

**11** Big pants  
Chances are your stomach is not quite as flat as it used to be. I know women who spend a lot of time obsessing over this fact, and there are many things you can do to improve matters, from fat-freezing to frantic exercise. Mostly, though, I find that a decent pair of big pants does the trick. Spanx is the leading brand, but I find that they are just too ugly. My favourite is Scandale, which look like chic retro Fifties pieces. There's a bra that combats back fat and a fabulous pair of high-waisted briefs. Always buy a size larger than you think you need, though, otherwise you'll feel like a pig in a condom.



can't be beaten, and despite the current trend for outlandish colours, Rouge Noir, that iconic dried-blood shade, remains a classic. If I could have only one shade, this would be it.

**12** Color Wow Root Cover Up (£28.50; victoriahealth.com)  
I suppose the easiest way to describe this product is mascara for hair. You can use it in between colour appointments to touch up grey roots, or to prolong the life of your highlights. It's also great for people with fine hair who want to create an illusion of thickness. It's simple to use: just brush it on using the applicator provided, or go to the website where you will find a how-to video. The powder formula is designed to adhere to the hair without being sticky or oily and without looking dry – and it should last you a couple of washes. One kit should suffice for about three months.

**13** Sarah Chapman Skinesis Overnight Facial (£45; sarahchapman.net)  
We all need a good facial occasionally. If you can't face Sarah Chapman's six-month waiting list, her serum/oil is the next best thing.

**14** Margaret Dabbs, podiatrist (020-7487 5510)  
Unless you want to turn into one of those old ladies whose feet frighten small

children, get into the habit of seeing a podiatrist once or twice a year. Margaret Dabbs has a highly skilled team who will restore extremities back to optimum health, no matter how vile or embarrassing the condition. They will then apply a finishing layer of gloss, leaving you sandal-ready. Dabbs's own range of products is also excellent, especially the anti-fungal Foot Hygiene Cream (£18; margaretdabbs.co.uk).

**15** Dr Vicky Dondos, cosmetic doctor (020-3432 2707)  
Subtlety is Vicky Dondos's middle name. When it comes to Botox

and fillers, she is the most circumspect of advocates, and she combines her non-surgical treatments with prescription skin products. I would defy anyone to spot her work – and yet it is not so subtle as to be ineffective.

**16** Dove Summer Glow Nourishing Lotion (£2.49; boots.com)  
The last thing you want as you get older is a real tan. The market is awash with caramel-coloured options, but dear old Dove Summer Glow gradual tan remains one of the best: a great texture, minimal pong, lovely natural colour, cheap – and easy to use.

**17** Liz Earle Cleanse & Polish Hot Cloth Cleanser (from £5.50; lizearle.com)  
Most of Liz Earle's range is excellent, but her Hot Cloth Cleanser is exceptional. It contains eucalyptus and cocoa butter for a non-drying cleanse. I use mine with my Clarisonic cleanser, before washing off with the muslin cloth provided.

**18** Lucinda Ellery hair salons (lucindaellery.co.uk)  
If you suffer from hair loss and the surgical option is not for you, go and see Lucinda Ellery. She provides intricate and invisible replacement systems for all types of hair loss, from alopecia to chemotherapy-induced shedding. The woman herself is lovely: warm, passionate and larger than life. She has salons all over the country and is preparing to conquer Los Angeles. For women struggling with baldness, she represents a lifeline.

**19** Bantika Elsley, hair technician (joshwoodcolour.com)  
Josh Wood's Atelier in Notting Hill is a mecca for A-listers and the wives of London's gazillionaires. Wood himself, a legendary session colourist, is brilliant, but probably beyond most normal wallets; Elsley, however, while not exactly cheap (around £200), is renowned for her colour skills, in particular a stylish, modern approach to treating older hair and all the challenges it presents, from greyness to difficult textures and loss of density. If you're looking for expert advice on how to achieve healthy-looking, youthful colour, she's worth every penny.

**20** Rimmel Scandal Eyes Waterproof Kohl Liner (£3.99; boots.com)  
This eyeliner has an expensive consistency for the price, making it easy to control during application.

**21** Freedom2Train (freedom2train.com)  
I hate gyms and I hate exercise. Former Loughborough University lecturer Steve Mellor at Freedom2Train is the only person who has ever managed to get me to do cardiovascular exercise without giving up after three sessions. Unlike most personal trainers, who stand around fondling their own triceps and eyeing up the pretty chick on the cross trainer, Mellor gives you his all. He is also a gym-phobe, preferring to train his clients in the fresh air. He believes in short, intense workouts. An all-round good egg. ■

