

KELLY CABLE

*the* NATURAL

# SOAPMAKING

BOOK *for* BEGINNERS



**DIY SOAPS**  
USING ALL-NATURAL  
HERBS, SPICES &  
ESSENTIAL OILS



*the* NATURAL  

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**SOAPMAKING**  

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Do-It-Yourself Soaps Using All-Natural Herbs,  
Spices, and Essential Oils

KELLY CABLE

PHOTOGRAPHY BY PAIGE GREEN

  
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*To Josiah, protector of the weak and proof that amazing athletic skills are passed down  
through moms*

*Noah, my super smart inventor who would really like to see a few things blow up*

*Lydia, who was created to create something beautiful*

*Matthew, my love*





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## *Introduction*

Most people who want to start living a healthier life begin with the ingredients in their food. That's what I did. But it wasn't long before I was reading the labels on shampoos, lotions, and soaps, too. The more I investigated, the more I wanted to find products with simple, natural ingredients.

It wasn't until I met Kathy from The Kefir Chicks that I realized that I could make my own as well, not to mention shampoo bars, shaving bars, and laundry bars. The problem was I had no idea where to start. The few books that I found were way too advanced, focusing on complicated techniques with little background information. After some time, I managed to slowly piece together information from a number of different websites and books until I was ready to give my crazy soapmaking idea a try.

One thing I did understand at this early stage was that almost every botched batch of soap can be fixed. That's right! Since I was on an extremely tight budget, this was encouraging and helped me relax and get excited about the possibilities. I didn't have any soap molds, of course, and I didn't want to purchase one (remember: tight budget). Instead, I checked every glass and plastic container in my house for one that had square corners and sides. Surprisingly, most containers in my home have curved edges. I ended up going to a thrift store and finding a sturdy square hat box and a wooden planter that was narrow enough to be the perfect size.

My first batch of soap was a Castile soap—a soap made almost entirely of olive oil. Of course, I didn't know that Castile soaps are notorious for not reaching trace (the stage when the raw soap begins to thicken). As a result, I almost burned out my hand mixer before giving up and pouring it into my hatbox soap mold. I was shocked and happy to see that 24 hours later it was wonderfully hardened and ready to cut!

After making hundreds of soap batches, I have developed a deep love and appreciation for the art. All soapmakers develop their own specialties and styles that suit them. To those just beginning their soapmaking journeys, I always say that making soap is like baking a cake. If you can follow a recipe, then you can make soap. It seems complicated at first, but the more you do it, the better you get! You wouldn't start with an extremely advanced cake with many steps and specialty tools. You would want to start with a simple recipe and work up to that stage by having fun, learning new techniques, and improving your skill. The same goes for making soap.

My goal with this book is to demystify the soapmaking process. It is meant to be a comprehensive resource for entry-level soapmaking. Instead of having to piece together instructions and tips from different books and websites in order to learn the art of soapmaking, I'm bringing it all together for you in this one book. This is the book I would have wanted to have when I first started making soap.

In the following pages you will find extensive lessons and tutorials that will help you understand the full process of making your own soap. I'll cover all the basics of how and why, including what could go wrong and what you can do to fix the problem. Then I will get you started on more advanced techniques, like how to create swirls of natural color and add herbal infusions.

And remember: All these soap recipes are made with natural ingredients! I will not suggest the use of artificial dyes or fragrances. In fact, it's the opposite. I'll give you a lot of great ideas for coloring and scenting your soaps naturally. I am committed to using only healthy ingredients that nourish your body. In my eyes, it makes no sense to go to all the trouble of making your own soap and then turn around and add the kinds of toxic ingredients that many commercial manufacturers use. I hope you enjoy your first step into the soapmaking world, and I can't wait to guide you through the process.

## HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

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If you are new to soapmaking, the best way to begin is to familiarize yourself with the essentials. I will go over the basics in [part 1](#), including supplies, oils, additives, colorants and scents. I will guide you through everything you need to know about basic cold-process soapmaking.

After you've read through the basics, you can jump into [part 2](#). There I'll outline the cold-process techniques used in the recipes in this book, and provide tutorials to help put the skills you are learning into practice. Begin with the cold-process tutorial, which includes the perfect starter recipe for beginning soapmakers. From there, you'll find tutorials on decorative techniques including embossing, layering, and swirling to take your soaps to the next level.

[Part 3](#) covers basic recipes, specialty bars, creative bars, and seasonal recipes. Once you feel comfortable with the basic recipes, don't be afraid to dive into specialty bars and get creative. Everyone loves a seasonal soap bar! Finally, we will go over how to package your soap to protect it and show it off.

Use this book as both a learning tool and a reference book. There are key terms, problem-solving ideas, and information to help you understand more about the soapmaking process. It is all about having fun and being creative, so let's get started.



## *Your Soapmaking Primer*

[Part 1](#) is all about the basics. Each chapter will build on information that I have presented, breaking down the entire soapmaking process into pieces that are easy to understand and categorize.

In this section I will outline what soap is and what is happening scientifically when you combine your ingredients. We'll discuss the general soapmaking process, what supplies you will need, and the different properties that fats and oils will bring to your creations. I'll also provide many options for natural colors and scents so that you can keep your soaps natural and healthy while making them look and smell beautiful.

In other words, it's everything you need to get ready to make your first batch of soap. Not to mention, this will be a great resource for you to come back to for ideas once you've advanced in your soapmaking skills.



*chapter one*

# UNDERSTANDING NATURAL SOAPMAKING

Welcome to soapmaking! In this chapter we'll discuss the foundations of soapmaking. For example, what is soap? What makes natural soap different from the soaps you'll find in most stores? What are some of the benefits of soapmaking? I'll answer these questions and take you through some basics so that you can begin to break down the process into easy steps. I'll also define key terms that you will encounter as you dive into this fun and creative craft.

## GET EXCITED

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Soapmaking can be as creative as your imagination allows. I will help you start by sharing basic recipes and building your confidence until you are experimenting and creating soaps on your own. If you've always wanted to make goat milk and honey soap, then you're in luck. How about Castile soap, soap for sensitive skin, or soap for babies? I've included a lot of specialty soaps like shampoo bars, shaving bars, and soaps made with essential oils that are known to help calm allergies. I've even included camping soaps like a jewelweed soap to help prevent poison ivy and poison oak reactions and an insect-repelling soap with citronella and other essential oils that combine to make a pleasant aroma for you, but an effective deterrent for bugs.

Maybe you're interested in soap because you're creative and want to make beautiful soaps with layers, stripes, and swirls. I'll give you the techniques to make sure you are ready to explore your artistic side. Remember, even if I give you step-by-step instructions for natural coloring and scents, you can always mix and match ideas from other recipes. Scents and colors are easy to substitute. Oils are a bit trickier, needing some calculations, but I'll show you how to do substitutions so that you'll be making your own recipes by the time you are finished.

## WHAT IS SOAP?

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There's no better way to understand something than to make it, but without background knowledge you can sometimes feel a bit lost. Which is why I can't teach you how to make soap without first answering the fundamental question: What is soap?

Put simply, when lye water is added to oils, there is a chemical reaction called saponification. Just as your elementary school vinegar and baking soda volcano eruption demonstrated a chemical reaction when two ingredients came together to make something completely different, the saponification process is a chemical reaction between fatty acids (oils, butters, fats) and sodium hydroxide (lye) that makes something new: soap. Recipes are developed with the goal of using all the lye during saponification so that no lye remains in the final soap product.

People have been making soap for centuries. Farmers would use every part of their animals, including the fat, to make things like candles and soap. Later, certain regions became famous for their olive oil and laurel berry oil soaps. My grandmother used to make soap with her mother using potassium hydroxide, or what she called potash, by taking the ashes from the fire, mixing it with straw, and running water through it for a few weeks. This would create a strong enough liquid to react with the fats they had

saved to make a soft soap that they would scoop out of a tin and use on dishes, clothes, and even their bodies. Using these same age-old principles with a modern method, you'll soon be doing this kind of science in your own kitchen.

## THE BENEFITS OF FROM-SCRATCH SOAP

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Before you dive into any new project, it's helpful to understand the benefits of what the project will provide. When it comes to soapmaking, there are huge benefits to making your own from scratch.

### Knowing Your Ingredients

This is the most important benefit for me and my family. When you make your own soap from scratch, you know exactly what is going into it. You make the decisions on what is healthy for your skin and for the skin of those you love. No processing procedure or GRAS ingredients (ingredients that the government determines to be "generally recognized as safe" and thus do not need to be listed on a label) are getting into your soap because you are in full control.

Store-bought soap often contains artificial ingredients. Though there are a lot of toxic ingredients that I will not list here, most of them are used as artificial coloring, synthetic fragrances, and additives in specialty soaps. Those may look and smell pretty, but they are not natural and definitely not what I would consider healthy. Even homemade soapmakers may fall into the trap of using fragrance oils and pigment powders. In my opinion, why go to all the trouble of making something with wonderfully nourishing oils and then ruin it by adding toxic ingredients?

In this book you will not find any suggestions for fragrance oils or artificial pigments and additives. You do not have to compromise quality. Instead, you will have fewer problems and difficulties in making your soap because, more often than not, it is artificial ingredients that cause botched batches. You will be blown away by the beautiful colors and amazing scents that you can create without any unnatural ingredients. I am committed to providing you with the kinds of recipes and products that I would give to my own family.

### Health Benefits

Your skin is the largest organ on your body, and it is extremely absorbent. The products that you put on your skin affect your overall health. When you make soap from scratch, you not only know your ingredients but you control them. You can add essential oils for

aromatherapy benefits, as well as clays, charcoal, and herbs to address acne and other skin concerns.

## **Saving Money**

If you want to be healthy, buying premade organic and premium products can become really expensive. When you make your own, there is an initial cost to the ingredients, but once you have them on hand, you can make enough soap for family and friends and still have ingredients left over to make lotions, lip balms, and other bath and body products.

## **Self-Sustainability**

One of the reasons I started my company, Simple Life Mom, was because I wanted to learn how to make more of what we use on a daily basis. I value being able to have the choice to buy or make my own products. Soap, shampoo bars, shaving bars, laundry bars—these are all things that we use on an almost daily basis and that we can create ourselves.

## **Pride and Satisfaction**

There is something very exciting about making a beautiful batch of soap with your own hands. It'll get you hooked, in a good way. My first batches were made with makeshift molds, and the results were funky shapes and sizes. I still couldn't have been prouder. I was like a little girl making her first batch of cookies. I still feel the same way today.

## **Learning a Marketable Skill**

Many people today are searching for pure and natural bath and body products. Who knows? You could end up starting a very successful home business, just as I did.

# **THE BASICS**

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Soapmaking from scratch can seem confusing at first, but I like to break the process down into categories and simplified steps. The steps you see here are the same steps you will see in the recipes. An understanding of what is happening at the molecular level will also help you visualize each step and why it is necessary.

## **The Science**

For saponification, you need long-chain fatty acids (oils, butters, fats) and sodium hydroxide (lye). Every oil has a unique combination of three fatty acids attached to a glycerol. This is why each soap recipe calls for more than one oil: Each oil brings a different combination of fatty acids and reacts with the lye differently. A soap made from multiple oils will have multiple benefits—like moisturizing, conditioning, and cleansing. When the lye and fatty acids are mixed together, the fatty acids release glycerol molecules that bond with the lye. This chemical reaction creates soap (technically a salt). The glycerin releases when you use it and nourishes your skin.

## The Process

It's helpful to think of a soap recipe in three parts:

- 1. Oils and fats.** You will weigh the oils, fats, and waxes in your recipe, melt them together, and then let the mixture cool to around 110°F.
- 2. Lye water.** After measuring the lye and water separately, you will pour the lye into the water. Do this outside! Be sure to read the “Safety First” section in the next chapter and follow those steps carefully to have a safe soapmaking experience. Once combined, allow the mixture to cool to around 110°F.
- 3. Essential oils and other natural additives.** After everything is cooled to around 110°F, you will pour the lye water into the oils and blend until trace. Trace occurs when the soap mixture thickens enough that when you drizzle some over the top of your mixture with a spoon, you can see a trace, or trail. This is often when scents and colors are added, though sometimes colors are added to lye water or oils (I will cover that later).

All that's left to do at this point is pour your beautiful creation into a soap mold and insulate for 24 hours before taking it out, cutting it, and letting it cure. It's that simple! But don't worry—I'll go into a lot more detail in the following chapters.

### *Key Soapmaking Terms*

**COLD-PROCESS:** The process of making soap at room temperatures or slightly above. No heat needed besides melting the fats together. Makes a smooth, hard bar.

**FATTY ACIDS:** Carbon, oxygen, and hydrogen compounds in fats. Types referred to in soapmaking: linolenic, lauric, myristic, palmitic, stearic, oleic,

ricinoleic acids. Each one of these will provide different properties to your soaps.

**GEL PHASE:** When the saponification begins, the soap will heat slightly and can enter a gel stage, when the entire bar becomes darker and almost translucent. After this stage is complete, the mixture will lighten in color and harden.

**HOT-PROCESS:** The process of heating soap over low heat. Soap is ready to use immediately after cooling, but will result in a different texture than what the cold-process provides.

**LARD:** Fat rendered from a pig.

**POTASSIUM HYDROXIDE (KOH):** This is also called potash and is used to make softer soaps. Liquid soaps often use potassium hydroxide as a base.

**SAP VALUE:** Every fat and oil has a different SAP value, the number of milligrams of sodium hydroxide or potassium hydroxide required to saponify one gram of that particular type of fat or oil.

**SAPONIFICATION:** The chemical reaction that occurs when lye, water, and oils are combined. Fatty acids release the glycerol molecule and bond with the lye. This chemical reaction creates soap (technically a salt) and releases glycerin to nourish your skin.

**SOAP ASH:** A white residue that can form on the surface of soap. It's hard to say why this occurs, because it doesn't seem to be consistent, but it is more likely to form when soap doesn't fully reach the gel stage or is cooled too quickly.

**SODIUM HYDROXIDE (NaOH):** The chemical name for lye, this is an alkali (base) used to react with fats and create soap.

