

Stealing Beauty

A new line of cosmetics lets you go slightly crazy—play! experiment! fall on your face!—without going broke.



Guess the price of every item on this page. Go on, guess.

Okay, so maybe the giant dollar sign tipped you off, but, believe us, the quality of these e.l.f. (eyes.lips.face.) cosmetics would never give it away. Imagine a double-ended mascara with a washable formula on one end, waterproof on the other (so smart!)...a juicy lip gloss loaded with SPF 15...eyeliners, softer than silk, that glide on in one swift stroke...each just one dollar. How can products this pretty and

innovative possibly be so...cheap?

For starters, e.l.f. has low overhead costs, little advertising, and minimalist packaging, which means you, the consumer, pay for only the makeup itself. And though good ingredients can be expensive, buying them in bulk lets e.l.f. get more for less. Cofounders Scott Vincent Borba (responsible for Hard Candy's cosmetics line and Neutrogena's men's line) and Joey Shamah say they spent a year and a half formulating the products, refining and re-refining lab samples dozens of times before finally meeting their own high standards.

Borba and Shamah set out to create something that would give women the chance to play and experiment with makeup—lots and lots of makeup—without having to empty their wallets. They've also donated a portion of their proceeds to a breast cancer awareness organization and have implemented what they call Color Therapy, donating cosmetics care packages to breast cancer patients in inner-city hospitals. Which makes e.l.f. what we call an all-around beautiful value. For details see Shop Guide.

—STEPHANIE TWEITO JACOB