CeraVe's reviews rarely call it *greasy*, where Cetaphil's and Vanicream's do; its SPF lotion pills

> Of the reviews we read, 18% of CeraVe's say it hydrates and isn't greasy, level with rivals (14% to 16%), but only 4% call it greasy or heavy, against Cetaphil's 12% and Vanicream's 10%. Its complaints sit on listings: white cast or pilling on the AM SPF 30 (48%, the only sunscreen here), a changed formula or ingredients that don't match the listing on the Daily Lotion (15%), and an unsealed jar on the Cream (16%). We used Amazon's critical filter on purpose, so this shows what complaints say, not how common they are.

CeraVe
against Cetaphil, Vanicream, Aveeno

671 reviews read
Amazon
dated 13 Feb 2012 to 31 Oct 2026

548 of the 671 in a theme
sorted by a model, 41 corrected by hand, counted exactly

November 2, 2026
public reviews only; no reviewer names

THE SHORT VERSION

Sell not greasy against heavier rivals; make the Daily Lotion listing match its bottle

4%

of CeraVe's reviews read call it greasy or heavy

Cetaphil 12%, Vanicream 10%, Aveeno 1%

48%

of the AM SPF 30 reviews read say it leaves a white cast or pills

The only sunscreen on this shelf; most of what we read is three stars or lower, on purpose

15%

of the Daily Lotion reviews read say its formula changed or the listing's ingredients don't match

Formula changes across the shelf: Cetaphil 12 reviews, Aveeno 11, often the scent

4.65

is CeraVe's Amazon rating across these listings; 2% of ratings are one or two stars

Cetaphil 4.72 and 2%, Vanicream 4.62 and 4%, Aveeno 4.75 and 1%

01 **Not greasy is CeraVe's, by being less heavy**

Praise for not feeling greasy is close (18% against 14% to 16%). The gap is the complaint: Cetaphil's Cream is called greasy or heavy in 19% of its reviews read, Vanicream's Cream in 17%.

02 **Formulas changed across the shelf**

15 CeraVe reviews read say the formula changed or the listing doesn't match, 9 of them on the Daily Lotion; Cetaphil 12, Aveeno 11. Several CeraVe ones say the photos' ingredients differ from the bottle (#35).

03 **Aveeno's reviews fault its pumps and smell**

Pump fails: Aveeno 21%, Vanicream 14%, CeraVe 3%. A smell they dislike: Aveeno 17%, CeraVe 3%.

Counts are of the 671 reviews we read (Amazon), not of everyone who uses it. A share is of each brand's own reviews read. Themes are a model's sorting; the counts of that sorting are exact.

WHAT WE READ

Each brand's three moisturizers by ratings count, with low stars read on purpose

Low stars read on purpose, so the fair star comparison is Amazon's own split, per listing. CeraVe's AM SPF 30 is the only sunscreen; Aveeno's three are body lotions. Vanicream's face wash was set aside for its lotion.

BRAND	AMAZON	1-2★, AMAZON'S OWN
CeraVe YOU	**4.65★**, about 397K ratings, 3 listings read 174, weighted to complaints on purpose: 1 Dec 2023 to 31 Oct 2026 CeraVe Daily Moisturizing Lotion, Face and B… 4.7★, 154K, 1% 1-2★, read 59; greasy 0%; cast 0%; changed 15%; pump 7% CeraVe Moisturizing Cream, Face & Body Moist… 4.7★, 145K, 2% 1-2★, read 57; greasy 7%; cast 4%; changed 4%; pump 0% CeraVe AM Daily Facial Moisturizer with SPF… 4.5★, 98K, 5% 1-2★, read 58; greasy 5%; cast 48%; changed 7%; pump 3%	2% of 397K
Cetaphil RIVAL	**4.72★**, about 89K ratings, 3 listings read 165, weighted to complaints on purpose: 26 Feb 2021 to 31 Oct 2026 Cetaphil Moisturizing Cream, Dry Sensitive S… 4.8★, 42K, 2% 1-2★, read 59; greasy 19%; cast 0%; changed 10%; pump 0% Cetaphil Daily Hydrating Face Lotion, Hyalur… 4.6★, 28K, 3% 1-2★, read 53; greasy 4%; cast 2%; changed 4%; pump 8% Cetaphil Moisturizing Face & Body Lotion, Se… 4.7★, 19K, 2% 1-2★, read 53; greasy 13%; cast 0%; changed 8%; pump 8%	2% of 89K
Vanicream RIVAL	**4.62★**, about 92K ratings, 3 listings read 173, weighted to complaints on purpose: 30 Mar 2013 to 31 Oct 2026 Vanicream Moisturizing Cream, Body & Face Mo… 4.6★, 51K, 4% 1-2★, read 59; greasy 17%; cast 2%; changed 2%; pump 19% Vanicream Daily Facial Moisturizer, Lightwei… 4.6★, 26K, 5% 1-2★, read 58; greasy 7%; cast 2%; changed 2%; pump 0% Vanicream Moisturizing Lotion, Body and Face… 4.7★, 15K, 3% 1-2★, read 56; greasy 5%; cast 2%; changed 2%; pump 25%	4% of 92K
Aveeno RIVAL	**4.75★**, about 128K ratings, 3 listings read 159, weighted to complaints on purpose: 13 Feb 2012 to 31 Oct 2026 Aveeno Daily Moisturizing Body Lotion, Fragr… 4.8★, 60K, 1% 1-2★, read 53; greasy 0%; cast 0%; changed 8%; pump 19% Aveeno Stress Relief Moisturizing Body Lotio… 4.7★, 36K, 1% 1-2★, read 52; greasy 0%; cast 0%; changed 13%; pump 12% Aveeno Skin Relief Moisturizing Lotion, Frag… 4.7★, 32K, 2% 1-2★, read 54; greasy 4%; cast 2%; changed 0%; pump 31%	1% of 128K