**SUPERFATTING:** The process of using less lye so that more fats are left over after the saponification process (also known as lye discounting).

**TALLOW:** Fat rendered from cattle or sheep.

**TRACE:** The phase when soap is ready to pour. It thickens enough to leave a slight trace or trail when a spoonful is dribbled over the surface.



Gathering the proper equipment is the first step in making your own soap. There are a number of items that you may already have in your kitchen, like bowls, pots, large spoons, and a scale. Other items like soap molds and lye can be found at your local hardware or craft store, thrift stores, or online (see [Resources and Supplies here](#) ). I'll give you details concerning what you need so you can make the best decision for your soapmaking project, whether you are looking to be frugal or to make a more expensive creation. Next, we will discuss how to use lye safely so that you are knowledgeable and confident.

## REQUIRED SAFETY EQUIPMENT

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First things first: Cold-process soapmaking requires working with lye, so it's essential to take the correct safety precautions. Lye is a base, meaning it reacts to and neutralizes acids. And just like many household cleaners that are bases (like ammonia), if used properly, it shouldn't be something to be afraid of.

The first tip I have is one of the most important: Mix outside, because when lye is poured into water, it produces fumes for about a minute. Do not breathe the fumes!

Here is a list of required safety equipment you'll need when working with lye:

**PROTECTIVE EYEWEAR:** Safety glasses ensure that your eyes will be protected from any accidental splashes that may occur when pouring or mixing. They can be purchased at hardware stores and craft shops for only a few dollars.

**GLOVES:** Always wear gloves when soapmaking. Your hands are closest to the lye when pouring and mixing and should be protected. Any thin disposable gloves or thicker reusable gloves will work.

**OLD CLOTHES THAT COVER EXPOSED SKIN:** In addition to your hands, be sure to cover all skin that could be injured, such as your forearms. Lye can bleach fabric, so I always wear an old long-sleeve shirt.

**SAFETY MASK:** Hardware stores have a variety of safety masks that cover your mouth and can be reused. Many people wear a mask (and gloves) when cleaning their bathrooms, it's not uncommon to have these items on hand.

## ESSENTIAL EQUIPMENT

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A lot of the equipment you will need can be found around your kitchen. When I first started, the only thing I needed to purchase was a very large, cheap stainless steel pot. As you make more soap, you may want to purchase more items like special slicing tools, molds, or stampers. As you begin to make your own soap, it's good to have your own items dedicated to soapmaking.

### Large Stainless Steel Pot

Lye reacts to metals like aluminum and iron, so you need to use stainless steel. Use a large enough pot that mixing will not cause it to splash out.

## Hand Mixer or Stick Blender

A hand mixer works great to emulsify the oils with the lye water, but a stick blender (also known as an immersion blender) will bring your soap to trace a lot faster and is easier to get down into the pot.

## Large Stainless Steel Spoon

Use a large stainless steel spoon to stir the fats and oils as they melt and to test whether the soap has come to trace.

## Glass or Plastic Bowls

I use both. I prefer to use a plastic bowl or storage container for lye water, because plastic cools a lot faster than glass. I use my regular large glass mixing bowls for weighing all the fats, oils, and waxes.



## Kitchen Scale

It's important to have a good digital kitchen scale with a "tare" button that resets the weight to zero after you place a bowl on the scale and that measures ounces to at least tenths (one digit after the decimal point). This allows you to weigh items such as 2.5 ounces.

## Rubber or Plastic Spatula

A medium-size spatula is handy for scraping soap out of the pot and making swirls of color.

## Thermometer

A thermometer is necessary for making sure the oils and lye water are at the ideal temperatures for creating an emulsion and for the saponification process to occur. You can use a glass candy thermometer (found in supermarkets and craft stores), but I prefer a good digital thermometer.

## Soap Mold

Soap molds are sold by capacity in pounds or by how many individual bars of soap they will make. Purchase a mold that can hold 3 pounds (12 bars) of soap or find a sturdy box that can be converted into a soap mold.

Soap molds come in all shapes, sizes, and materials. Every soapmaker has a favorite. Here's a description of the different types to help you find yours:

**LOAF MOLDS:** These are the most common type. They are long and rectangular, typically with an open top. A good strong loaf mold is made from wood, but many manufacturers make them out of silicone. Wooden loaf molds are my favorite because they are sturdy. I like the shape they give my soaps, and I have plastic dividers so that I don't have to struggle to achieve uniform sizes and weights.



**LOG MOLDS:** These molds are rounded like the bottom of a log. You can find them shaped as large rectangles or individual cups. After your soap hardens, it will be rounded on one side and flat on the other.

**SILICON MOLDS:** Soft silicone molds are very convenient for making specialty shapes, such as flowers, leaves, or even cartoon characters. (Beware of hard plastic molds, as they can be very difficult to remove soap from without destroying the shape.) Silicone molds also don't need any lining. I'm not big on using plastics, but the temperatures stay so low that there is no danger in using them. However, they do take longer for the soap to cure before removing; instead of 24 hours, you often need to wait 48 to 72 hours because air is not in contact with the soap. You also have to slowly peel away the silicone from the soap.

**DIY MOLDS:** You can also make molds from items around your home. Just make sure that you don't mind if it gets ruined by oils and that your soap can be removed easily. Glass does not work well. People say you can put it in the freezer and the soap will release, but I've tried this technique a few times and it has never worked. Instead, choose cardboard boxes or plastic that you can bend or tear. My friend likes to use round potato chip containers and modified cereal boxes.

There are instructions online for how to build molds of different sizes from wood or PVC pipe. Again, just make sure you have a clear plan for removing the soap, whether

that means installing hinges or having sides that unscrew.

## Parchment or Waxed Paper

If you are not using a silicone soap mold, you will need to line your mold to make sure the soap doesn't stick. Lining can easily be done with parchment or waxed paper. I used to tape the parchment paper in place before I learned the simple trick of turning the paper over so that it curls down instead of up. You don't want your parchment paper moving when you're pouring soap because it will make a mess, so if it's not lying flat, go ahead and add a few strips of tape.

## INGREDIENTS

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It's important to understand your ingredients before you start. Every fat, oil, natural additive, and essential oil brings something different to a soap recipe. The type of vitamins and amount of glycerin that is released in order to nourish our skin or hair varies and is based on the ingredients. The next two chapters in this book are dedicated to a more detailed profile of ingredients, such as base oils, essential oils, and natural colorants. Right now, I want to give you a basic understanding of the ingredients that you will use.

## Lye

Lye is necessary to turn the oil mixture into a soap. The lye used in each of the recipes in this book is sodium hydroxide (NaOH), not potassium hydroxide (KOH), which makes a much softer soap. I recommend buying sodium hydroxide specifically formulated for soapmaking to ensure that it is filtered, with no debris. I once bought lye that had small pebbles in it and a mysterious purple dye that did not show up until the lye was poured into the water. You can find lye at your local hardware store in the plumbing section as well. Just make sure it is 100 percent sodium hydroxide beads or crystals (not liquid), with no other additives.

### *Working with Lye*

The best way to work with lye is to not touch it directly. Always wear gloves, safety glasses, and a long-sleeve shirt so that it doesn't make contact with your skin or hurt your eyes. Always go outside, even during winter months, and wear a mask when pouring the lye crystals into the bowl of water,

because it will give off a toxic gas for about a minute. After that it is safe to take inside.

If you accidentally get a little lye on your skin while stirring, you will not feel it immediately. You'll feel an itch a minute or two later as it starts to burn your skin. Wash the area with soap and water immediately. Remember, once the saponification process is finished, molecularly no lye will remain in your soap. Until then, treat it with the proper safety precautions.

## Water

Water is used in a soap recipe to dissolve the lye crystals so that they are prepped and ready to react with the oil molecules during saponification. Water also helps control the rate at which the recipe comes to trace or thickens. The standard amount of water used in a recipe is calculated at the rate of 30 to 38 percent of the oils.

## Base Oils

Every recipe is built around a set of base oils. These can be composed of animal fats, vegetable oils, or waxes. The oils chosen for a recipe are very important. Each oil is made up of a different combination of fatty acids, vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants. Some oils help create a long-lasting hard bar, while others bring the cleansing properties that we all want in soap. Oils can determine whether you have large or small bubbles, and whether your soap is conditioning to the skin. In the next chapter I'll go into these oils in detail. For now, understand that soap recipes usually have at least three different types of fats or oils because they come together to give the soap the nourishing properties desired. On the other hand, a laundry soap bar will have only one or two oils because the primary purpose of a laundry bar is to wash clothes, not add oils or make giant bubbles.

What about using animal fats? For those of us who raise and eat animals, being able to use all parts of the animal, even the fat, is a bonus. No one wants to be wasteful. Fats from healthy, grass-fed animals make for an extremely nourishing, hard bar. I am definitely partial to a good soap bar with tallow. At the same time, I understand and respect those who do not want to use animal fats in soap. I've created a huge variety of recipes to choose from, enough for anyone to find a favorite go-to recipe to build off and be creative.

Some examples of fats, butters, and oils you will find in this book are olive, coconut, castor, grapeseed, avocado, and sweet almond oils; shea butter, cocoa butter; tallow, and lard. These days you can find a lot of these oils in grocery stores and specialty

food stores. Sometimes you need to look around and do some research to determine whether they are the high quality that you need. You can also find them online in stores like Amazon.com, Bulk Apothecary, Etsy, Mountain Rose Herbs, Starwest Botanicals, Soaper's Choice, and Thrive Market. Some of these oils can also be purchased in local vitamin shops if you don't want to shop online. I have a list of my favorite online shops on my website, [SimpleLifeMom.com](http://SimpleLifeMom.com).

## Natural Additives

Once you have lye, water, and base oils, you really could stop there. But I expect one of the reasons you want to make your own soaps is so that you can create high-quality, nourishing bars that look and smell wonderful! That's where natural additives come in.

Natural additives can be used for exfoliation, such as oats, coffee grounds, salt, or loofahs. Others add nourishment to the skin through antioxidants and vitamins, or moisturizing properties through ingredients like honey, avocado, goat milk, coconut milk, activated charcoal powder, aloe, and clay. Honey also adds to the bubbiness of a soap bar.

Herbs can also be added for exfoliation and nutritive properties. I like to use peppermint leaves and various teas like comfrey, chamomile, and green tea. The tea water, leaves, or both can be used. Rose petals, lavender, and calendula flowers are beautiful on top of soaps, making pretty decorative bars. When it comes to herbs and soap, the options are endless.

## Natural Colorants

Going to all the trouble to make a healthy soap bar with nourishing oils and then ruining it with food colorings and other unhealthy dyes seems like a big waste of time and resources. I'm very happy to say that natural soapmakers have beautiful rich tones to choose from.

Black and gray can be made with activated charcoal and brown from coffee and cocoa powder. Green can be made with spirulina, comfrey leaf, and parsley leaf. Orange comes from annatto, pumpkin purée, and clays. Pink and red come from rose clay and madder root. Yellow comes from annatto and turmeric. Blue can be made with woad and indigo. It's a whole rainbow of colors!

These clays, powders, seeds, or leaves are either added to the lye water, added at trace, or added to the oils through an oil infusion that is made ahead of time. In [chapter 4](#) I've provided you with step-by-step instructions and even a handy chart that lists the color, when it's added, and a general idea of how much to add.

Most of these natural colorants can be found easily online, and coffee, teas, and cocoa powder may be found in your local grocery store as well. Some ingredients are easy to find one year and harder the next, depending on supply and demand. Woad is one of those ingredients, though it can be substituted, with changes to your recipes, with indigo, which I like to purchase from Starwest Botanicals for purity. Other natural colorant herbs, seeds, and clays can be found at Mountain Rose Herbs, Etsy, and Amazon.com.

## **Essential Oils and Natural Resins**

Essential oils and natural resins are used to impart a natural scent to soaps, as well as unique nutritive properties. Only use essential oils that are third-party tested and approved. Other labels such as pure, therapeutic, and natural are not regulated. Those claims may or may not be true.

There are over 100 essential oils that you may recognize. You probably don't have reason to stock that many in your cupboard, though. I've aimed to keep the oils used in these recipes to a manageable list that ranges from woody, floral, and oriental to citrus, fresh, and green. Some of the essential oils you will see are lavender, orange, cedarwood, lemongrass, cinnamon, frankincense, rosemary, grapefruit, geranium, patchouli, ylang-ylang, peppermint, and tea tree. Many of these can be found in supplement and vitamin stores or pharmacies, but for the most variety look online at Mountain Rose Herbs, Starwest Botanicals, or doTerra.



*chapter three*

**BASE CARRIER OILS**

In this chapter, we will review the different types of fats and oils that are used to make soap. The four major kinds of fats and oils that we will use are tallow, lard, olive oil, and coconut oil. When they are combined, they create hard bars that can be either cleansing, bubbly, creamy, or conditioning, or some combination of all four. After deciding on one or all of these bases, you will then add other oils to ensure that your bar is exactly how you want it.

For example, if you want to make an olive oil soap, you will need to use a harder oil along with it or else you will wind up with a very soft soap. If you use only coconut oil in your mixture, your skin may become dry. I will help you understand how you can combine your oils to make wonderfully nourishing soap bars. There are some oils you will not see listed below. Some of them were omitted because they are genetically modified or not ethically grown and processed. Others, like rice bran oil, can sometimes cause difficulties when used for soapmaking. Since I want you to have successful experiences, I've chosen oils that are easy to use and accessible.

In the following list you will see that I give the SAP value for each oil. You can use the SAP value to determine how many ounces of lye are needed to convert 1 ounce of oil into soap, but rest assured that online lye calculators will also do the job for you. Note that the SAP value I give you is for sodium hydroxide, not potassium hydroxide.

### *Using SAP Value*

In order to determine how much lye to use, multiply the SAP value of the oil you are using by the amount. For instance, if I am using 6 ounces of apricot kernel oil (SAP value: 0.139) in my recipe, I need to multiply  $0.139 \times 6 = 0.834$ . That means that I need 0.834 ounce of lye to saponify the oil. I make this calculation for each of the oils in my recipe. Remember, every oil is different and therefore needs a different amount of lye.

