

# **Soap Making Made Easy**

**A Beginner's Guide To Making Great Soap**

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## PUBLISHERS NOTES

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## DEDICATION

This book is dedicated to all self sufficient individuals.

## CHAPTER 1- WHAT IS SOAP MAKING?

People have made soap for hundreds of years for helping to remove dirt and oil from skin, dishes, surfaces or clothing. In the past, individuals had to make soap at home because it was not available in stores. Making soap at home was a time-consuming, dirty and hot process that many pioneers only did once a year.

The typical ingredients included animal fat that required hunting for animals, butchering and rendering the fat. In various geographic regions, vegetable oil was preferred instead for making hard soap. However, collecting vegetable oil was also a laborious chore that required harvesting fruits or vegetables to process to collect the essential oils.



### **Alkaline Solutions**

At the same time, ancient people had to gather additional ingredients such as alkaline substances that assist with breaking down skin oils. Alkaline solutions used to make soap are called lye that actually is sodium hydroxide. The combination of lye and fats creates a chemical reaction that hydrolyzes the fats to make a solid soap. Making soap with these methods during ancient times required individuals to use open fires while carefully watching the mixture before placing it in molds to harden. Because making soap was a long and difficult process, many people learned to barter or sell soap for other goods.

### **Adding Scents**

Eventually, inventive individuals learned how to make special soaps with fragrances, emollients and other ingredients. People enjoyed using scented soaps that moisturized the skin or added fragrance to fabrics. A popular ancient soap had the ingredient cassia made from the buds of a tree. This light cinnamon scent was helpful for deodorizing the skin during a time before there were deodorant products. The soap was also helpful for cleaning wool from sheep and goats before the fibers were used to weave fabrics. When cassia was not available, people used alternate ingredients such

as sesame seed or cypress oil. Wood ashes left over from hot fires were also an alternative ingredient for making soap. Delicately scented soaps were also devised using fragrant oils from lavender or rose flower petals.

### **Specialized Soaps**

In China and other countries, soaps were made from local wild spices and plants. Many groups kept the art of soap making a secret to avoid sharing recipes with others. This made certain varieties of soaps valuable for trading purposes. Factories in Europe began to make specialized or fine soaps during the 1600s that were desired by royal or wealthy individuals. In Italy, hard soaps made with olive oil were popular to soothe and moisturize dry skin. In Spain, delicate and white Castile soap was created using oils from the locally grown laurel and olive plants.

### **How Soap Products Became Popular**

Entrepreneurs opened factories in several geographic regions to manufacture specialized soaps such as Pears Soap, a translucent variety with a unique and delicate scent. Ivory Soap is popular because it is a gentle soap that floats on the surface of water.

Because people also wanted laundry soap, manufacturers began to grind soap with a mortar and pestle to make flakes that dissolved quickly in warm water. By the late 1800s, soap making became a big business with large factories opening in major cities. Many of these factories still exist today, making numerous varieties of soap and laundry products. Intensive advertising of soap products in newspapers and magazines quickly made individuals want to buy soaps in local stores.

### **The Invention of Liquid Soaps**

During the late 1800s, liquid soaps were also invented for washing dishes or fabrics. Companies also developed stronger liquid soaps for household cleaning purposes such as washing floors, bathroom fixtures or kitchen countertops. Liquid soaps were popular with homemakers because it quickly mixed with water while sanitizing household items. This allowed individuals to complete chores such as washing clothing much faster. Liquid soaps also left less sticky residue on clothing and surfaces while ensuring items were cleaned thoroughly. Today, there are hundreds of liquid soap products available in a variety of scents for specialized cleaning purposes.

### **How Soaps Get to Stores**

Most modern soaps are made in large factories in big batches with either hot or cold chemical processes. Hot processes for soap making vary in temperature such as boiling, warm or normal formats; cold processing of soaps is the most popular method using old-fashioned mixing of lye and water to create hard soaps.

After soap is prepared, it is placed in molds of different shapes and sizes to dry. The average drying time for hard soaps is three days. When soaps are completely dried and hardened, the products are packaged in paper, plastic or cardboard packages. Large boxes of packaged soaps are delivered to warehouses and stores by trucks or

trains. Today, individuals shopping for soap expect to find an aisle filled with product choices.