Per brand, its 3 own listings with the most ratings (each line: Amazon's stars, its ratings and its share of 1-2★, then reviews read). Amazon shares reviews across a product's sizes, so a few describe a sibling. Per listing: up to 20 most helpful, 20 from Amazon's critical filter, and 10 each of one and two stars.

SIDE BY SIDE

Greasy is Cetaphil's and Vanicream's complaint (12% and 10%), not CeraVe's (4%)

Share of each brand's reviews read, two-thirds of them three stars or lower on purpose. Shares follow the product: see slide 3. Green is praise, red a complaint.

SHARE OF EACH BRAND'S REVIEWS READ THAT SAY IT · REVIEWS IN BRACKETS

THEMES SORTED BY A MODEL (GEMINI), SOME BY HAND · COUNTS EXACT

WHAT REVIEWERS SAY	CERAVE	CETAPHIL	VANICREAM	AVEENO
PRAISE gentle on sensitive skin	11% (19)	14% (23)	27% (47)	16% (26)
PRAISE hydrates without feeling greasy	18% (31)	16% (27)	14% (24)	16% (25)
COMPLAINT the pump fails	3% (6)	5% (8)	14% (25)	21% (33)
COMPLAINT a smell they dislike, or a changed scent	3% (6)	5% (8)	3% (6)	17% (27)
COMPLAINT too greasy or heavy	4% (7)	12% (20)	10% (17)	1% (2)
COMPLAINT formula changed, or the listing's ingredients don't match the bottle	9% (15)	7% (12)	2% (3)	7% (11)
COMPLAINT white cast or pilling	17% (30)	1% (1)	2% (3)	1% (1)
COMPLAINT arrived without a seal	6% (11)	4% (6)	1% (1)	2% (3)

Other themes: leaves a sticky or tacky film (45); causes burning, stinging, or redness (35); breakouts or bumps (33); not hydrating enough or feels drying (31); too thin, watery, or ineffective (29); arrived leaking or damaged (28); and 3 more. 548 of the 671 reviews are in a theme; of the 123 that are not, 20 are a few words of four- or five-star praise and 42 give one or two stars. Every review is listed in the HTML version. Each share is over its own window: CeraVe 1066 days; Cetaphil 2074 days; Vanicream 4964 days; Aveeno 5375 days.

A model (Gemini) named one set of themes for every brand and marked which each review says (up to three); we count its sorting. Base per brand: CeraVe 174 reviews; Cetaphil 165 reviews; Vanicream 173 reviews; Aveeno 159 reviews.

WHAT CERAVE'S REVIEWERS COMPLAIN ABOUT

CeraVe's complaints sit on one listing each: SPF pilling, lotion formula, cream seal

Of its 60 low-star reviews, critical filter included: cast or pilling 17, formula or listing 10, unsealed 9. Take the SPF's to product.

white cast or pilling

by listing: CeraVe Daily Lotion 0% · CeraVe Cream 4% · CeraVe AM SPF 30 48%. share of reviews, then of low stars: CeraVe 17%, 28% · Cetaphil 1%, 2% · Vanicream 2%, 2% · Aveeno 1%, 2%

Hard to spread & pills

“Hard to spread and pills up quite a bit”

2★ · CeraVe AM SPF 30 · Oct 2026

Not for all skin types

“I used this product while undergoing acne treatment, but I wasn't satisfied with it because it pilled on my face.”