Once I've calculated the amount of lye needed, I still need to take away at least 5 percent of the lye so that I have oils leftover in my soap for nourishment. We call this superfatting, or lye discounting. The traditional lye discount used is 38 percent of the oil in the recipe. For example, a recipe with 34 ounces of oil will need 12.92 ounces of water ( $34 \times 0.38 = 12.92$ ).

But you don't have to do all this work yourself every time you want to substitute an oil or create a new recipe! As I mentioned, there are some wonderful lye calculators online that will do the math for you. My favorite is on [SoapCalc.net](http://SoapCalc.net).

## **Apricot Kernel Oil**

SAP VALUE: 0.139

§

**Good for:** Highly Conditioning, Moisturizing, Stable Creamy Lather

Apricot kernel oil is a golden cold-pressed carrier oil that has a light, nutty scent. It is high in oleic and linoleic acids, and vitamins A, E, and C, making it very moisturizing and conditioning to the skin. In soapmaking, it is important to keep apricot kernel oil to 10 percent or less or it will make soap too soft.

## Argan Oil

SAP VALUE: 0.136

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**Good for:** Moisturizing, Conditioning, Adding Hardness, Stable Rich Lather

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Argan oil is cold-pressed from the kernel of the Moroccan argan tree. It is a lightweight golden oil that is high in antioxidants and vitamins A and E. It is a more expensive oil, but the properties make this a great soap for aging skin.

## Avocado Oil

SAP VALUE: 0.133

\$

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**Good for:** Medium Creamy Lather, Conditioning

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Avocado oil has a light yellow-green tint and is slightly thicker than many carrier oils. It is high in vitamins A, B, D, and E as well as oleic and palmitoleic acids and is considered a healing and moisturizing oil for dry and mature skin.

## Babassu Oil

SAP VALUE: 0.175

\$

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**Good for:** High Lather, Cleansing, Adding Hardness

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Babassu is a great substitute for coconut oil for those with coconut allergies. Its cleansing ability in soap is high, and it's gentler than coconut oil. It is rich in vitamin E, phytosterols, and other antioxidants. Babassu also speeds soap to trace.

## Beeswax

SAP VALUE: 0.067

\$

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**Good for:** Adding Hardness

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Beeswax is primarily used to harden soap bars when other oils that are desired may leave the soap softer than preferred. Also, it does not fully saponify, leaving properties in the soap to help naturally moisturize the skin and maintain that moisture for dry or itchy skin. It's a great addition for those with sensitive skin.

## Castor Oil

SAP VALUE: 0.128

⌘

**Good for:** High Stable Bubbles, Creamy Lather, Moisturizing, Conditioning

Castor oil is a thick, yellow oil cold-pressed from beans from the castor bush. It is about 90 percent ricinoleic acid, a fatty acid that is traditionally used to treat skin rashes and infections. Combined with honey, castor oil gives an amazing lather, which is why I like to use it in shampoo bars. Castor oil also helps speed soap to trace.

## Cocoa Butter

SAP VALUE: 0.138

⌘⌘

**Good for:** Stable Lather, Hard Bar, Conditioning, Moisturizing

Cocoa butter is made from the roasted seeds of the cacao tree. Like many other carrier oils and butters, it is high in vitamin E and other antioxidants. If it is pure, it has a cocoa scent and is hard, not creamy, when at room temperature. Cocoa butter makes a hard soap bar and is an excellent moisturizer. Like beeswax, it doesn't fully saponify and has properties that help hold moisture in the skin.

## Coconut Oil

SAP VALUE: 0.183

⌘

**Good for:** High Lather, High Bubbles, Cleansing, Hard Bar

Coconut oil is a great ingredient to create a hard, bubbly, cleansing soap bar. Solid at temperatures below 76°F, nondeodorized coconut oil has a strong coconut scent that only slightly remains in unscented soap. It can be drying to the skin if used in excess of 45 percent of the oils in the recipe, with the exception of salt soaps, due to high superfatting.

## Grapeseed Oil

SAP VALUE: 0.130

⌘

**Good for:** Medium Creamy, Stable Lather, High Conditioning

Grapeseed oil is a lightweight, greenish-yellow oil that is high in linoleic acid, omega-6 fatty acids, and antioxidants. As a mild astringent, it's great for acne. Grapeseed oil creates a creamy lather and is highly conditioning to the skin and hair.

## Hazelnut Oil

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SAP VALUE: 0.136

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**Good for:** Stable Medium Lather, Moisturizing, Cleansing

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Hazelnut oil is a light, amber-colored oil with a nutty scent when unrefined. It is an all-around great oil for soapmaking because it creates a stable lather with medium-size bubbles. It is also cleansing and moisturizing. It slightly slows soap coming to trace and makes a softer soap unless used in low amounts. Hazelnut oil is high in oleic acid, vitamins, and minerals.

## Hemp Seed Oil

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SAP VALUE: 0.138

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**Good for:** Medium/Low Lather, High Conditioning

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Hemp seed oil makes a silky-feeling bar that has a good lather and is highly conditioning. It is high in vitamins A and E but does not last as long as other oils in soap before oxidizing. Plan to use your soap within 6 months rather than storing it for a long period, or use a lower superfat percentage like 5 percent if you add hemp seed oil to your recipe.

## Jjoba Oil

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SAP VALUE: 0.069

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**Good for:** Stable Strong Lather, Conditioning

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Jjoba oil is actually a wax cold-pressed from the beans of the jjoba shrub. It is very stable liquid, making it a great oil in long-term soaps and extracts. It creates a beautiful, strong lather and is conditioning to skin and hair. It does not fully saponify, creating a hydrating barrier to protect and moisturize. Jjoba can actually destroy lather when used in high amounts. I keep it below 15 percent of oils in recipes.



*Gentle Baby Soap, [here](#)*

## Lard

SAP VALUE: 0.141

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**Good for:** Stable Creamy Lather, Conditioning, Hard Bar

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Lard is the rendered fat from a pig. It makes a wonderfully hard and long-lasting bar with a stable, creamy lather. It also helps soap come to trace faster. Always choose lard from a free-range, natural source. You can find it at a health food grocery store and render it yourself by cooking it down and straining.

## Macadamia Nut Oil

SAP VALUE: 0.139

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**Good for:** Conditioning, Hard Bar, Creamy Lather

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Macadamia nut oil closely resembles sebum, the oil our skin naturally produces, making it great for all skin types. It is a light oil with a slight nutty scent. It is high in antioxidants and is composed of almost 60 percent oleic acid, with omega-3 and omega-6 fatty acids. This makes it a great ingredient for creating a nourishing soap bar.

## Mango Butter

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SAP VALUE: 0.145

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**Good for:** Conditioning, Moisturizing, Hard Bar, Creamy Lather

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Mango butter is similar to shea butter in hardness and texture. Like many natural oils, it is high in vitamins A and C as well as antioxidants. It's great for those with dry skin, especially for use in facial soaps thanks to its high moisturizing ability. It helps create a hard bar with a stable creamy lather.

## Neem Oil

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SAP VALUE: 0.139

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**Good for:** Stable Creamy Lather, Conditioning, Moisturizing, Hard Bar

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Neem has traditionally been used as an antibacterial and anti-inflammatory agent. It is very calming to the skin, making it a great ingredient in soap for those with acne or sensitive skin. It creates a stable, creamy lather in a hard, long-lasting bar.

## Olive Oil

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SAP VALUE: 0.135

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**Good for:** Low Cleansing, Very Conditioning

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Olive oil makes a very gentle soap for babies, elderly, and anyone with skin conditions requiring a gentle soap because it is so low in cleansing power. It is high in antioxidants like vitamin E and polyphenols. It makes a softer bar, but hardening and cleansing oils like coconut can be added to increase hardness.

## Shea Butter

\$

SAP VALUE: 0.128

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**Good for:** Stable Lather, Conditioning, Hard Bar

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Shea butter is a creamy, soft butter that gives a silky feeling to soap bars. It is high in vitamins A and E as well as fatty acids and minerals. It doesn't fully saponify, making it a great ingredient to increase the nourishing properties of soap.

## Sweet Almond Oil

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SAP VALUE: 0.139

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**Good for:** Stable Medium Lather

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Usually added to soap recipes for its moisturizing effects on hair and skin, sweet almond oil also creates a mild soap with a stable medium lather that is great for those with sensitive skin. It contains vitamins A and E and linoleic acid, and is high in oleic acid—a moisturizing fatty acid.

## Tallow

SAP VALUE: 0.143

\$

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**Good for:** Stable Creamy Lather, Conditioning, Slightly Cleansing, Hard Bar

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Tallow is the number one traditional ingredient for soapmaking. It makes a fabulous hard, bubbly, conditioning and cleansing bar of soap. Remove the superfat content and you have a great laundry bar. Choose grass-fed, organic sources in health food grocery stores or local farms.

### *A Note on Nut Allergies*

Nut allergies are a serious concern. I make soaps for people in my family who cannot have nuts, so I've developed and included in this book some recipes with no-nut oils or nut butters.

If you have a tree-nut allergy, watch out for coconut oil, sweet almond oil, hazelnut oil, and macadamia nut oil. Replacing coconut oil in soaps can be difficult, but ethically sourced palm oil or babassu oil makes a good substitute. Check the recipe labels to quickly identify nut-free recipes.



*chapter four*

## **NATURAL ADDITIVES, COLORANTS & SCENTS**

In this chapter we'll take a deeper look at the natural ways to add scents, colors, and textures to your soaps. I know you want to make beautiful soap, yet you also want to keep your creation healthy and nourishing. I've got you covered! Some natural additives are for exfoliating, while others moisturize your skin. A lot of additives change color once they go through saponification, some may rapidly speed your soap to trace, and still others heat the soap so much that you need to treat it differently after pouring. I'll make sure you have all the information you need about natural additives so you will know what to expect before beginning your soapmaking projects.

## NATURAL ADDITIVES

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One thing I love about natural soapmaking is that there are so many options when it comes to natural additives. You can search around your kitchen for herbs, flowers, coffees, or teas to use. Even salt, oats, blackberries, and strawberries make great additives. Not only do all these natural additives contribute desirable qualities to soap like exfoliating properties and beautiful color, they also add nutritive and therapeutic qualities.

Each recipe in this book has been thoughtfully developed to include natural additives for color, texture, scent, and more. But don't let my ideas limit yours! Before long you'll be substituting additives in your recipes with your favorite herbs and essential oils. In order to guide you through the recipes in this book and prepare you to venture out on your own, I want to outline some of the considerations that should be made when adding natural additives to a recipe.

### Herbs

Many herbs, such as peppermint, nettle, lemon balm, lemongrass, lavender leaves, calendula, and chamomile, can be used for visual effect, exfoliation, or health benefits. Please keep in mind that most herbs turn brown when added at trace. If you want to avoid this, add them to the top of your soap right before it sets, or use finely powdered herbs like alkanet root, parsley, or spirulina for benefits to the skin and added color.

### Activated Charcoal

Activated charcoal is commonly used for detoxification and cleansing. I use it in my facial soaps for its beneficial impact on the health of skin, including helping acne, eczema, and psoriasis. Add 1 teaspoon per pound of soap.

### Clays

Bentonite, rose, white kaolin, and Moroccan orange clays are my favorite clays to use. They add color, act as wonderful cleansers, and are used for detoxification. If you decide to try another clay, do some research first. Some clays can change the texture of the soap or don't hold a true color after saponification.

### Honey

Honey makes a creamy, bubbly soap. It also breaks down within the soap to nourish the skin in a way few other ingredients can. It is antimicrobial and a humectant that will absorb moisture from the air for your skin. I typically add 1 tablespoon of honey per pound of soap.

## Milks

Goat, cow, and even coconut milks contain vitamins that our skin and hair need. Be aware, however, that using milks in your soapmaking does add a few more steps to the process. I recommend replacing no more than half of the water in a recipe with milk. You will still need to add lye slowly so that you do not burn the milk sugars, but you'll have fewer problems with overheating your mixture.

## Juice

Juices can be added to soap recipes, but these are a little harder to manage because the sugars can cause overheating. Most will turn a dark color within the soap, typically brown, depending on how much you add and how fast you add the lye to your juice and water mixture. Replacing 25 percent of the water with juice gives the bar a more golden color without browning or causing sugar difficulties.

## Exfoliants

My favorite exfoliants are ground oats, coffee grounds, tea leaves, ground nuts, and salt, though you can add other exfoliating ingredients from your kitchen. Just make sure to only add ingredients that have a long shelf life.

## Aloe

I love adding aloe to soap. Use full-leaf aloe, not just the common aloe taken from the inside of the leaf. This will ensure that your soap has more nutrients, including those that are stored within the green part of the leaf.

## Fruits

I do not recommend large pieces of fruit, but puréed and dried fruits work beautifully in soap. A little goes a long way. When using puréed fruits, you need to be aware of the impact of the sugars on the soap. I typically do not insulate soaps with fruit or other high-sugar ingredients (see [here](#) for more information on insulating).

## Questionable Additives

Before we go on, you may be wondering why you don't see additives like titanium dioxide or mica in this book. Some soapers consider titanium dioxide to be natural because it is used in sunscreens, but studies have shown that it is absorbed into skin cells and can cause damage to DNA, so you won't find it in my recipes. Likewise, many micas have been doctored to give brighter colors than what you would find naturally. I've chosen to stay away from controversial additives and GMO or ethically questionable oils. It's not always easy to know what's completely natural or ethically processed, so I've done my research to provide you with only the best options.

### *When to Add Natural Additives*

- Natural additives can be added to the lye water, at trace, or to the top of your batch of soap as it is setting. The best time depends on the additive.
- Milks, juices, coffees, teas, and aloe are added to the lye water, replacing some or all of the water.
- Honeys, clays, charcoals, fruit, exfoliants, and some herbs are added at trace.
- When adding any powders at trace, you should transfer a few large spoonfuls of soap to a separate bowl and stir the powder into that before adding it to your large batch, just as you would with flour when making gravy. This eliminates any possibilities of larger lumps being left in your soap batch.