### **Development of Modern Soaps**

Each manufacturer of soap uses specialized formulas with particular ingredients. This specialization makes a unique product that is desirable by different customers. Companies have devised formulas using pumice grains that make a strong soap that removes heavy dirt such as grease. Alternatively, there are delicate soaps created for the sensitive skin of babies. There are soap formulas that are designed to deodorize or medicate the skin. Medicated soaps might help prevent acne or relieve itchy dermatitis. Recently, antibacterial soaps have become popular to prevent the spread of infections. Both hard and liquid antibacterial soaps are commonly used in bathrooms and kitchens to destroy bacteria.

## CHAPTER 2- WHAT ARE POPULAR SOAP MAKING METHODS?

If you are confused about the whole soap making process, you're about to find out about it. You probably hear people talking about cold process, hot process, melt and pour, rebatching, and possibly mentioning soap-making kit. To serious soap-makers, soap making refers to the actual production of new soap. That is, you start with soap making ingredients, lye and oils, mix them together, and produce soap that did not exist before.

### **Why Make Your Own Soap**

There are people that just aren't interested in making soap from scratch. For them, they enjoy decorating soap rather than cooking up soap. They like to focus on the appearance, colors, scents, and swirls, rather than that first stage of combining ingredients to create a basic soap. When these individuals talk about making soap, they are often talking about "melt and pour" and "rebatching". With these methods, soap is not made from scratch. You take soap that has already been made and melt it down. You then smooth it out and start decorating it.

Making your own soap is fun and interesting. It allows you to produce soaps of any size, color, shape and fragrance. When you make your own soap, you decide what goes into it. You can add any ingredients that you like, such as medicinal herbs, floral fragrance or moisturizers. The following are popular methods for making soap, and any of these methods uses a few specific ingredients to produce soap that turns out correctly.



### **Cold Process**

This is the most common method of making soap. Cold process soap turns out very hard and lasts a long time. This method involves combining fatty acids and sodium hydroxide, also known as lye. You can obtain the fatty acids from nearly any

oil or fat, including some cooking oils and animal fats. When the right proportions of water, sodium hydroxide and fatty acids are mixed, it will go through a process called saponification.

These ingredients are combined at very high temperatures and then allowed to cure for several weeks. This process allows the soap to harden, and it can be cut into bars. Just remember, it is extremely important that you avoid skin contact with lye. For safety purposes, it is essential to use safety equipment such as goggles, gloves, long sleeves and other protective clothing. When the fat and lye are combined, a chemical reaction occurs. This reaction neutralizes the lye so that it is safe to use on the body. When the fat solidifies, it takes on cleaning properties and is able to lift dirt away.

### **Hot Process**

This method of making soap is a more advanced version of the cold process soap making method. This soap making process should definitely not be done by an inexperienced soap maker. It uses fatty acids and lye just like the cold process soap making method, but rather than mixing the ingredients and letting them to cure for several weeks, all the ingredients are mixed and cooked at extremely high temperatures to get rid of the excess water. The soap is allowed to cool off, and then it's ready to be used.

### **Melt and Pour Soap**

This is a very simple way to make soap, and this method is perfect for beginners and children. It requires the use of a pre-made soap, as a soap base. You can use a basic soap with or without fragrances, colors or other additives. The soap base is melted, and ingredients, such as herbs, colors, essential oils, fragrance oil or glitter are added to the base. Once mixed, the next step is to pour the base into soap molds where they are allowed to harden. After the soap has solidified, you can use it.

### **Rebatching Method**

Rebatching is another simple method of making soap. It is like soap modifying. For this method you use old bits of soap or a bar of soap, chop it down and put it in some water on the stove and allow it to liquefy. Once it has liquefied, you can add new ingredients to the soap. You can personalize the scent and other properties by adding ingredients such as herbs, essential oils, colorants, and fragrance oils. Then pour the soap into molds and let it re-harden. Once the soap has solidified, it is ready for use.

