and fruits, as these are some very popular options for homemade masks. Depending on the kind of mask you use, some masks are designed to pull out impurities, hydrate your skin, or infuse your skin with mega doses of feel-good nutrients.

Eat well. A healthy diet is exceptionally vital. Looking and feeling healthy has a lot to do with what you put into your body. A sufficient intake of protein and vitamins is absolutely essential for the maintenance and repair of your skin. Include fresh fruits and vegetables in your diet and drink plenty of water throughout the day to keep your skin nourished and hydrated. When thirsty, opt for a cool and refreshing glass of water with fruits or try to consume more fruits and vegetables full of water content, such as

watermelon and cucumber.

We lose water through breathing, sweating, urination, and digestion so it is important to rehydrate and replenish the water that we have used. Our body uses water to help regulate our body's temperature and carry out other bodily functions. Most people prefer to drink carbonated drinks or sugar-packed artificial juices. Although it still contains water, it also contains other ingredients that may not be healthy for us.

Take a vitamin supplement if you feel you are not getting all of your daily requirements from your diet alone. Vitamins A, C, and E are all particularly

beneficial for the skin. Try to cut out as many greasy, fatty, sugary foods as possible and load up on fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean meats instead.

The concept of beauty has undergone a real change over the last few decades. The emphasis has shifted from superficial treatments to a more positive approach that aims at protecting and preserving the natural beauty of the skin. Skincare with natural ingredients, based on the tried and tested Ayurvedic system, has shown a complete lack of harmful side effects and irritative reactions. Indeed, Nature is not only an expert chemist but the best cosmetologist.

Dos

- ▶▶ Nighttime cleansing is a must, in order to remove dirt, pollutants, stale sweat, oil, dead skin cells and make-up that are deposited on the skin during the day.
- ▶▶ Do protect your skin with broad-spectrum sunscreen. Apply sunscreen 20 minutes before sun-exposure. If you are in the sun for more than an hour, re-apply the sunscreen. A sunscreen with SPF 20 is adequate for most skins. For sensitive skin that burns easily, use sunscreen with higher SPF.
- ▶▶ The use of scrubs is an integral part of skin care. It helps to remove dead skin cells, unclog pores and brightens the skin.
- ▶▶ Moisture helps to keep the skin soft, smooth, supple and youthful. Moisturisers are available in both liquid and cream forms. For dry skin, use a creamy moisturiser. It should also be applied under make-up.
- ▶▶ Nourishing is important for normal to dry skin. It helps to keep the skin lubricated and soft, so that it can hold moisture. After cleansing the skin at night, apply nourishing cream and massage it on the skin for 2 to 3 minutes. Wipe off with moist cotton wool.

Don'ts

- ▶▶ Don't wash the face with soap and water more than 2 or 3 times a day. Alkaline soaps can disrupt the normal pH balance and leave the skin prone to acne.
- ▶▶ Avoid heavy moisturisers on oily skin as the pores can get clogged, leading to blackheads and acne. For oily skin, mix 100 ml rose water with one teaspoon pure glycerin. Keep in an airtight bottle in the fridge. Apply this lotion to moisturize a normal to oily and combination skin.
- ▶▶ Don't apply facial scrub on skin with pimples, acne or rash. Don't pick or pinch blackheads and pimples.
- ▶▶ Don't stretch or pull the skin around eyes while removing make-up. Scrubs and masks should not be applied around eyes. Avoid leaving under-eye creams overnight. Remove them gently with moist cotton wool after 15 minutes. Leaving it on all night can lead to puffiness.

Are you tired of applying a number of makeup products every morning to look pretty? Do we really have to succumb and play slaves to the hottest trend in makeup and the cosmetic world? Or is there a way to make us feel better without having to apply layer upon layer of creams? There are also instances wherein you have to go bare-faced. Who swims with full-on makeup, complete with winged-tip liners and contours?

Let's face it; you can't wear makeup all the time.

So instead of devising ways to sneak a hint of makeup on your skin, why not improve the quality of your skin and figure out other ways to make you look prettier sans the makeup?

When you go without make-up for a while, you give your skin a chance to breathe. If you want to look good without spending hours in front of the mirror every day, then it's time to give your skin a break. So, here we bring you natural ways to enhance your looks without any makeup. You need to be mindful of essential aspects of your diet, your habits, your lifestyle, and your skincare routine.