## NATURAL COLORANTS

Colorants are one of the most common ways that unnatural and toxic ingredients are added to homemade soaps. Even though certain colorings are approved for use in foods and cosmetics in the United States, many countries have limited, if not outright banned, the same ones because of studies showing the damaging effects they can have on the nervous system and brain. Some unnatural colorants can be easy to miss. For example, mica is natural, but most powdered micas found online have pigments added to them so that they are much brighter than they are naturally.

Soapmaking supply stores almost always promote unnatural colorants made from manmade pigments, food colorings, and synthetic dyes sold in powders or small

blocks. Yes, these colorants are often brighter than natural colorants, which can be muted or have a natural earthy tone. But you can still achieve strong colors like blue, red, yellow, and green using the guide I will provide for you. If you don't believe me, just take a look at the photos in this book. All those beautiful colors are made from all-natural colorants only!

## Clays

I've found clays to stay true to initial color, making them easy and fun to use. Use clays like bentonite, white kaolin, Moroccan orange, and rose. I prefer to use white kaolin in small amounts for a silky soap, as too much will make soap slimy. Moroccan orange clay sometimes seems to be more tan, depending on the vendor, so if you are looking for orange, make sure that the packaging specifically says that it is orange.

## Powdered Herbs

You can use many herbs in your soapmaking. Be aware that some will turn brown after saponification, so unless you're up for some experimentation, use those recommended in this book or place them on the surface of your soap.

## Kitchen Ingredients and Spices

Cocoa powder, paprika, coffee grounds, ground turmeric, ground ginger, tomato purée, carrot juice: There are so many things that you already have in your kitchen that can be used to make beautifully colored soap!

## WHEN TO ADD COLOR

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Certain natural colorants perform better when they are added to the lye water, added at trace, or prepared ahead of time as an oil infusion and added to the oils before the lye water is added. You can also add color after pouring your soap into the mold, to create special effects. For more information, see the Natural Colorants chart ([here](#)).

### Adding Color to the Lye Water

This is the simplest method—you just stir the colorant directly into the lye water.

### Adding Color at Trace

To add color at trace, remove a scoop of the soap when it has reached a light trace, place it in a glass bowl, and add your colorant. Use a whisk to make sure there are no lumps. Return it to your soap batch and mix well until the color is fully incorporated.

## Adding Color as an Oil Infusion

You can take whatever oil is called for in a recipe and infuse it with a beautiful color. Just substitute some of the oil in your recipe with the infused oil to color your soap. If you choose lighter-colored oils for infusion, it will result in a purer color.

## Adding Color After Pouring

I use this method to create layers and swirls. Transfer a scoop of soap to a bowl and blend in the colorant. Pour the large soap batch into your mold. Then add the colored soap by layering smoothly or swirling.

## COLORANT TIPS

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It's important to note that some colorants added at trace or after pouring will change color as they cure and are exposed to air. Here are some examples:

- Spirulina added at trace is bright green when it comes out of the mold, but it turns more of an algae-green after a week. For a brighter green, try oil infused with liquid chlorophyll.
- Alkanet root powder added at trace will turn bright blue during the first 24 hours, then mature to a deep purple after curing. It's fun to watch!
- Turmeric infused in oil will hold a beautiful orange even after cure, yet when it is added as a powder at trace it will give your soap a strong golden-orange color that will fade significantly after curing to a pretty but more muted gold.
- Clays usually hold true to their color whenever they are added.
- Beet root powder starts off a pretty, bright pink, but when added to soap, it turns brown.
- Woad has become very expensive. To create a cheaper bluish effect, use just enough activated charcoal powder to create a gray and then pair it with pink, peach, or orange. This will create a pretty blue-gray appearance without the high cost.

I have put together a Natural Colorants chart ([here](#)) to help you in your soapmaking. The colorants listed can be added in different ways, but I've found that

these particular methods give soap the strongest and richest color. Amounts will change depending on the strength of your infusions and desired richness of color.

## NATURAL COLORANTS

NATURAL ADDITIVE	WHEN TO USE	COLOR	AMOUNT PER POUND OF SOAP
Activated Charcoal	Trace	Gray/Black	1-1½ teaspoons
Ground Cinnamon	Trace	Brown	2 teaspoons
Brewed Coffee	Cooled and used in place of some water before adding lye; used grounds added later	Brown	2 teaspoons
Cocoa Powder	Trace	Brown	1 tablespoon
Ground Cloves	Hot Oil Infusion	Brown	½ ounce in place of olive oil in recipe
Spirulina Powder	Trace or Lye Water	Green	½-1 teaspoon
Parsley	Oil Infusion	Green	½ ounce in place of olive oil in recipe

Liquid Chlorophyll	Trace	Green	½–1 teaspoon
Alfalfa	Oil Infusion	Green	½ ounce in place of olive oil in recipe
Burdock Leaf	Oil Infusion	Green	½ ounce in place of olive oil in recipe
Comfrey Leaf	Oil Infusion	Green	½ ounce in place of olive oil in recipe
Dandelion Leaf	Oil Infusion	Green	½ ounce in place of olive oil in recipe
Ground Calendula Flowers	Lye Water	Yellow	¼ cup
Ground Turmeric	Oil Infusion	Yellow	½ ounce in place of olive oil in recipe

NATURAL ADDITIVE	WHEN TO USE	COLOR	AMOUNT PER POUND OF SOAP
Annatto seeds	Oil Infusion	Yellow	2 ounces for orange, ½–1 ounce for yellow in place of olive oil
Ground Ginger	Oil Infusion	Cream/Yellow	1 ounce in place of olive oil in recipe
Safflower Powder	Oil Infusion	Yellow	½ ounce in place of olive oil in recipe
Moroccan Orange Clay	Trace	Tan/Orange	1–2 teaspoons
Saffron	Oil Infusion	Yellow/Orange	½ ounce in place of olive oil in recipe
Paprika	Trace or Lye Water	Orange	1–2 teaspoons
Tomato Purée	Trace	Dark Orange	¼ cup—decrease water for amount of purée added

Pumpkin Purée	Trace	Orange	¼ cup—decrease water for amount of purée added
Carrot Juice	Trace	Orange	¼ cup—decrease water for amount of purée added
Rose Clay	Trace or Lye Water	Pink	2 teaspoons
Madder Root Powder	Trace or Lye Water	Pink/Red	2–3 teaspoons
Alkanet Root Powder	Trace or Oil Infusion	Purple	1 teaspoon or ½ ounce oil infusion in place of olive oil in recipe
Black Walnut Hull Powder	Lye Water	Brown/Purple	2 teaspoons
Indigo Powder	Lye Water	Deep Blue	½–1 teaspoon
Woad Powder	Oil Infusion	Sky Blue	½ ounce in place of olive oil in recipe

## ESSENTIAL OILS

Essential oils are the pure, volatile oils within a plant's leaf, seed, flower, root, or bark that are captured during a distillation or cold-press process. To visualize how potent they are, understand that a plant has more oils than just volatile oils. During steam distillation, heavier oils remain as volatile oils are captured to be bottled for your use. This is one of the differences between carrier oils and essential oils. Carrier oils are made of heavier lipid oils, while essential oils are made up of aromatic volatile oils. Essential oils are not only aromatic, but have also been shown to impact the body in wonderful ways, making them ideal for natural soapmakers.

### *Making Herbal Infusions to Color Soap*

If you've ever made tea, then you've made an infusion. It's easy to make a small amount of an herbal infusion that will last for multiple batches of soap. There are two ways to make infusions, either hot or cold. Let's take a closer look at both.

#### **HOT INFUSION**

A hot infusion is much faster than a cold infusion, so if you haven't planned weeks ahead, use this method.

- First, choose a light-colored liquid oil from your soap recipe to infuse. For example, most recipes call for olive oil, so it's a great choice. Pour a little less than 1 cup into a saucepan and heat over low heat until it is around 200°F. You do not want to fry the herbs.
- Fill an 8-ounce glass jar with herbs or flowers—or, if using powder or seeds, use 1 heaping tablespoon—and then pour the hot oil over. Screw on the lid and shake gently.
- Allow to cool to room temperature, shaking every 30 minutes.

### COLD INFUSION

The cold infusion method takes at least 6 weeks for colors to infuse, but it's a great option if you have the time and want to get several infusions going at once.



- Fill an 8-ounce glass jar with fresh herbs or flowers—or, if using powder or seeds, use 1 heaping tablespoon—and pour your oil of choice over the top (figure 4.1).
- Screw on the lid and leave on your windowsill for 6 weeks, shaking occasionally.

You will find that you need to use only part of these stronger infusions in your recipe for great color. I infuse in olive oil, so I typically replace 25 percent of the olive oil in my recipes with color-infused olive oil. This gives me the

color that I want, while leaving more infused oil for the next batch. Either let the colorants settle to the bottom of the jar and then pour carefully, or strain through a cheesecloth before using. To learn more about how to color soap naturally, see Jo Haslauer's book, *Natural Soap Color: Botanical Beauty in Cold Process Soap*. Jo is the frontrunner in coloring soap with herbal infusions and creates jaw-dropping colors in soap.

## Blending Essential Oils

You don't want to create a beautiful-smelling natural soap that doesn't last. By understanding more about essential oils, you can blend them to make sure they last for a year or more.

### ***Top, Middle, and Base Notes***

Essential oils are divided into top, middle, and base notes, though many fit in more than one category. By combining them, you ensure that even if your top notes fade slightly, the middle and base notes will last much longer.

- **TOP NOTES** are the first-impression scents that don't last long. Examples: lemon, lime, orange, grapefruit, bergamot, lavender, lemongrass, eucalyptus, peppermint, tangerine, and niaouli.
- **MIDDLE NOTES** are noticeable to the senses after they process the top notes and last longer. Examples: chamomile, cinnamon, clove, clary sage, fir needle, rosemary, geranium, juniper berry, tea tree, thyme, and cypress.
- **BASE NOTES** are very important because they help middle and top notes last longer in your soap. Try adding small amounts of these: patchouli, frankincense, myrrh, cedarwood, ginger, sandalwood, vetiver, helichrysum, rose, jasmine, ylang-ylang, and neroli.

### ***Dilution***

Some essential oils are much stronger than others. As a result, if they are added in equal amounts, one may drown out the other. If you would like to use three or more different oils in your blend, open the bottles and hold them together under your nose, wafting them back and forth. If one overpowers the others, then you will know to add less of that particular oil. Always try to make your blends a few hours before use. They tend to mature and improve, and this will allow you to make any adjustments before use.

## Shopping for Essential Oils

With essential oils becoming very popular in recent years, selling them has become a profitable market, prompting many opportunists to try to take advantage of unsuspecting buyers. I've encountered some oils that were supposed to be pure and yet were diluted, and others that were replaced with a fragrance oil or a similar-smelling cheaper oil. Unfortunately, you cannot trust labels that say that your essential oil is pure, 100 percent, or natural. I've seen labels that falsely claim therapeutic or commercial grade. On the other hand, the top reliable and very expensive essential oil companies are not the only good ones out there.

So how do you find pure essential oils? After all, how the plant was grown, harvested, and processed all matters! First, get to know the company that you are planning to purchase from. Do they discuss purity, where they get their oils, and how they are harvested? Second, look for third-party testing of their products. Some essential oils will be pre-blended for your convenience. Others may be diluted for safe topical use, making them too weak for soapmaking purposes. I like to use Bulk Apothecary, Mountain Rose Herbs, and Starwest Botanicals.

## Safety Considerations and Recommendations

Skin is the largest organ on your body and will absorb most of what you apply to it. Essential oils are very potent, and just because they are natural does not mean that they cannot harm you if used improperly. After all, you may find that you are allergic to some. I have a horrible grass allergy and cannot even smell lemongrass without an allergic reaction. Always perform a patch test on your wrist after diluting to see if you are sensitive to a particular oil. A safe dilution rate for topical application is 2 percent for daily use for adults (12 drops of essential oil to 1 ounce of carrier oil), 1 percent for elderly (6 drops per ounce), or 0.5 percent (3 drops per ounce) for children.

When it comes to safety precautions for essential oils, do not follow general advice found on blogs and other websites. You'll find enough conflicting information to drive you crazy. Instead, I rely on respected organizations that have trained, experienced herbalists and aromatherapists, like the National Association for Holistic Aromatherapy (NAHA; [naha.org/explore-aromatherapy/safety](http://naha.org/explore-aromatherapy/safety) ), and the Herbal Academy ([theherbalacademy.com/a-guide-to-essential-oil-safety](http://theherbalacademy.com/a-guide-to-essential-oil-safety) ).

Here are some general precautions for special circumstances concerning commonly used essential oils like those you will find in this book.

*Essential Oils to Avoid*

Plant essential oils like sassafras, wormwood, pennyroyal, mustard, and elecampane are generally understood to be poisonous. You won't stumble across them by accident in most stores, though I have seen them, so beware.

Cinnamon bark can burn your skin even after being diluted so that you think you're being stung repeatedly by wasps. (Yes, this knowledge comes from firsthand experience!) Use cinnamon leaf, *not* bark. There is a big difference!

Other essential oils to avoid because of potential skin irritation are oregano and clove. They are fine in small amounts when blended with other oils, but are an irritant to those with sensitive skin if used in large amounts.

Be aware of possible allergic reactions as well. Those with grass allergies may have difficulties with lemongrass or chamomile. Always do a patch test on your wrist after diluting the oil to 2 percent (12 drops of essential oil to 1 ounce of carrier oil).

### ***Babies and Children Age 5 and Below***

Some essential oils are considered hard on small developing bodies and should always be used with caution.

**COMMON ESSENTIAL OILS TO AVOID:** wintergreen, birch, peppermint, rosemary, and eucalyptus.

**ESSENTIAL OILS THAT ARE GENERALLY CONSIDERED SAFE:** cedarwood, blue tansy, cypress, chamomile, geranium, helichrysum, lavender, mandarin, neroli, sandalwood, tea tree, frankincense, bergamot, juniper berry, lemon, patchouli, orange, and spruce.

