Why Your Clean Apps Disagree About Diaper Cream

4 published scoring rules in 60 seconds, plus a 5-minute routine for the store aisle

This sheet doesn't list any app's scores. Scan the tube yourself, then use these rules to work out **why** Yuka, EWG Skin Deep and Think Dirty disagree.

1 Zinc oxide's form counts

- **EWG:** zinc oxide scores higher in inhalable forms (sprays, powders) and lower in solids and liquids. Small particles, including nano, count as higher absorption.[1,2]
- **Yuka:** weighs form (nanoparticles), penetration and spraying; lists non-nano and non-sprayable zinc oxide separately.[3,4]
- **Think Dirty:** no particle-size or spray rule found; rates ingredients as listed.[5]

So: check "non-nano" and cream vs. spray before comparing.

2 Essential oils aren't "fragrance"

- **Think Dirty:** any product listing "fragrance" is rated 7 or higher. Named oils are rated on their own.[5]
- **EWG:** flags "fragrance and unidentified essential oils" as not fully identified.[2]
- **Yuka:** rates each ingredient; re-evaluated several lavender ingredients in Jan 2026.[4]

So: avoiding scent? Look for lavender, tea tree and other oils too.

3 Baby skin is part of the math

- **EWG:** counts "infant skin, lips, or damaged skin" as higher absorption.[2]
- **Yuka:** considers infants and dry, damaged or atopic skin.[3]
- **Think Dirty:** no separate infant adjustment found.[5]

So: a baby cream can be flagged more strongly than an adult lotion.

4 Drug labels, dose, no score

- **FDA:** zinc oxide 1–25% and petrolatum 30–100% are OTC skin protectant actives.[7]
- **Yuka:** doesn't rate medications, so a drug cream may show no score.[6]
- **Dose:** mostly not counted, so 10% vs. 25% zinc barely moves a score.[2,8]

So: no score is a coverage gap, not a verdict.

The 5-minute referee routine

1. **Read the label:** active ingredient and %, cream/balm/spray, "non-nano," fragrance, essential oils, extracts.
2. **Scan it yourself** in each app. Scores change, so skip old screenshots.
3. **Find the driver:** the single worst-rated ingredient in each app.
4. **Name the rule:** zinc form? Essential oils? Baby-skin factor? Drug label or dose?
5. **Compare like with like** (creams with creams, balms with balms). Ask your pediatrician about rashes or skin concerns.

Diaper-cream aisle checklist

☐ I know the active ingredient and its %

☐ Cream or ointment, not a spray or powder (if I'm avoiding inhalable forms)

☐ "Non-nano" stated, if that matters to me

☐ No "fragrance" or "parfum" in the ingredients

☐ Essential oils checked (lavender, tea tree, etc.)

☐ I know which ingredient set each app's score

Sources (read Nov 3, 2026): 1. ewg.org/skindeep: Zinc oxide ingredient page · 2. ewg.org/skindeep/learn_more/about · 3. help.yuka.io: Classification of cosmetic ingredients · 4. help.yuka.io: Risk level changes for cosmetic ingredients · 5. thinkdirtyapp.com/methodology · 6. help.yuka.io: Unrecognized products · 7. 21 CFR 347.10 (ecfr.gov) · 8. Yuka Terms & Conditions (USA) §3.2. Not affiliated with Yuka, EWG or Think Dirty. App names are used only to describe their published methods.

General information, not medical advice. Non-Toxic Baby & Screen-Free Play Directory · lincslittleloves.com/blog/why-diaper-cream-scanner-apps-disagree/