Wash your face twice daily. Skincare is a key factor in looking good without makeup. Wash your skin twice a day preferably in the morning and at night

In a world of toil and sweat, Spartans were the ultimate labour-free elite. In modern terms, Sparta's wealth was structural, systemic, and invisible. For their citizens, life was a luxury few civilisations have ever achieved: absolute freedom from work



A timeline

- 1000 BCE - Early Sparta**
 - Spartan communities form in Laconia.
 - Wealth based on land and livestock.
 - Citizens begin small-scale farming; hierarchy not yet rigid.
- 800 BCE - Lycurgus' reforms**
 - Legendary lawgiver Lycurgus establishes social and economic system.
 - Iron currency introduced to discourage hoarding.
 - Land redistributed; military training becomes central.
- 740-720 BCE - Conquest of Messenia**
 - Spartans enslave the Messenian helots.
 - Helots farm the land, creating invisible wealth for citizens.
 - Spartan men now free from labor, focusing entirely on military.
- 650-500 BCE - Peak military & economic strength**
 - Sparta dominates Peloponnesus.
 - Surplus crops, livestock, and tributes ensure labor-free lifestyle.
 - Spartan women manage estates, gaining economic influence.
- 480 BCE - Battle of Thermopylae**
 - Spartans gain nationwide fame.
 - Military dominance reinforces wealth through tribute and control.
- 431-404 BCE - Peloponnesian War**
 - Sparta leads Peloponnesian League against Athens.
 - Conquests and alliances expand resources.
 - Citizens maintain leisure and training while helots support the economy.
- 4th Century BCE - Gradual decline**
 - Number of full Spartan citizens drops.
 - Land concentration rises; wealth becomes unevenly distributed.
 - Social and economic rigidity weakens overall power.
- 371 BCE - Battle of Leuctra**
 - Sparta suffers major military defeat by Thebes.
 - Decline in dominance shows limits of wealth tied only to labor of others.
- Legacy**
 - Spartans were rich not in gold but in freedom, leisure, and structural wealth.
 - Society demonstrates how invisible labor can create extraordinary prosperity.

Spartans: Wealth without work

Tech billionaire and venture capitalist Vinod Khosla made a bold prediction last week at an AI Summit in Delhi that people may not even need jobs by 2050 as Artificial Intelligence (AI) continues to make rapid advancements across sectors.

But not many know that people of Sparta in ancient Greece used to lead lives that Khosla is envisioning today.

"We never worked. The land worked for us," a Spartan might have said.

When you think of Sparta, what comes to mind? Crimson cloaks, iron discipline, endless military drills. But behind the warrior image was a society so wealthy that Spartan citizens never had to work.

While Athenians tilled fields, crafted goods, and traded in bustling markets, Spartans spent their days training, strategizing, and governing. Their wealth wasn't in coins or jewels — it was in time, freedom, and security.

Helots: The invisible workforce
The secret to Spartan ease? The helots. These were state-owned serfs, captured from regions like Messenia. They farmed the land, tended animals, and delivered crops to Spartan households.

Every Spartan male had his needs met without touching a plow. Helot labor turned the city-state into an invisible economic powerhouse. Wealth in Sparta wasn't earned by sweat — it was enslaved and structured.

Simplicity hides great riches
Iron bars were sometimes used as

currency. Homes were plain. Meals were famously austere, including the infamous "black broth."

Yet simplicity was only skin-deep. Behind bare walls flowed fertile lands, livestock, and agricultural surplus — a quiet wealth the Spartans didn't flaunt. Luxury was discouraged, but the comfort and freedom it brought were real.

Even Spartan women benefited. With men away training, women



managed estates and inherited property. In a society otherwise rigidly martial, they wielded considerable economic power.

War, conquest, and quiet wealth
Military victories further boosted Spartan prosperity. Conquered lands

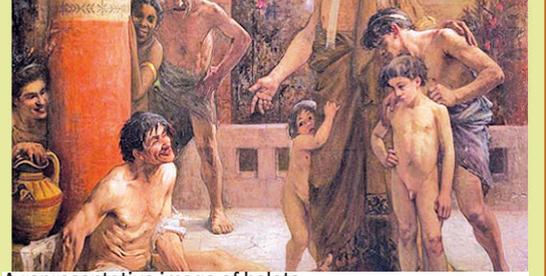
added new helots. Spoils of war flowed into the state. Unlike Athens, where wealth came from trade and commerce, Spartan riches came from dominance, organization, and hierarchy.

The citizenry could spend decades perfecting themselves as warriors, free from survival worries, relying on a system designed to give them time over toil.

Fragile prosperity
Even this remarkable system had cracks. Land concentrated in fewer hands. The number of full Spartan citizens declined. Wealth became unevenly distributed. The very structure that allowed a life free from labor was fragile, dependent on social hierarchy, military control, and demographic balance.

Yet at its peak, Sparta was extraordinary: a city where citizens lived entirely free of manual labor, supported by the system's quiet, invisible riches.

Rich in freedom, not gold
Spartans were rich not because of coins, trade, or treasures — they were rich in time, discipline, influence, and the freedom to devote life to excellence. In modern terms, Sparta's wealth was structural, systemic, and invisible. For the Spartan elite, life was a luxury few civilizations have ever achieved: absolute freedom from work. In a world of toil and sweat, Spartans were the ultimate labor-free elite.



A representative image of helots. PIC: ANCIENT-ORIGINS.NET