### ***Pregnant and/or Breastfeeding Women***

Though cases reporting problems during pregnancy are from nondilution or oral ingestion at toxic levels, some essential oils should be avoided during pregnancy or breastfeeding, just to be safe. These recommendations are from NAHA and the International Federation of Professional Aromatherapists.

**COMMON ESSENTIAL OILS TO AVOID:** basil, birch, camphor, hyssop, parsley seed, sage, tansy, tarragon, and wintergreen. Others can build in your body over time and should not be used often: oregano, thyme, clove, and cinnamon.

### ***Elderly and Those with Fragile Immune Systems***

**COMMON ESSENTIAL OILS TO AVOID:** birch, wintergreen, thyme, oregano. Some elderly or those with lowered immune systems may have more sensitive skin; you should use cinnamon, clove, basil, birch, and peppermint with caution.

**GREAT ESSENTIAL OILS TO USE:** lavender, marjoram, geranium, lemon balm, Roman chamomile, rose, orange, grapefruit, and ylang-ylang.

## The Essential Essentials for Soapmaking

So far I've discussed only a few of the hundreds of essential oils out there. There are many wonderful reference books that you can turn to in order to learn more about their scents and benefits. Rather than provide a long list, I want to highlight 10 of my favorite essential oils for soapmaking. I've also included an essential oils fragrance wheel (figure 4.2 ) to depict the rainbow of scents you can add to your homemade soaps.

### Lavender

*LAVANDULA ANGUSTIFOLIA*

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**Precautions:** Always dilute and perform a patch test on your wrist before first-time use.

**Try it in:** Relaxing Lavender Soap ([here](#) ) or Luxurious Shampoo Bar ([here](#) )

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A middle to top note with a sweet floral and herbaceous scent. Blends well with lemongrass, patchouli, vanilla, cedarwood, peppermint, lemon, or cypress.

### Lemon

*CITRUS LIMON*

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**Precautions:** Though not a danger in soap, phototoxicity or severe burning from the sun or tanning beds can occur when lemon essential oil is applied directly to the skin. Always dilute and perform a patch test on your wrist before first-time use.

**Try it in:** Coconut Milk Soap ([here](#) ) or Chamomile Tea Soap with Chamomile Flowers ([here](#) )

---

A top note with a clean citrus scent. Blends well with lavender, ylang-ylang, chamomile, frankincense, rose, neroli, or eucalyptus.

### Tea Tree

*MELALEUCA ALTERNIFOLIA*

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**Precautions:** Always dilute and perform a patch test on your wrist before first-time use.

**Try it in:** Acne Charcoal and Tea Tree Soap ([here](#) ) or Acne Bentonite Clay and Charcoal Soap ([here](#) )

---

A middle note with a warm, fresh, spicy-camphoraceous scent. Antibacterial, making it great for acne soap. Blends well with lemon, cypress, lavender, rosemary, marjoram, basil, peppermint, lime, or chamomile.

## Sweet Orange

*CITRUS SINENSIS*

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**Precautions:** Always dilute and perform a patch test on your wrist before first-time use.

**Try it in:** Goat Milk and Honey Soap ([here](#)) or Uplifting Salt Soap ([here](#))

---

A top note with a sweet citrus scent. Blends well with basil, ylang-ylang, cinnamon leaf, clove, frankincense, lavender, juniper berry, neroli, or rose.

## Rose

*ROSA DAMASCENA*

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**Precautions:** Always dilute and perform a patch test on your wrist before first-time use.

**Try it in:** Sensual Rose Soap ([here](#)) or Spring Cutouts ([here](#))

---

A middle to base note with a rich, sweet, floral scent. Most commonly used as an aphrodisiac. Blends well with chamomile, lemon, lavender, sandalwood, patchouli, clary sage, neroli, or vetiver.

## Cedarwood

*JUNIPERUS VIRGINIANA*

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**Precautions:** Always dilute and perform a patch test on your wrist before first-time use.

**Try it in:** Pet Shampoo ([here](#))

---

A base note with a soft woody scent. Blends well with fir, cypress, patchouli, or rose.

## Patchouli

*POGOSTEMON CABLIN*

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**Precautions:** Always dilute and perform a patch test on your wrist before first-time use.

**Try it in:** Patchouli, Charcoal, and Spirulina Swirl Soap ([here](#))

---

A base note with an earthy, musky, smoky scent. Blends well with lavender, lime, rose, sandalwood, cedarwood, geranium, frankincense, or orange.

## Ylang-Ylang

*CANANGA ODORATA*

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**Precautions:** Always dilute and perform a patch test on your wrist before first-time use.

**Try it in:** Ocean Salt Soap ([here](#)) or Goat Milk and Honey Shampoo Bar ([here](#))

---

A base note with a rich, sweet floral scent. It is known for its ability to calm and is considered an aphrodisiac. Blends well with lemon, eucalyptus, peppermint, grapefruit, vetiver, patchouli, mandarin, or orange.

## Lemongrass

*CYMBOPOGON FLEXUOSUS*

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**Precautions:** Can be a skin irritant to some. Always dilute and perform a patch test on your wrist before first-time use.

**Try it in:** Aloe and Nettle Herbal Soap ([here](#)) or Bug-Away Camping Soap ([here](#))

---

A top note with a heavy lemon scent. Can be used as a natural insect repellent. Blends beautifully with lavender, tea tree, rosemary, ylang-ylang, geranium, grapefruit, or cedarwood.

## Peppermint

*MENTHA PIPERITA*

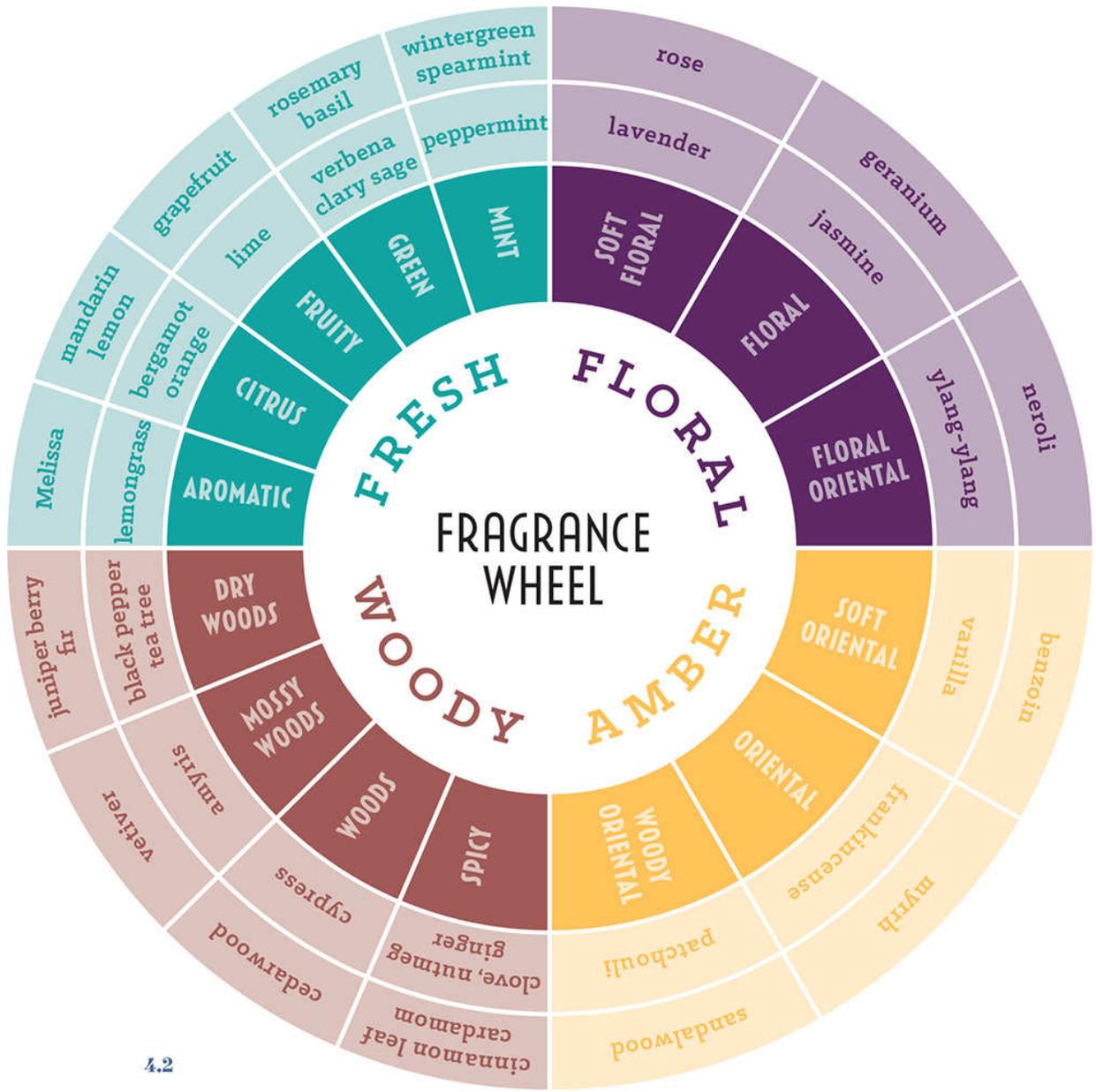
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**Precautions:** Not for use with small children or elderly. Always dilute and perform a patch test on your wrist before first-time use.

**Try it in:** Energizing Peppermint and Basil Soap ([here](#)) or Cocoa-Mint Soap ([here](#))

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A top note with a fresh, minty, herbaceous scent. It is considered to be an uplifting and energizing scent. Blends well with basil, eucalyptus, rosemary, tea tree, lavender, fir, cypress, geranium, or grapefruit.





PART

2

## *Techniques & Tutorials*

Now that you are armed with the important information about ingredients and supplies, it's time to start experimenting with basic cold-process soapmaking. [Part 2](#) delves deeper into the actual soapmaking process, outlining the step-by-step process of cold-processed soap, as well as explaining different decorative techniques for creating various color swirls and layers and for embossing your soap creations.

I will break everything down into clear, understandable steps. The accompanying tutorials are designed to suit your needs and interests and will give you valuable hands-on experience. Start here if you're new to soapmaking, or dive right into the recipes in [part 3](#) if you're already familiar with the process and want to start experimenting with different recipes right away.



*chapter five*

## **COLD-PROCESS SOAPMAKING**

The recipes in this book are primarily designed for the cold-process soapmaking method, my preferred way of making soap. I'll go over each step of the soapmaking process, including what could go wrong, and provide in-depth tips to troubleshoot your soap. Remember One way or another, you can almost always fix a botched batch of soap. This chapter's tutorial will make sure that you comprehend each step of the process. I'll give you enough detail that you will understand what you are doing and also why, so that making soap will soon feel like second nature.

Cold-process soapmaking simply means making soap without applying heat to the soap batter. Heat is applied only to prepare the oils ahead of time. You will be melting fats and butters like cocoa butter, tallow, and coconut oil so that there is one uniform, incorporated pot of oils. Those oils can then be used at room temperature or, ideally, a little hotter. My aim is to have my oil and lye water at around 110°F for ideal saponification and time to trace. The oils and lye water are then emulsified; you can use any stirring device, but I highly recommend a stick blender for ease of use and to help bring the soap to trace quickly. After the soap mixture is brought to trace, it is poured into a mold to finish processing.

The cold-process method is very popular because it is easy to get a silky-smooth-finish soap. It's also much easier to create swirls, layers, and other designs within the soap because it yields a thinner, smoother batter. It can also yield a thicker batter that can easily suspend herbs and other ingredients. Cold-process can hold natural essential oil scents better than hot since the essential oils are added at trace and at a lower temperature than other methods.

I tend to use hot-process or hand-milling only if I need to rescue a botched batch of soap, but that's just my personal preference since both have their pros and cons. I just love the silky-smooth texture of a soap that has been made with the cold-process method. All the recipes in this book use the cold-process.

## **COLD-PROCESS SOAPMAKING IN 10 STEPS**

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### **STEP 1**

#### **Gather Ingredients and Supplies**

Obviously, you don't want to get started and then realize that you don't have an important ingredient, so the first thing you need to do is gather all the ingredients that the recipe calls for. Depending on the recipe, this can include preparing color infusions.

Next, gather your scale, bowls, spoon, pot, zip-top plastic bag, thermometer, mold, parchment, stick blender, spatula, blanket, and safety equipment for working with lye.

### **STEP 2**

#### **Weigh All Ingredients**

The easiest way to make sure something doesn't go wrong is to be precise, so I recommend using a kitchen scale for all your ingredients.

First, weigh each of the oils, fats, and/or butters that you are using in your recipe by weight (not liquid volume) and combine them all in a large stainless steel pot. Heat them over medium-low heat until they are all melted and well combined.



Next, weigh the lye crystals in a zip-top plastic bag and seal the top ([figure 5.1](#)). The bag is there simply to remind you not to pour the water into the lye, but rather to pour the lye into the water.

Finally, weigh the water in a glass or plastic bowl and set aside.

### STEP 3

## Create Lye Water

Wearing protective eye gear, gloves, and a mask, go to a well-ventilated location outside. Unless you're wearing a very sturdy mask, hold your breath as you pour the lye crystals into the water, as the mixture will give off fumes for about a minute. Stir until dissolved, usually only 10 to 15 seconds ([figure 5.2](#)). Then you can bring the lye water inside to cool (when you combine the lye and water, the temperature will shoot up to 170° to 200°F).



#### STEP 4 Equalize Temperatures

Let the oil mixture and the lye water cool to 100° to 110°F unless otherwise noted. Recommended temperatures will vary slightly in some recipes, since temperature affects how fast soap comes to trace. Cooler temperatures are used with ingredients that cause higher temperatures, like milk and alcohol.

Sometimes you may need to put the oils and/or lye water in a cold- or hot-water bath to ensure that they come to the right temperature at the same time. Simply fill your kitchen sink with a few inches of cold or hot water and put the pot of oils or the bowl of lye water in the water ([figure 5.3](#)).