### **Considerations**

Making your own soap can be a fun and rewarding experience. Many recipes and techniques for making soap are available, but you need to do some research to decide what type of soap you are interested in making. Beginners like to use a melt and pour method as it is an easy and inexpensive way to make soap. And it does not involve the use of lye, which can be potentially dangerous. Also, this method doesn't take a lot of time to make. When you make soap, you can easily personalize the soap with colors, fragrance and even names and interesting phrases. Add fun things that will make it

look pretty. You can add things that everyone in the house would like. Everyone, including the kids, can have their own specially designed soap bar.

Soap dye is available at most craft stores. You can also purchase natural pigments to color your soap. You can add artificial fragrances available at crafts suppliers, spices from your cupboard, or pure essential oils. This is a great way to make your soap both functional and aesthetically appealing. Herbs, minerals, salts, honey, oatmeal, and even essential oils are beneficial for the skin. Sea salts, for example, help exfoliate and ease inflammation.

## CHAPTER 3- WHAT ARE THE KEY INGREDIENTS NEEDED FOR MAKING SOAP

Before you begin making soap it is important to decide what process you will use. This will determine the key ingredients. There are three methods of making soap. They are: Cold Process, Hot Process, and Melt and Pour. The first two methods require you to use lye. The last method, Melt and Pour, allows you to melt blocks of pre-made soap and form it in molds.

When most people talk about making soap they are speaking about either Cold Process or Hot Process. Therefore, the majority of this article will address the key ingredients for those two methods. There will be a quick overview of Melt and Pour.

### **Melt and Pour**

Melt and Pour is the simplest way to get into soap making. You do not actually make soap in the technical sense. What you are doing is melting a block of pre-made soap and adding colors and fragrance to it. You do not need to use lye, water, or fat. There are many kits that come with the materials.

The key ingredients for Melt and Pour are:

### **Melt and Pour Base**

This is the block of material that you will melt and then pour into the soap molds. You can melt it in the microwave.



### **Fragrance**

A fragrance is any sort of smell that you want to add. You can use either essential

oils or fragrance oils.

### **Cold Process Soap and Hot Process Soap**

These are the methods that are usually associated with soap making. Both of them require you to use three main ingredients: fat, water, and lye. The terms hot and cold simply refer to the methods of mixing the ingredients. In a Hot Process method you mix the ingredients together, and then you put them in a pot in the oven. Most people prefer the Cold Process method.

### **Lye or Sodium Hydroxide**

This is the most crucial ingredient in the soap making process. Without lye there can be no soap. Lye is a very dangerous ingredient and you must handle it with caution. You have to wear gloves and glasses. Lye will burn. You are going to be mixing the lye crystals with the water and that water will become harsh. You never want to touch the water with your bare skin. Always use a plastic or stainless steel container to mix the water and lye crystals.

Lye should always be added to water. You never want to pour water into lye. That can be dangerous. Think of it like adding water to oil. You would never put water into a pot of hot oil because it would cause a fire. Likewise, you want to add the lye flakes into the container of water, not the other way around.

It is also important to be in a well-ventilated space. Lye causes harsh fumes. Some soap makers will use a mask. Others prefer to work in a large workroom that has windows and fresh air.

### **Water**

Some people recommend using only distilled water. This is because it has no minerals or impurities. You don't have to use distilled water if you can't find it. Some people even substitute milk for water when they make milk soaps. However, if you do decide to use a different liquid there are separate precautions. For instance, milk usually needs to be brought down to a very cold temperature. It is easier to use water. Also, classic soap recipes all call for water. That is why almost all soap makers use water.

### **Oil**

After the water and lye are mixed together you will add in the oil. You can choose any oil you want. Many people like olive oil. There are also people who make soap using coconut oil. Some people use Crisco. You could even use rendered bacon fat. The oil is going to transform when it is mixed with the lye water. It gets very hot and then starts to get thick.

If you want, you can mix the different oils together. Some people like to mix coconut and olive oil. Other people use exotic oils like coffee bean oil. Different oils have their own unique properties. Olive oil is known to make a very smooth and creamy soap. Coconut oil makes lots of bubbles.

