**How to Avoid SLS in your Cosmetics**

SLS is a strong one of the most harsh and irritating surfactants. It damages the protective outer barrier created by our body’s natural oils and sebum.

The good news is that there are many [alternatives](http://www.organicvetiversoaps.com) to SLS, ones you can find on the shelf, if you know how to look for them, as well as ones you can use in making your own products.

Most common versions of it are manufactured with petroleum. However, some variations of it are manufactured with coconut oil. It may come as a surprise that these coconut-derived variants on SLS are still permitted in many reputable organic standards, such as Ecocert and the Cosmetic Organic and Natural Standard, or COSMOS.

Another sulfate which is similar to SLS is ALS, or ammonium laureth sulfate. Since it is a bigger molecule than SLS, it can’t penetrate the skin as readily as SLS can, that’s why it is less irritating than SLS. But it can still cause dryness and irritation, especially on sensitive skin, and can be very drying for hair.

Some safer alternatives you can look for in your [products](http://www.organicvetiversoaps.com) include SLSA (sodium lauryl sulfoacetate), Sodium Cocoyl Glycinate, Disodium / Sodium Cocoyl Glutamate, Decyl glucoside, and Lauryl glucoside.

*Formulating* Cosmetics: *Natural* Alternatives

For those of you who are formulating your own beauty products, you may be aware that surfactants are the essential ingredient you must include when formulating a shampoo, or any other beauty cleanser that foams.

We can choose from others including:

* SLSA (sodium lauryl sulfoacetate)
* Sodium Cocoyl Glycinate
* SCS (Sodium Coco Sulfate)
* Disodium / Sodium Cocoyl Glutamate
* Decyl glucoside
* Lauryl glucoside.

A very popular alternative is Sodium Coco Sulfate (or SCS), many so-called ‘green’ surfactants are available every day, but the choice of not-so-green ones is still bigger; many surfactants, even new ones, still contain all sorts of ethoxylated molecules, PEGs, and so forth.

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