**STEP 5**

**Combine Oils and Lye Water and Bring to Trace**

When the temperatures are equalized for the oils and lye water, carefully pour the lye water into your large pot of oils. This is when splashes can happen, so be careful (figure 5.4 ).





Fully immerse a stick blender (or hand mixer) in the pot to avoid adding extra bubbles into your batter (figure 5.5 ). Mix until trace; you will know it's ready when the soap begins to thicken so that it leaves a light trace or trail over the batch when spooned over the top (figure 5.6 ). You don't have to mix nonstop—mix for a few minutes, then let it sit for a few minutes. Keep checking because some soaps thicken very quickly.



### *All About Trace*

It's important to note that not all traces are the same. Here are different levels that will be required for the recipes throughout the book.

**LIGHT TRACE:** The oil and lye water are emulsified, but the soap is still a thin liquid. You can tell when your mixture has reached a light trace when a spoonful is dribbled over the top and it leaves a trail that is not raised from the surface at all. A bright light will help you see it.

**MEDIUM TRACE:** The consistency is thickening, but it is thinner than pudding. When soap is spooned over the top of the batter, it leaves an easy-to-see trail that is slightly raised above the batter.

**THICK TRACE:** The consistency is thick like pudding.

**SEIZE:** The soap has passed the thick trace stage and is beginning to set up in the pot, becoming almost impossible to scoop.



LIGHT TRACE



MEDIUM TRACE



THICK TRACE

## STEP 6

### Add Additives

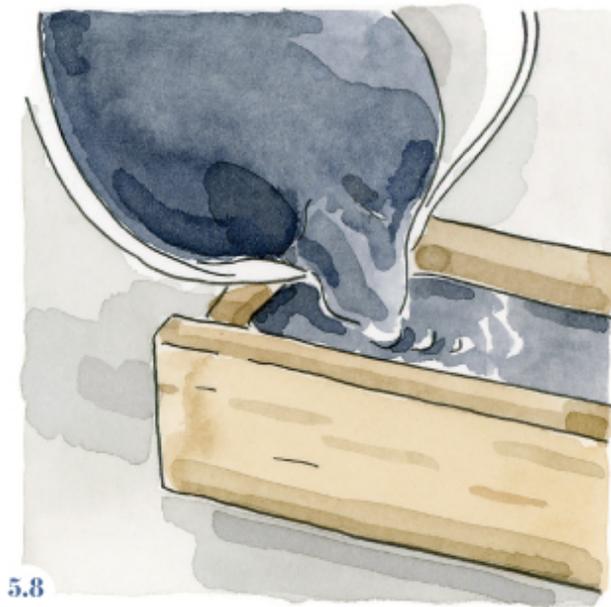
Most colorants, scents, and other additives are added to the soap mixture at trace. Powdered colorants are usually added by transferring 1 cup of soap to a separate bowl and using a whisk to incorporate the powder until there are no lumps (figure 5.7). The colorant is either added back to the larger batch and blended or reserved to drizzle over the top of the batch to create swirls. Some additives can accelerate trace. Follow the instructions in each recipe regarding blending or whisking additives.



## STEP 7

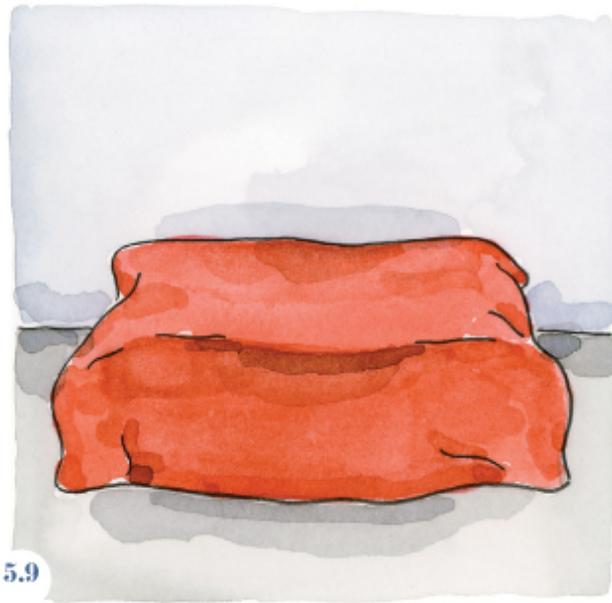
### Pour into Mold and Design

Line your mold with parchment paper. Pour the soap batter into your mold ([figure 5.8](#)). If you are adding color swirls or layers, this is when you should do so.



## STEP 8 Insulate

After pouring the soap into the mold, cover and insulate by wrapping the mold in a blanket for 24 hours ([figure 5.9](#)). Insulating keeps heat from escaping too quickly, helping the entire batch pass through the gel phase (see [here](#)), which increases the vibrancy of natural colorants. Some soaps need to be insulated lightly with only a towel, or not at all, thanks to ingredients like milk, honey, or wine that can overheat the batch of soap if insulated heavily.



## STEP 9 Clean Up

It's important to keep your gloves on while you're washing all pots, bowls, and utensils used for soapmaking. You'll need a lot of soap, because any residual oils will not be saponified, so they will contain lye water. Wash everything immediately after pouring the soap, otherwise it will harden and be difficult to remove. Don't just place everything in your dishwasher without rinsing or you may clog the dishwasher's drain. I wash items dedicated to soapmaking by hand. Any bowls that I also use for other purposes I hand-wash and then run through the dishwasher.

## STEP 10 Cut and Cure

After 24 hours, check the soap to see if it is hard enough to remove from the mold. If your fingers can mark the surface, allow it to sit for another 12 to 24 hours. Remove the soap from the mold and cut if necessary ([figure 5.10](#)). The recipes in this book are for 3 pounds of soap, so you can cut 12 (4-ounce) bars from each batch. Use a straight kitchen knife, miter box, or pastry cutter (straight or crinkle edge). Some molds also come with sectional dividers so that you don't have to cut the soap.



Place the bars on a shelf or rack to dry and cure. They can be stacked if necessary, but be sure to turn them once a week. Cure for 4 to 6 weeks. Yes, that's a big variance. Soap usually finishes saponifying after the first 3 to 4 weeks. Any time after that is important for water evaporation and hardening so that it will last longer. After curing, place in a cool, dry location with ventilation, such as a plastic shoebox with the lid left slightly ajar.

## COLD-PROCESS TUTORIAL

Now that you have worked your way through each step of the soapmaking process and gotten to know your ingredients, you are ready to get started! This first tutorial uses a basic recipe that will walk you through each step to creating the perfect entry-level soap. We'll start with things to do before you begin and follow up with troubleshooting tips to answer any questions that may come up during the process.

I strongly recommend starting a soapmaking notebook. You will want to record what went well with each batch and what you would like to do differently next time. When you start making more advanced recipes, you'll also want to keep track of your favorite essential oil blends and colors.

### Before You Begin

- Make sure everyone living with you understands that you are making soap and that the kitchen is off limits. You don't want someone running through when you're in the

middle of things or running the faucet into your lye water as it sits in a cold-water bath in your sink.

- Clear the area. Make sure there are no dishes in or around the sink. You will need it free to clean all your equipment when you're done.
- Make sure you have enough time. I know some people who've been making soap for a long time can make a batch in 30 minutes. I still take 90 minutes on average, including off time as I wait for temperatures to equalize.
- Gather your equipment and supplies. As you will see, even the simplest recipe requires a lot of equipment and ingredients.
- Read the recipe in full before you begin. This is the best way to know what to expect and prevent mistakes along the way.

## COLD-PROCESS TUTORIAL

# Tried and True Soap

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• GENTLE

**YIELD:** 3 POUNDS  
OR 12 (4-OUNCE)  
BARS

**LYE DISCOUNT:** 15%

**SCENT:**  
UNSCENTED

---

**START TO FINISH TIME:** 1 to 2 hours, 24 hours insulation, 4 to 6 weeks to cure

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This recipe will give you a simple, hard, bubbly cleansing bar. You will not have to wait a very long time for it to come to trace, but it won't come to trace too fast for you, either. It's a great recipe that I've used time and time again, and it's ideal for beginners.

***SAFETY FIRST!*** Remember to wear your safety equipment and mix the lye water outside. Tell everyone you live with that where you're working is off limits. Give yourself enough time to complete the recipe.

### EQUIPMENT

- kitchen scale
- glass bowls
- large spoon
- large stainless steel pot
- small zip-top plastic bag
- thermometer
- mold
- parchment paper
- stick blender (or hand mixer)
- rubber spatula
- blanket

### INGREDIENTS

- 14 ounces tallow
- 10 ounces olive oil
- 8 ounces coconut oil
- 4.1 ounces lye
- 12.2 ounces filtered water

- 1. HEAT THE FATS/OILS** In a large pot, combine the tallow, olive oil, and coconut oil. Heat over medium-low heat until they are melted and incorporated. Remove from the heat and allow to cool to 100° to 110°F.
- 2. MIX THE LYE WATER** Put on safety gear, including protective eyewear, a mask, gloves, and long sleeves. Outside, carefully add the lye crystals to the water and stir until dissolved. Allow to cool to 100° to 110°F. If the oils and lye water cool at different rates, you can use a cold- or hot-water bath in the sink.
- 3. PREPARE THE MOLD** While the oils and lye water cool, line the mold with parchment paper.
- 4. COMBINE AND BRING TO TRACE** When both the oils and lye water are 100° to 110°F, carefully pour the lye water into the pot of oils. Use a stick blender (or hand mixer) to mix for 1 to 2 minutes and then let the mixture rest for 4 to 5 minutes. Repeat mixing and resting until light trace.
- 5. MOLD THE SOAP** Pour the soap mixture into the mold, cover with a lid or parchment paper, and insulate with a blanket for 24 hours.



*Goat Milk and Honey Soap (top), [here](#) ; Tried and True Soap (bottom)*

- 6. CUT AND CURE** Remove the soap from the mold. If it seems too soft to remove, wait another 12 to 24 hours before removing. Cut the soap into 12 (4-ounce) bars. Allow the bars to cure in a well-ventilated location for 4 to 6 weeks.

**TIP:** Measure each ingredient carefully and watch your temperatures and you're much less likely to have any problems.

## COLD-PROCESS TROUBLESHOOTING TIPS

PROBLEM	CAUSE	SOLUTION
<b>Not coming to trace</b>	Recipes with thin liquid oils can cause soap to take longer to come to trace. Castile bars can do this. Or you could have added too much water and not enough lye. Or your temperatures are too cold for a good chemical reaction.	Make sure your temperatures are right. Watch for light trace. You should not have to blend for an hour. Did you add the lye water? Your batter may be very thin, but if you've really emulsified the oils with the water, use a good light to look for a slight trail left behind when soap is drizzled over the top.
<b>Coming to trace too fast</b>	Higher temperatures, using a stick blender, and adding certain ingredients can all cause soap to come to trace quickly.	When using honey and a lot of other hard fats and butters, watch your batter carefully. Don't use a stick blender if you want to have more time before it sets.
<b>Seizing in the pot</b>	Seizing can occur when the soap comes to trace too quickly or the temperature cools at the same time the soap starts to come to trace, solidifying the oils.	Scoop as much as you can into the mold. If you cannot even scoop the soap out of the pot, which is very rare, then you need to finish by hot-processing (see <a href="#">here</a> ).
<b>Hard, chalky soap that crumbles when you try to cut it</b>	Your recipe has too much lye.	Measure your lye carefully every time! If this happens, save it by hand-milling (see <a href="#">here</a> ) and add a tablespoon or two of water.
<b>Liquid oozing from soap</b>	You may have had false trace, where the oils were not fully emulsified but cooled and hardened instead of actually reaching trace.	Save by hand-milling (see <a href="#">here</a> ).
<b>Gel-like soap with wrinkled top</b>	Your soap overheated.	If it is hard, it's still fine to use. If you don't like the wrinkled top, shave it with a potato peeler. If it's soft, it may need to be hot-processed or allowed to cure longer.
<b>Soap begins to crack or bubble up in the middle</b>	This usually occurs only when soap with extra sugars from juices, milks, or alcohol become overheated.	All recipes with juice, milk, or alcohol have steps to ensure that this doesn't happen. Start with alcohol boiled off and milk, juices, or alcohols frozen to a slush. If this still happens, carefully uncover and place the mixture in the refrigerator if possible.

<b>White powder on top of soap</b>	This is known as soap ash and is purely cosmetic.	The only sure way to avoid soap ash is to carefully place parchment paper directly on the top surface of your soap after pouring. This isn't possible in molds with inserts and can ruin some designs; in these cases try to keep your soap well insulated. If you want to get rid of it, simply shave it off with a potato peeler or rub very gently while you rinse the bar. Don't touch as it dries to avoid fingerprints.
<b>Dark center and light edges</b>	This is known as a partial gel. If too much heat is lost around the edges of the mold, the outer edges of the soap will not gel. It is purely cosmetic.	There is no fix for a partial gel. Just make sure that you insulate better the next time you use that recipe. If this happens often, you may want to consider placing newly poured soap in a 170°F oven until fully gelled. The entire batch will look dark. Then remove and allow to cool.
<b>Crooked soap</b>	Curing on an uneven surface.	Get a level or use an app on your phone to see if the location that you want your soap to rest is level. If your floor happens to be very uneven in that spot, your soap will come out lopsided.
<b>Soap remains soft, even after days in the mold</b>	You probably didn't add enough lye.	You can still use this batch for personal use. It will continue to harden over a few weeks but will not be a long-lasting bar. You can turn this soap into a moisturizing hand soap: Shave 4 bars with a potato peeler and add them to a gallon of water, then heat lightly until melted.
<b>Soap separating in the mold</b>	It wasn't properly blended, so the oils and water did not fully emulsify.	Scrape the soap back into the pot and blend until emulsified, then return the soap to the mold.
<b>Soap has colored spots</b>	Fresh herbs or teas were not prepared properly or the oils in the soap are going bad.	Dried herbs are better than fresh, because teas and herbs can bleed into the soap over time. This is why I suggest making tea before using the tea leaves. You can always incorporate the tea water into your soap as well. If the spots are orange or brown from oils going bad, there's really nothing you can do. Always store soaps in a cool, dry location out of the sun.