If you are going to mix different oils together make sure that you have researched their different properties. Some oils work better together than others. It is very common to see people mix olive oil and coconut oil, for example.

### **Fragrance**

If you want to add a fragrance to your soap, then you have two options: Fragrance oil or Essential oil. These are the two different categories that liquid scents for soaps fall under. Fragrance oil is synthetic oil. It is chemically created to create a smell that is similar to a real life object. For instance, if you wanted to have a soap smell like apple pie then you would have to use fragrance oil. There is no way to add a real apple pie to soap.

Essential oils are natural. You can only get essential oils for certain scents. Some of the more popular ones are lavender, lemon, lime, and bergamot. These are usually more expensive than the synthetic oils, but people tend to prefer them because they are natural and also have a stronger smell.

## CHAPTER 4- WHAT ARE 5 GREAT SOAP MAKING RECIPES?

Before commercial soap was available, people made their own soap to clean their clothing, their homes and themselves. Although it is no longer necessary to make soap at home, it is a craft that many people enjoy. Making soap is much easier these days since it is possible to buy lye already made in the form of pellets, flakes or grains. However, lye should be handled with care since it can burn the skin and eyes. Soap making that involves using lye should also be done in a well ventilated area because even the fumes can be irritating.

There are several options for making soap at home including the simple cold process method. This procedure is much safer than the standard hot process method that requires a mixture of lye and water to be mixed with various types of fat. Hot process soap can be made in a crock pot or the oven and then poured into molds where it cures faster than cold process soap.

Homemade soap does not contain the potentially harmful chemicals found in most commercial soap, so people with sensitive skin or allergies find relief from the itching and rash they may experience after using store bought soap. Although it takes some time, effort and knowledge, making soap at home is very economical. A large batch can be made for much less than buying bars of readymade soap and the leftover scraps can be saved and added to the next batch. There are some great recipes for different types of soap that are simple enough for nearly anyone to do.

Laundry soap probably accounts for the largest volume of soap used in any modern home. The cost of laundry soap is also a considerable expense, so using the following recipe to make homemade laundry soap can greatly reduce the cost of clean clothing and linens. This simple recipe makes enough laundry detergent to wash 52 loads at the approximate cost of .0225 cents per load. You will need 3 gallons of water, 1 cup washing soda, 1/2 cup Borax and one bar of soap. Heat 4 cups of water to boiling while using a grater to shred the bar of soap.

Once the water is boiling, add small amounts of the shredded soap bar and stir the mixture until the soap is dissolved. Add 3 gallons of water to a five gallon bucket along with the Borax, washing soda and soap solution. Cover the bucket and allow it to sit for 24 hours before stirring it up. Use 1 cup of the finished soap for each load of laundry. It will clean as well as popular commercial laundry detergents with added bleach alternative.

Basic 4-oil soap is very useful as hand soap, bath soap and a facial cleansing soap. The recipe is simple and fragrance can be added for a pleasant scent. The process can be completed in just one hour, but since the recipe does use lye, children should not be present and precautions should be taken to prevent the lye from burning skin and eyes. The ingredients needed are 6.5 ounces each of palm oil and coconut oil, 7.5 ounces olive oil, 1.3 ounces of castor oil, 3.1 ounces of lye, 8 ounces of water and 1

ounce of fragrance or essential oil.

Mix the water and lye together and heat the solution until the lye is dissolved then set it aside to cool. Melt the solid oils and combine with the liquid oils, and after both mixtures measure about 110 degrees gradually add the lye mixture to the oil mixture. Use a stick blender to mix between additions, adding the fragrance as the final ingredient. When the mixture is thoroughly blended, pour into molds and let it sit from 12 to 24 hours. Remove the soap from the molds and cut into the desired shapes before curing from 2 to 4 weeks.

Every mother knows only the gentlest soap should be used on a baby's delicate and sensitive skin. This recipe for baby soap includes no fragrance and a high percentage of fat to gently clean a child's skin. The ingredient list includes 48.75 ounces of olive oil, 4.25 ounces of castor oil, 20 ounces of distilled water and 6.578 ounces of lye. The olive oil can be infused with chamomile to provide a pleasant and soothing scent to the baby soap.

