



Skin Anatomy & Common Disorders

BUILDING BLOCK FOR SUCCESS - reusable across all programs

Applies to: Cosmetology, Barbering, Esthetics, and Nail Technology

Suggested time: 3 hours (theory, diagram work, and case practice)

How to use this plan: The lines under "Say" are scripted word for word so every class hears the same information - read them aloud. *Italic in brackets is what you do.* The jade "Teaching move" names the method; the "Students" line is their involvement.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

- Describe the structure and main functions of the skin.
- Identify the three layers of the skin and what each does.
- Recognize common skin conditions seen in the salon.
- Tell the difference between a condition you can service safely and a contraindication that requires referral.

Materials and Equipment

- SGS chapter slide deck with skin diagrams, projector, and whiteboard
- Printed skin-layer diagram for labeling
- Common-conditions handout and the Service or Refer case cards
- Gloves and the student workbook

Key Terms

skin, epidermis, dermis, subcutaneous layer, melanin, sebaceous gland, sudoriferous (sweat) gland, collagen, elastin, lesion, disorder, contraindication, contagious, referral.

Lesson Sequence

1. Opening Hook - 10 min

Teaching move: *Make the skin personal and high-stakes.*

SAY (read aloud):

Here is something most people do not realize: the skin is the largest organ of the body. And it is the canvas for so much of what we do - facials, makeup, shaving, hair removal. Knowing how the skin is built, and knowing when something on it means stop, protects every client and protects you. Today we learn the skin.

- **Students:** name one service that works directly on the skin.

2. The Structure of the Skin - 20 min

Teaching move: *Layer analogy with the diagram.*

SAY (read aloud):

The skin has three layers - picture a mattress. *[Point to the diagram.]* The top layer is the epidermis, the protective outer cover you see and touch; it is where melanin gives skin its color. Below it is the dermis, the supportive middle layer, full of collagen and elastin for strength and bounce, plus your glands, nerves, and



tiny blood vessels.

The bottom layer is the subcutaneous layer, the padded base of fatty tissue that cushions and insulates. Three layers - cover, support, cushion.

- **Students:** name the three layers in order from top to bottom.

3. What the Skin Does - 15 min

Teaching move: Connect functions to services.

SAY (read aloud):

The skin is not just a wrapper - it does real jobs. It protects you from the outside world, it regulates temperature through sweat glands, it lets you feel through nerves, and its sebaceous glands secrete oil that keeps skin and hair supple. It even helps make vitamin D from sunlight.

Why does this matter to us? Because healthy skin takes a service beautifully, and troubled skin tells us to slow down or stop. We read the skin before we work on it.

- **Students:** name two functions of the skin.

4. Common Conditions We See - 20 min

Teaching move: Recognize, never diagnose.

SAY (read aloud):

Let's talk about what you will actually see on the floor. You will see oily and dry skin, acne, sensitive and reactive skin, sun damage, and irritation. Hear me clearly on this: our job is to recognize, not to diagnose. We are not doctors.

Some conditions we can work around with care, like normal dryness or mild oiliness. Others - anything red, swollen, oozing, crusty, or that looks contagious - tell us to stop. When in doubt, we treat it as a reason to stop.

- **Students:** name one skin condition that would make them pause before a service.

5. Contraindications - When to Stop - 15 min

Teaching move: The safety heart of the lesson.

SAY (read aloud):

A contraindication is any condition that means you should not perform the service. Open or oozing skin, signs of infection, anything contagious, severe inflammation, or a cold sore in the work area - all of these are a stop. When you see one, you do not perform the service, and you do not diagnose it. You calmly refer the client to a physician and reschedule.

This protects the client, it protects everyone else in the salon, and it protects you and your license.

- **Students:** state the two things we never do when we see a contraindication (diagnose; service it).

6. Activity - Label and Sort - 20 min

Teaching move: Apply both halves of the lesson.

SAY (read aloud):



Two-part activity. First, *[hand out the skin-layer diagram]* label the three layers and their parts. Then, in groups, take the Service or Refer cards - each describes a client's skin - and decide: do we service safely, or do we stop and refer? Be ready to defend your answer.

- **Students:** label the skin layers, then sort case cards into Service or Refer and explain.

7. Check and Recap - 15 min

Teaching move: Recall and reinforce the stop rule.

SAY (read aloud):

Quick check. What are the three layers of skin? *[Pause.]* Epidermis, dermis, subcutaneous. What do we do when we see an open, oozing area? *[Pause.]* Stop and refer. To recap: the skin has three layers and real jobs, we recognize conditions but never diagnose, and a contraindication always means stop and refer.

Read the skin first, every time.

- **Students:** name one thing they will check on a client's skin before starting.

Assessment

- Performance: skin-layer labeling and the Service or Refer card sort.
- Written: quiz on skin structure, functions, and contraindications.
- Verbal: participation in the case discussion.

Assignment

Read the Skin Anatomy & Common Disorders chapter and complete the labeling worksheet. Study the difference between a serviceable condition and a contraindication.

Instructor Notes and Safety

Stress recognize-not-diagnose and refer-when-in-doubt.

Keep images professional and clinical; tie each condition to a clear service decision.