## *What is the Gel Phase?*

The gel phase is a natural stage in the saponification process that occurs during insulation. If soap is insulated, the entire batch can heat up enough that it darkens and looks like gelatin. This phase doesn't last; after the soap gets through the bulk of the saponification, it will begin to cool. You'll then see it lighten significantly.

If you join any soapmaking groups or forums, you will constantly hear people talking about whether they gel their soap or not. Many people are passionate about their decision.

### **GELLING PROS**

I prefer to allow my soap to go through gel phase for two main reasons:

- **BRIGHTER COLORS.** Natural colorants are significantly enhanced by gelling.
- **FASTER HARDENING.** There is not a huge difference, but the water seems to evaporate faster, so the soaps are ready sooner.

### **GELLING CONS**

However, you can run into a few problems with your soap gelling:

- **PARTIAL GELLING.** This occurs when the center of the soap heats up and gels, but the outer edges do not. Partial gelling creates a darker circle in the middle of your soap, with the outer edges being lighter. In my opinion, most of the time it makes the soap look more interesting!
- **OVERHEATING.** In recipes with milk or alcohol, I specifically tell you not to insulate. Once you know your mold and how it holds heat, you can decide differently. Sugars from milk, honey, wine, purées, and juices can accelerate the saponification process and cause a quick rise in temperature. This heat needs to be released. If you've insulated a hot soap, it can crack, wrinkle, or—very occasionally—turn a dark, gel-like consistency and stay that way.
- **DARKER COLORS.** You may want a whiter soap. If so, don't gel your soap, and don't insulate at all.

### **TIPS FOR GELLING**

As long as you are careful to not let soaps with added sugars overheat, you will have soaps that have gelled while retaining bright colors.

- **FOR MILK, HONEY, OR JUICE SOAPS:** Cover with parchment paper or the mold's lid and don't insulate. They will probably go through the gel phase anyway, but without insulation they will not overheat. I also give you lower temperatures for those recipes. This will help everything stay cooler while still being hot enough to saponify.
- **FOR ALL OTHER SOAPS:** If the temperature in your house is above 75°F, just cover with parchment paper or the mold's lid and then cover with a towel. You can add another towel around the outside to avoid a partial gel. If your house is below 75°F, cover with a blanket or 2 to 3 towels. This will help the soap maintain enough heat to gel throughout the batch, deepening that beautiful color.

## OTHER METHODS

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Though this book is all about cold-processed soap, other soapmaking methods have great advantages as well hot-process soapmaking, melt and pour designing, and hand-milling soap. Though cold-processing is my regular go-to method, I know a number of people who use these other methods regularly and love them! Even if you are a die-hard cold-process soapmaker like me, knowing how to hot-process and hand-mill is important because they will be your primary methods for fixing botched batches and using soap scraps.

### Hot-Process Soapmaking

Hot-processing starts out the same as cold-processing. The difference occurs when you bring your soap to trace. Instead of pouring it into your mold, you lightly heat it for a few hours.

1. Weigh your ingredients, melt the oils together, and safely combine the lye and water.
2. After the oils and lye water cool to at least 150°F, pour them both into a slow cooker. If they are hotter, they may boil over when you begin to heat them.
3. Blend using a stick blender until trace. Be careful to watch for splashes if the slow cooker is shallow.
4. Cover with a lid and *do not open* . Let the soap sit in the slow cooker on the lowest setting, checking every 15 minutes *without lifting the lid* . If your slow cooker heats the soap too quickly, it could overflow! It will make a terrible mess, so check it often.
5. After an hour or two (depending on the heat level of your slow cooker), you should start to see the soap turn into a clear gel with the consistency of mashed potatoes, starting on the outer edges. There is no need to stir yet. Keep the lid on to keep moisture from escaping.
6. Once the entire batch has transformed, add your essential oils and any other natural additives and stir.
7. Scoop the soap into a mold. Bang the mold on the floor to knock out any air bubbles. Allow to cool.
8. When the soap is hard enough to remove from the mold (usually after 24 hours), remove and cut, allowing it to cure for another few days until hard enough to use.

It's ready without any further curing!

**9. Store in a well-ventilated area.**

The main benefit to hot-processing is obvious: You don't have to wait 4 to 6 weeks for the soap to cure! It often looks chunkier and doesn't have the smooth texture that cold-processed soap has, but it has a lot of really cool character. If you don't like the chunky top, you can always shave it with a potato peeler.

## **Hand-Milling**

Hand-milling is a cross between cold-processing and hot-processing. Start by making cold-process soap as usual with no colorant or essential oils. Then, instead of letting it cure after removing it from the mold, grate it into a double boiler over gently simmering water, while wearing gloves (since it will still contain lye). Stir until the soap is melted. Now add your essential oils and any other natural additives and pour into the mold again. After it is hard enough, remove it from the mold and allow it to cure for a week.

Why make cold-process soap and then hand-mill it? This will be the method you will use if your cold-processed soap goes wrong. It is also called re-batching. If you had too much lye or your soap didn't set up properly, you can save it by hand-milling. You may need to add a little more scent toward the end, depending on how your original scent fades. It is also a great way to use soap scraps. Save them until you have enough to make a batch of hand-milled soap. Let your kids be creative and make something new with old soap scraps.



## Melt and Pour

This method simply refers to taking soap that has already been made by someone else and melting it, much like with the hot-process fashion, and making it your own by adding wonderful scents, colors, designs, and shapes. You can even have a melt and pour party! It is the perfect soap-related activity for getting your kids involved because the lye has already been processed.

Another benefit is that, as with hot-processed soap, it is ready to use right away. As a fun project and gift, it's the perfect way to let your creative side shine. There are many books dedicated to melt and pour projects, so I won't go into great detail, but I did want to give you a quick how-to outline as well as a fun activity to get you started.

## MELT AND POUR TUTORIAL

# ROSE PETAL MELT AND POUR SOAP

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• GENTLE

**YIELD:** 3 POUNDS OR 12 (4-OUNCE) BARS

**SCENT:** ROSE

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**START TO FINISH TIME:** 1 hour, plus 4 hours cooling time

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This is a simple, elegant melt and pour soap. The glycerin content makes it extremely nourishing for the skin. With a rose scent and rose petals added gently to the top, it can be a special gift or great way to spoil yourself after a long day.

**SAFETY FIRST!** Remember to wear your safety equipment and mix the lye water outside. Tell everyone you live with that where you're working is off limits. Give yourself enough time to complete the recipe.

### EQUIPMENT

- kitchen scale
- measuring spoons
- knife
- double boiler
- large spoon
- mold
- parchment paper
- rubber spatula

### INGREDIENTS

- 3 pounds (48 ounces) melt and pour base, white or glycerin
- 1 ounce rose essential oil (3% to 5% dilution)
- 1 to 2 tablespoons rose clay
- 2 ounces dried rose petals

**PREP AHEAD** *Before you purchase a melt and pour base, read the ingredients list carefully! Lye will be listed as sodium hydroxide, lye, or saponified oils. You should recognize all other ingredients (coconut oil, shea butter, and so on). Stay away from stabilizers and emulsifiers if at all possible. There is no need for them and they are mostly not natural.*

- 1.** Cut the melt and pour base into 1- to 2-inch chunks, place in a double boiler over gently simmering water, and stir until melted.
- 2.** Add the rose essential oil and rose clay and stir until fully incorporated.
- 3.** Line your mold with parchment paper. Pour the soap into the mold. When it starts to harden on top but is still sticky, add the rose petals, patting gently to make sure they don't fall off.
- 4.** Remove the soap from the mold after it's set (about 4 hours). It's ready to use immediately.
- 5.** Store in an airtight container. Consider sealing to prevent the glycerin from sweating.



*Left (from top to bottom): Pink Grapefruit Wedding Soap, [here](#) ; Acne Bentonite Clay and Charcoal Soap, [here](#) ; Candy Cane Soap, [here](#) ; Mocha-Coffee Scrub Bar, [here](#) ; Patchouli, Charcoal, and Spirulina Swirl Soap, [here](#)*

*chapter six*

**DECORATIVE  
TECHNIQUES**

Most people who make their own soap want to add beautiful designs as well. There are many different decorative techniques, and more being invented by soapmakers all the time. In this chapter I'm going to show you three basic techniques that are used in the recipes in this book: embossing, swirling, and layering. You'll need to understand the terminology, tools needed, and the step-by-step process before you get started. Everyone develops their favorite methods, so use these as a springboard to develop your own shortcuts and beloved methods over time.

## EMBOSSING

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Embossing soap means to stamp or mold it so that a shape of your choosing is imprinted on the bar.

### Stamps

You don't have to use a stamp made just for soapmaking, but some rubber stamps are too soft to leave an imprint. Cure the soap for a few days after taking it out of the mold before stamping. It will still be soft enough to emboss, but hard enough to keep the shape (figure 6.1).



### Frosting

By pouring soap at thick trace, you can create a type of frosting on the top. Use a spatula to level the soap in the mold and then create a frosting top (see Relaxing Lavender Soap, [here](#)).

### Lace

Plastic or even paper doilies from the dollar store make great imprints. (Crocheted doilies are too thick and fuzzy.) Cut to fit the bottom of your mold. If your mold doesn't

come completely apart, you may need to tape the lace to the bottom so that your soap comes away without it.

## EMBOSSING TUTORIAL

Consider using a soapmaking notebook. You will want to record what worked well for embossing and what you want to do differently next time.

### Before You Begin

- Make sure everyone living with you understands that you are making soap and that the kitchen is off limits.
- Clear the area. Make sure there are no dishes in or around the sink. You will need that area to clean all your equipment when you're done.
- Make sure you have enough time. Allow for at least 2 hours.
- Choose a stamp design. There are some great acrylic options on Etsy. You can also have one specially made for you with your own design. If you choose a rubber stamp, make sure it has a very simple design that is deep enough to imprint. Intricate designs are hard to work with.
- Gather other equipment and supplies. As you will see, even the simplest recipe requires a lot of equipment and ingredients.
- Read the recipe in full before you begin. This is the best way to know what to expect and prevent mistakes along the way.

## EMBOSSING TUTORIAL

# SILKY-SMOOTH SOAP

- GENTLE
- VEGAN

**YIELD:** 3 POUNDS  
OR 12 (4-OUNCE)  
BARS

**LYE DISCOUNT:** 15%

**SCENT:**  
UNSCENTED

**START TO FINISH TIME:** 1 to 2 hours, 24 hours insulation, 4 to 6 weeks to cure

This recipe makes a silky-smooth soap that is gentle on the skin. It is perfect for stamp embossing because it is soft enough within the first few days to be able to take the stamp design very well, but firm enough to hold it without being sticky.

***SAFETY FIRST!*** Remember to wear your safety equipment and mix the lye water outside. Tell everyone you live with that where you're working is off limits. Give yourself enough time to complete the recipe.

### EQUIPMENT

- kitchen scale
- glass bowls
- large spoon
- large stainless steel pot
- small zip-top plastic bag
- thermometer
- mold
- parchment paper
- stick blender (or hand mixer)
- rubber spatula
- blanket

### INGREDIENTS

- 22 ounces olive oil
- 9 ounces coconut oil
- 3 ounces argan oil
- 4.3 ounces lye
- 13 ounces filtered water

- 1. HEAT THE FATS/OILS** In a large pot, combine the olive oil, coconut oil, and argan oil. Heat over medium-low heat until they are melted and incorporated. Remove from the heat and allow to cool to 100° to 110°F.
- 2. MIX THE LYE WATER** Put on safety gear, including protective eyewear, a mask, gloves, and long sleeves. Outside, carefully add the lye crystals to the water and stir until dissolved. Allow to cool to 100° to 110°F. If the oils and lye water cool at different rates, you can use a cold- or hot-water bath in the sink.
- 3. PREPARE THE MOLD** While the oils and lye water cool, line the mold with parchment paper.
- 4. COMBINE AND BRING TO TRACE** When both the oils and lye water are 100° to 110°F, carefully pour the lye water into the pot of oils. Use a stick blender (or hand mixer) to mix for 1 to 2 minutes and then let the mixture rest for 4 to 5 minutes. Repeat mixing and resting until light trace.
- 5. MOLD THE SOAP** Pour the soap into the mold, cover with a lid or parchment paper, and insulate with a blanket for 24 hours.
- 6. CUT AND CURE** Remove the soap from the mold. If it seems too soft to remove, wait another 12 to 24 hours before removing. Cut the soap into 12 (4-ounce) bars. Allow the bars to cure for 4 to 7 days before stamping.
- 7. STAMP AND CONTINUE TO CURE** After the soap has cured for 4 to 7 days, it should still be soft enough to imprint but hard enough to hold the shape of the stamp without being sticky. You want a clear, deep imprint. I like to line up the edge of my soap bar with the edge of my countertop, then place the stamp carefully onto the bar to ensure that everything is straight. Gently press down. If you are using a rubber stamp, gently roll the stamp as you press directly down for a better print. Continue to cure in a well-ventilated location for 4 to 6 weeks.



*Mocha-Coffee Scrub Bar, [here](#)*

## Troubleshooting

Another good reason for waiting 4 to 7 days after removing the soap from the mold before stamping is to make sure there is no ash on your soap. If there is, you can shave the surface with a peeler or gently rinse and rub the ash off.

- Don't push too hard with a stamp when your soap is slightly soft or it will squash! I learned that the hard way.
- If you're using lace to emboss, consider removing a scoop of soap and adding color to it. Spread the colored soap onto the lace in the mold before pouring the full batch on top: lace on soap! Don't overlap the lace or it will look like a mess.

## SWIRLING

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Swirling colors into soap is super easy and fun. There are many techniques to choose from, and soapers are constantly inventing more. I will outline the three basic techniques to help get you started, followed by a tutorial for a basic swirl.