3★ · CeraVe AM SPF 30 · Oct 2026

formula changed, or the listing's ingredients don't match the bottle

by listing: CeraVe Daily Lotion 15% · CeraVe Cream 4% · CeraVe AM SPF 30 7%. share of reviews, then of low stars: CeraVe 9%, 17% · Cetaphil 7%, 17% · Vanicream 2%, 3% · Aveeno 7%, 17%

Inaccurate Ingredients

“The ingredients on the bottle I received are slightly different than the ingredients list included the product photos. The formula is fine, but I avoid a couple of ingredients that are in the formula that I received.”

3★ · CeraVe Daily Lotion · Jun 2026

Won’t rub in

“I used to love this but now I leaves a white residue on my face that won’t rub in and absorb. switched to the Cetaphil version”

3★ · CeraVe AM SPF 30 · Aug 2026

arrived without a seal

by listing: CeraVe Daily Lotion 3% · CeraVe Cream 16% · CeraVe AM SPF 30 0%. share of reviews, then of low stars: CeraVe 6%, 15% · Cetaphil 4%, 5% · Vanicream 1%, 2% · Aveeno 2%, 2%

Good

“The lotion seems good. Had no seal.”

2★ · CeraVe Cream · Sep 2026

Not sealed

“I ordered this cream because it really helps the skin and does its job. I writing this concerning product safety. When I opened the container it had not seal. That is not good to not have a seal on the cream before using. It can make question product safety.”

1★ · CeraVe Cream · Oct 2026

The themes here hold 33 of CeraVe's 60 one- and two-star reviews read; 11 are in no theme. Quoted as written, whole, without reviewer names; each quote is an example, the share beside the theme the evidence.

WHAT THE RIVALS' REVIEWERS SAY

Aveeno's reviews fault its pumps; Cetaphil's call its cream greasy

Reviews naming CeraVe: Cetaphil 15 (8 prefer CeraVe, 3 Cetaphil), Vanicream 7, Aveeno 2. Anecdotes.

the pump fails

share of reviews, then of low stars: CeraVe 3%, 5% · Cetaphil 5%, 7% · Vanicream 14%, 12% · Aveeno 21%, 23%

The pump doesn’t work

“The pump on the bottle does not work”

3★ · Aveeno Skin Relief · Oct 2026

Bottle pump head doesn't work

“Bottle pump head would not release. Could not use the product.”

2★ · Aveeno Skin Relief · Oct 2026

too greasy or heavy

share of reviews, then of low stars: CeraVe 4%, 2% · Cetaphil 12%, 22% · Vanicream 10%, 22% · Aveeno 1%, 2%

Greasy

“This leaves your hands feeling very greasy long after you put it on”

1★ · Cetaphil Face & Body Lotion · Oct 2026

No thanks

“This is a very oily moisturizer. If you enjoy feeling your oily moisturizer on your skin hours after applying it, this one’s for you”

2★ · Cetaphil Cream · Oct 2026

Cetaphil reviews that name CeraVe

15 of Cetaphil's 165 reviews read; 8 prefer CeraVe, 3 prefer Cetaphil

Needs a lid with a pump on it

“This should have came with a pump on it like CeraVe does.”

3★ · Cetaphil Cream · Jul 2026

Good Body Lotion!

“Affordable and works well. The formula changed a little. 10 years ago I remember it being more greasy. This formula is more lightweight than the older version. It is slightly less expensive and longer lasting than Cerave Daily Moisturizing Lotion because it's a little heavier than Cerave and you don't need to use as much...which is why I stick to Cetaphil to use on my body and Cerave for my face. Neither break me out (but there are some ingredients in Cetaphil that may make some people breakout...). Cerave also dries quicker and feels nicer in my opinion.”

4★ · Cetaphil Face & Body Lotion · Jun 2026

Quoted as written, whole, without reviewer names. Each quote is one review: an example of its theme; the shares beside the theme are the evidence.

WHAT REVIEWERS PRAISE

CeraVe and Cetaphil are praised for not feeling greasy; Vanicream for being *gentle*

What each brand's reviewers praise, with every brand's share beside the theme.

hydrates without feeling greasy

CeraVe 18% · Cetaphil 16% · Vanicream 14% · Aveeno 16%

Very good

“This is actually really great. I’ve had a skin rash for a few days and this is so soothing for it and Not greasy. My skin was nicely smooth and moisturized.”

5★ · CeraVe Cream · Oct 2026

Great Moisturizer

“This moisturizing lotion is great, doctor recommended for good skin care, not just a commercial our own doctor recommended it. It's smooth and no greasy feeling afterwards, absorbs nicely into your skin to moisturize.”

5★ · CeraVe Daily Lotion · Oct 2026

gentle on sensitive skin

CeraVe 11% · Cetaphil 14% · Vanicream 27% · Aveeno 16%

Great for my sensitive skiny

“Very nice, no fragrance, well absorbing lotion. I have sensitive/allergies, and this lotion does not trigger them...big win!!”