Dissolve the lye in the water by heating it in a well ventilated area. Set the mixture aside to cool down to 100 degrees while combining the oils and heating to the same approximate temperature as the lye and water mixture. Slowly combine the two mixtures and stir until the color and texture are even. Next, mix with a stick blender until the liquid soap thickens to the consistency of pudding. Pour the soap into a mold and allow let it sit for 2 days. The high fat content of baby soap means it will take longer to fully cure.

One very simple method of making bar soap is by saving leftover slivers until there are enough to melt down and re-mold. Although this soap is not really homemade, it is very economical to make.

A very easy way to create soap at home is by purchasing natural melt soap blocks made of 100 percent vegetable glycerin. Melt the blocks and add fragrance and colorants before molding to create beautiful soaps for the home and for gifting.

## CHAPTER 5- HOW TO MAKE FRAGRANCES AT HOME?

If you love wearing a variety of fragrances but don't love paying a fortune for expensive perfumes, one fantastic idea is to start making your own versions at home. It may take a little more time and effort than just picking up a bottle from the store, but it can save you money and result in an individualized product that perfectly suits your tastes and style. Plus, homemade fragrances are a wonderful gift idea for birthdays and the holiday season. Gather your ingredients, outlined below, and then follow these instructions in order to create fabulous fragrances right in the comfort of your own home.



### **What You Will Need Before You Begin**

Before you start even the very first step of making a fragrance, make sure that you have all the items you will need with you in one place. What you don't want is to have to leave the process in order to get a bottle, or some aluminum foil. Start by gathering the following items, which you can tailor to meet your specific fragrance needs if necessary.

- High-percentage alcohol like vodka
- Your choice of essential oils or extracts
- Glycerin
- Empty glass bottles to store the finished fragrances
- Spring or filtered water
- Measuring spoons and cups
- A small plastic funnel
- Glass jar with lid for mixing
- Aluminum foil

### **Clean and Sterilize Empty Fragrance Bottles**

The first step in making your own fragrance at home is preparing the bottles that will store the finished product. Many people choose to reuse glass vials or small bottles, and this can be a great way to recycle as well as save money on new bottles.

However, it is vital that the bottles are completely clean before they are used. If you have a dishwasher, place the bottles inside and put it on the hottest cycle possible to ensure that it is completely disinfected. Be sure that the bottles or vials are also totally dry before you begin.

### **Prepare the Mixing Area**

The fun part starts now, but you want to make sure that you have a clear space to work in before you open up any liquids. Remember that the items being used, including alcohol and essential oils, are very potent. Spilling them on furniture or the carpet could result in some stains as well as unpleasant odors, which means that clearing up first is vital. Many fragrance makers also lay down a sheet of newspaper wherever they plan to work in order to make cleaning up even easier.

### **Start Mixing Together Your Ingredients**

In a glass jar specifically used for mixing, you will start adding all of the ingredients for your personalized fragrance. The first ingredient should be one quarter of a cup of your strong alcohol, ideally clear vodka with a high alcoholic proof. Next up is adding the actual scent to the mix. For a batch this size, you will typically use 25 droplets of fragrance. This number should be relatively consistent whether you are using an extract or an essential oil.

However, you don't have to stick with 25 drops of the same scent. Mix things up, like vanilla and orange, for a fragrance that fits the season, your style or your personal preferences. Remember that 25 drops is a guideline, and it can differ depending on factors like the size of your dropper and the strength of the alcohol. Put in about 20 drops, swirl the liquid and then smell. From there, add one drop at a time to ensure that it doesn't get to be too overpowering.

### **Seal the Glass Jar and Let the Fragrance Settle**

This step is often skipped over by individuals in a rush to try out their fragrance, but it is important not to overlook the settling process. It takes time for the full scent of the fragrance to develop, but the result will be a much more upscale, attractive scent. To let the fragrance age properly, seal the lid of the glass jar and then let it sit out of the sun in a cool spot indoors.

The minimum waiting period is 48 hours, but if you are not in a rush it is better to wait a full 10 days to open up the jar. When you do give it a quick swirl and see how the scent has developed. You can still tweak it by adding more drops of oil at this point, but you can't dilute it further with alcohol, or you risk ruining the fragrance entirely.

### **The Final Transformation to Perfume**

The mixture you should have at this point will be very strong, and it shouldn't be placed directly on the body. You need to dilute, not with alcohol, but with roughly three teaspoons of water. Glycerin is the final item, and it takes just four to six drops to seal in the fragrance and preserve the sweet smell for months to come. From here, all

you need to do is funnel the liquid into your choice of bottles. Label them with the scent, and then you're done!

Making your own fragrance from home is a lot easier than many people expect. The process can take up to two weeks to finish, but the actual hands-on time is minimal. Plus, these fragrances are an affordable alternative to store-bought versions.

## CHAPTER 6- TEN TIPS ON MAKING SOAPS

Making your own soap has many benefits such as being able to blend scents that you like and saving money. It can be a bit tricky and messy so it is a good idea to know just what you are doing before you start. Here are a few tips to help make the soap making process go as smoothly as possible:

### **Use a Dedicated Space**

If it is at all possible it is best to have a dedicated work area for making soap. There is a chance that it could get a bit messy and having somewhere special that you do the work will ensure that the soap, and materials for making it, do not get all over places that it does not belong. If you are not able to dedicate an area to soap making make sure that you remove any unnecessary items from the area. This will give you more room to work as well as keeping things clean. The materials used for making soap should also be stored together so that you do not have to search for them the next time you need to make some.

### **Use Wholesalers If Possible**

When you buy your soap making materials from a wholesaler you will probably spend a bit more in the beginning, because you may have to buy more than you normally would, but you will save in the long run. A great place to start your search for a wholesaler would be on the Internet with sites like EBay.

### **Allow Your Soap Plenty of Time to Dry**

Handmade soaps should be allowed at least three weeks to dry to ensure that you will get the most life out of your product. When soap is not allowed enough time to dry it will not last as long as it should. Once you start using your homemade soap, a soap dish with holes in the bottom will allow your soap to dry in between uses.



### **Don't Let Layered Soaps Dry Completely Between Layers**

If you allow a layered soap to dry before you add the next layer there is a good chance that after just a few uses to bar of soap will fall apart. When you allow it to set but not dry completely, the layers will bind together better. This will reduce the chance of the layers separating later, which is the largest problem with layered soaps.

### **Give Your Soap a Personal Touch**

If you are going to make your own soap why not let people know it. With items like cookie cutters or stamps you can put your own personal design on your soap. This is also a good idea if you plan to sell your soap, then yours will have its own uniqueness. You can also use many different sizes and styles of molds. If you want to get creative, hit the sand toy aisle at the local store. Here you will find shells and many other different toys that will make molds.

### **Experiment with Different Ingredients**

There are many things that can make your soap smell nice but there are also many things that can add health benefits to you soaps. A very common mixture is lavender and chamomile. This combination smells great together but this also has a calming effect. The worst that can happen is that you mix something that just does not work and you have to start over. When you experiment you could end up making your next favorite soap by mistake.

### **Be Extremely Careful**

Melted soap can be very hot so it is very important to wear protective gear while you are working with it. Safety glasses and gloves are never a bad idea, and you should never wear loose fitting clothing that could catch on something causing a spill. Make sure that all pets and children are out of the area while you are making soap so that they do not get burned in case of an accidental spill.

### **Dealing with Soap Stuck in the Mold**

If you are having troubles with your soaps getting stuck in the molds that you are using there are two things that you could try. It could be that the mixture you are using is just not exact and you can try changing it a bit. The other thing that you can do is to just run a bit of warm water on the back side of the mold; this should allow the soap to pop right out.

### **Increase Hardness and Lather**

Adding just a bit of salt to your mixture will give you a harder bar of soap which will mean a soap that lasts a bit longer. If your soap is lacking in the lather department there are two things that you can try. First you can add a bit of sugar about one teaspoon per pound of oil. You would want to add either of these to the water just before you add the lye to allow it to work properly.

### **Use a Good Recipe**

There are many different recipes out there for making soap and finding the