5★ · Vanicream Lotion · Oct 2026

Vanicream Moisturizer

“This moisturizer doesn’t irritate my skin, fragrance free and is not greasy. Really like this product and will purchase again.”

5★ · Vanicream Lotion · Oct 2026

THEIR WORDS, AND THREE MOVES

Not greasy on the Cream and Lotion; a Daily Lotion listing that matches; pumps that work

The phrases reviews repeat across the four brands (each chip says how many are CeraVe's), one line we wrote around a review's words, and two from the reviews.

PHRASES 4+ REVIEWS WROTE · REVIEWS, CERAVE'S OF THEM

- sensitive skin 79 CeraVe 14
- dry skin 59 CeraVe 8
- fragrance free 47 CeraVe 12
- absorbs quickly 22 CeraVe 6
- moisturizing cream 20 CeraVe 10
- feeling greasy 20 CeraVe 9
- non greasy 16 CeraVe 4

Counted, not chosen by a model: runs of 2 to 4 words that 4 or more of the reviews we read wrote, names left out; 7 of the 40 counted.

CREAM AND DAILY LOTION BULLETS · HYDRATES WITHOUT FEELING GREASY

Not greasy, against heavier rivals

START FROM THEIR WORDS

“Gives my skin moisture without being greasy”

Only 4% of CeraVe's reviews read call it greasy or heavy; Cetaphil's 12%, Vanicream's 10%. Keep it off the SPF listing.

From reviews: #60 (CeraVe), #62 (CeraVe)

DAILY LOTION IMAGES AND INGREDIENTS · FORMULA CHANGED, OR THE LISTING'S INGREDIENTS DON'T MATCH THE BOTTLE

A listing that matches the bottle

A LINE WE WROTE AROUND A REVIEW'S WORDS

“The ingredients on the bottle you receive”

15% of its reviews read say the formula changed or the photos differ from the bottle. Update the images: a listing fix marketing owns.

From reviews: #35 (CeraVe), #55 (CeraVe)

DAILY LOTION IMAGES · THE PUMP FAILS

Pumps that work

START FROM THEIR WORDS

“Pumps are convenient. Simple to use”

The pump fails in 21% of Aveeno's reviews read and 14% of Vanicream's; CeraVe's 3%. Show the pump; keep rival names off Amazon.

From reviews: #19 (CeraVe), #638 (Aveeno)

Each line takes a run of 3 or more words from the first review named; the others are on the same subject (#n = its number in the HTML list). Built on reviewers' words, with a few of our own where a reply needs them: match it to CeraVe's own voice before using it.

HOW WE READ IT

What we read, how it was sorted, and what it cannot tell you

What was asked. “CeraVe”: we read it as CeraVe (moisturizing cream). No rivals were named, so we picked 3: Cetaphil (a drugstore moisturizer for sensitive skin, same shelf); Vanicream (a drugstore moisturizer for sensitive skin, same shelf); Aveeno (a drugstore moisturizer for dry skin, same shelf).

The reviews. Per brand, an Amazon search (“CeraVe moisturizing cream”; “Cetaphil moisturizing cream”; “Vanicream moisturizing cream”; “Aveeno moisturizing cream”), its own listings with the most ratings, and per listing up to 20 most helpful reviews, up to 20 from Amazon's critical filter (one to three stars), and up to 10 each of one and two stars. We read complaints on purpose: the share of low stars here is not the share of buyers who complain; Amazon's own split is on slide 3.

Dates. CeraVe on Amazon 1 Dec 2023 to 31 Oct 2026; Cetaphil on Amazon 26 Feb 2021 to 31 Oct 2026; Vanicream on Amazon 30 Mar 2013 to 31 Oct 2026; Aveeno on Amazon 13 Feb 2012 to 31 Oct 2026; read November 2, 2026.

The themes. A model (Gemini) named one set of themes from a sample of the reviews, added themes for reviews it left out, then read each of the 671 reviews and marked the themes it says, up to three; a second pass reread each against its theme and kept only those that say it. 548 of the 671 reviews are in a theme (41 corrected by hand, each with its reason in the HTML list). The counts are exact tallies of that sorting; the sorting is a reading, not a measurement. Named and sorted by hand from a word search of the reviews, not by the model: “formula changed, or the listing's ingredients don't match the bottle”.

The quotes. Every quote is one review, stored as written and shown whole. No reviewer names. Reviews that name an account, carry a link, or name or describe a private person are counted but never quoted (3 left out for naming a person).

What it cannot tell you. Reviews come from buyers who chose to write one; we read low-star reviews on purpose, so a share is not the share of buyers who complain. A share is of the reviews we read, not of buyers.

The evidence. The HTML version of this report lists every review we read, by theme, with a link to the review on Amazon.