The most important tip for swirls is that your soap needs to be at light to medium trace. You must emulsify the oils and water, but don't overdo it. Thinner soap will cause the swirls to sink into the soap, while soap that is too thick will cause the swirl

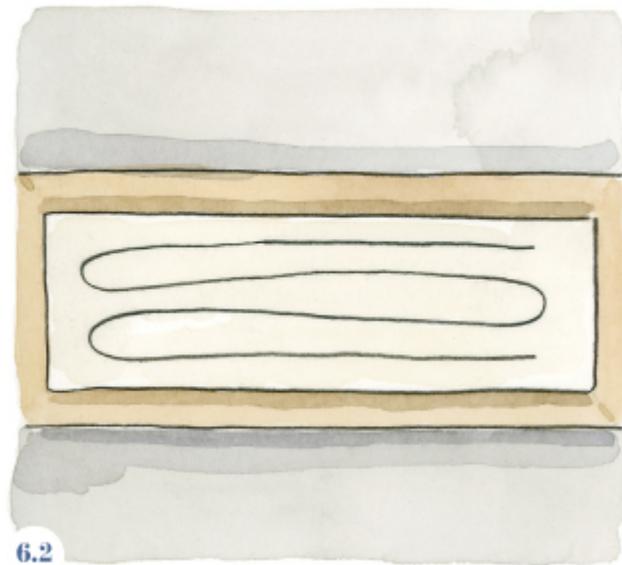
to sit on top of the soap. Make sure your temperatures are a little lower than usual, 90° to 100°F, to give yourself more time to create swirls.

You'll need a few extra tools for swirling:

- Extra glass bowls or measuring cups—one for each color you'd like to swirl into your batch
- Whisk
- Rubber spatula or chopstick (for a basic swirl)
- An extra-large pot (for a slide)

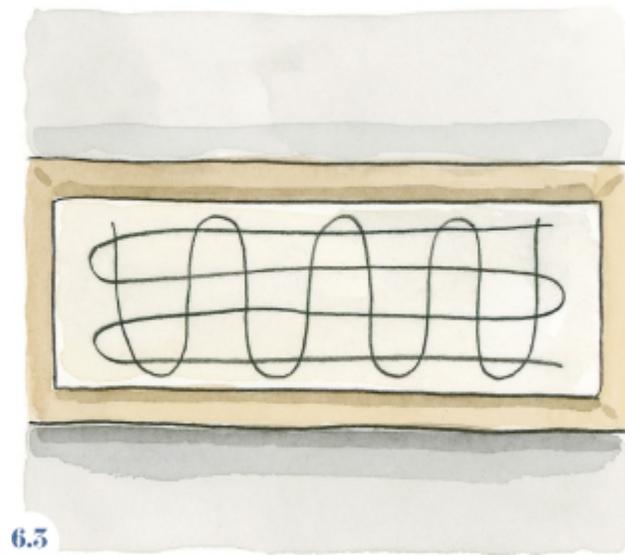
## Basic Swirl

1. At light trace, divide the soap batter into several glass bowls depending on the number of colors you are making. If you want just a few swirls on top, transfer just 1 cup to a separate bowl. If you are coloring the entire batch, divide it up evenly.
2. Add color to the soap you removed—for example, activated charcoal, rose clay, spirulina, or cocoa powder—and whisk to remove any lumps.
3. Pour the base color into the mold. Pour the colored soap over the base color in vertical, horizontal, or diagonal stripes. It is important to choose only *one* direction (figure 6.2).

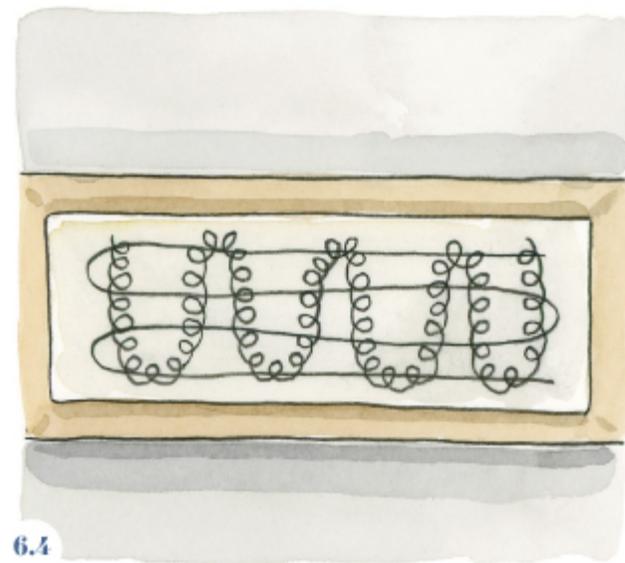


4. For larger swirls, use a spatula. For smaller swirls, use a chopstick. Insert the spatula or chopstick into the batter until it reaches the bottom of the mold. Drag it

up and down across the length of the mold ([figure 6.3](#) ; see Patchouli, Charcoal, and Spirulina Swirl Soap, [here](#) ).



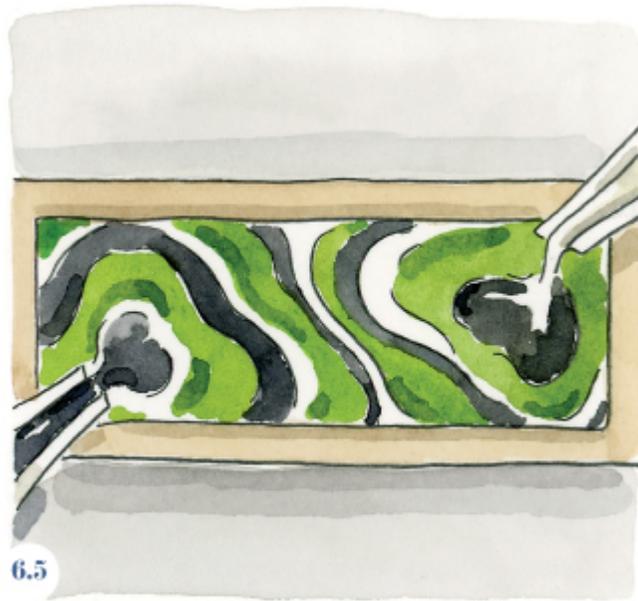
5. Stop there or add extra swirls by returning the spatula or chopstick to the starting point and retracing your steps, making small circles across the length of the soap ([figure 6.4](#) ; see Acne Bentonite Clay and Charcoal Soap, [here](#) ).



## Spin

1. At light trace, divide the soap batter equally into several glass bowls and add your desired colors to each, whisking to remove any lumps.

- Decide on the order of colors. Begin to pour a small amount of one color in the two opposite corners of your mold, counting out 4 seconds each time. Add the next color on top of the first, again counting 4. Repeat until all the colors are used multiple times (figure 6.5).
2. opposite corners of your mold, counting out 4 seconds each time. Add the next color on top of the first, again counting 4. Repeat until all the colors are used multiple times (figure 6.5).



3. Very slowly and gently spin the mold a few times. (Be sure to do this carefully—the first time I tried this I slopped soap out everywhere.) This will add a swirl effect to the colors (figure 6.6).



## Slide

1. At light trace, divide the soap batter into several glass bowls depending on the number of colors you are making.
2. Pour the colors one at a time into a large pot. Create multiple layers of color by pouring each color for a few seconds and repeating until all the soap is used (figure 6.7 ).
3. Gently pour the soap into the mold from one end to the other (figure 6.8 ).





## SWIRLING TUTORIAL

Consider using a soapmaking notebook. You will want to record what worked well, what the soap thickness was for your favorite swirl technique, and what you may want to do differently next time.

### Before You Begin

- Make sure everyone living with you understands that you are making soap and that the kitchen is off limits.
- Clear the area. Make sure there are no dishes in or around the sink. You will need that area to clean all your equipment when you're done.
- Make sure you have enough time. Allow for at least 2 hours.
- Read through each design style and decide on the one you would like to try. I am going to guide you through the basic swirl. It's a great method to start with until you're comfortable with swirling and understand how thickness affects the final product. If you'd like to try the spin or slide technique, follow the instructions above.

## SWIRLING TUTORIAL

# COCOA-MINT SOAP

- NUT-FREE
- VEGAN

**YIELD:** 3 POUNDS  
OR 12 (4-OUNCE)  
BARS

**LYE DISCOUNT:** 10%

**SCENT:**  
CHOCOLATE MINT

**START TO FINISH TIME:** 1 to 2 hours, 24 hours insulation, 4 to 6 weeks to cure

It never fails that every time I make this soap, one of my kids comes in and asks if I'm making fudge. I can't even remember the last time I made fudge, but these sure do smell yummy. They have a minty-chocolaty scent from the peppermint essential oil, cocoa butter, and cocoa powder, and I think the dark chocolate on cream is an elegant look. These bars make wonderful gifts.

***SAFETY FIRST!*** Remember to wear your safety equipment and mix the lye water outside. Tell everyone you live with that where you're working is off limits. Give yourself enough time to complete the recipe.

### EQUIPMENT

- kitchen scale
- glass bowls
- measuring spoons
- large spoon
- large stainless steel pot
- small zip-top bag
- thermometer
- mold
- parchment paper
- stick blender (or hand mixer)
- whisk
- rubber spatula
- chopstick
- blanket

### INGREDIENTS

- 13 ounces olive oil
- 10 ounces cocoa butter
- 9 ounces babassu oil
- 4.2 ounces lye
- 12.2 ounces filtered water
- 1 ounce peppermint essential oil
- 2 tablespoons cocoa powder

**1. HEAT THE FATS/OILS** In a large pot, combine the olive oil, cocoa butter, and babassu oil. Heat over medium-low heat until they are melted and incorporated. Remove from the heat and allow to cool to 90° to 100°F.

**2. MIX THE LYE WATER** Put on safety gear, including protective eyewear, a mask, gloves, and long sleeves. Outside, carefully add the lye crystals to the water and stir until dissolved. Allow to cool to 90° to 100°F. If the oils and lye water cool at different rates, you can use a cold- or hot-water bath in the sink.

**3. PREPARE THE MOLD** While the oils and lye water cool, line the mold with parchment paper.

**4. COMBINE AND BRING TO TRACE** When both the oils and lye water are 90° to 100°F, carefully pour the lye water into the pot of oils. Use a stick blender (or hand mixer) to mix for 2 to 3 minutes and then let the mixture rest for 4 to 5 minutes. Repeat mixing and resting until light trace.

**5. MIX IN NATURAL ADDITIVES** When the soap reaches light to medium trace, add the peppermint essential oil and blend for 30 seconds.

**6. MIX IN COLORANTS** Transfer ½ cup of the soap to a separate bowl. Add the cocoa powder and whisk until there are no lumps.

**7. MOLD THE SOAP AND SWIRL** When the soap is at medium trace (just a little thinner than pudding), pour the main batch of cream-colored soap into the mold. Pour the cocoa soap in a horizontal line back and forth over the top of your batch, making stripes. Insert a chopstick into the batter until it reaches the bottom of the mold. Drag the chopstick vertically back and forth across the length of the mold. Stop there or add extra swirls by returning the chopstick to the starting point and retracing your steps, making small circles across the length of the soap. Cover with a lid or parchment paper and insulate with a blanket for 24 hours.

**8. CUT AND CURE** Remove the soap from the mold. If it seems too soft to remove, wait another 12 to 24 hours before removing. Cut the soap into 12 (4-ounce) bars. Allow the bars to cure in a well-ventilated location for 4 to 6 weeks.



## Troubleshooting

- Thickness is crucial for swirling. If the soap is too thin, your colors will sink into the soap when poured. This is pretty for a swirl within the soap, but if you want to make a top swirl, you need to pour when it is thicker. But if it's too thick, your design will literally sit on top of the soap.
- You don't want to cover the top, just make stripes. If you have extra colored soap, don't use it.
- Just as with painting, knowing when to stop is key. When you like it, walk away. Too much swirling and you'll lose the design or blend the colors too much.

## LAYERING

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Layering is another fun decorating technique. It involves making layers of soap in different colors. The layers do not have to be straight vertical lines. Pretty layers are also made with texture, shapes, and swirls.

If you've never made layers before, start with two. You don't want to run out of time and have your soap seize while you're trying to make multiple layers. When you get more experienced and confident, you can add more layers.

For the best results, you will need to bring your soap to thick trace, which has a pudding-like consistency.

### How to Make Layers

1. When the soap reaches thick trace, divide your batch into 2 glass bowls.
2. Add a different color to each bowl, mixing thoroughly.
3. Pour one colored soap into your mold and smooth it out with a rubber spatula.
4. Carefully spoon the second color into the mold over the first color. Use the rubber spatula to smooth it out or add texture, depending on what effect you want to create (figure 6.9).



# LAYERING TUTORIAL

Consider using a soapmaking notebook. You will want to record what worked well, what soap thickness worked the best and gave your favorite results, and what you may want to do differently next time.

## Before You Begin

- Make sure everyone living with you understands that you are making soap and that the kitchen is off limits.
- Clear the area. Make sure there are no dishes in or around the sink. You will need that area to clean all your equipment when you're done.
- Make sure you have enough time. Allow for at least 2 hours.
- The easiest method for a beginner is to use colors that can be added at trace, such as activated charcoal. However, if you want to use oil-infused colors, consider using 2 ounces each of two olive oil-infused colors. Reduce the olive oil in the recipe by 4 ounces. Divide the batch in half at light trace and add your colored oils to each batch at this time. Blend really well so there will be no separation.

## LAYERING TUTORIAL

# TEA TREE AND LEMON LAYERED SOAP

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• ACNE-FIGHTING	<b>YIELD:</b> 3 POUNDS OR 12 (4-OUNCE) BARS	<b>LYE DISCOUNT:</b> 5%	<b>SCENT:</b> TEA TREE AND LEMON
<b>START TO FINISH TIME:</b> 1 to 2 hours, 24 hours insulation, 4 to 6 weeks to cure			

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Ready to make pretty layers? The tallow and coconut will help this batch come to trace and thicken quickly so you can create two clean layers. Be patient and add your second layer when the soap is thick enough to scoop onto the first layer without sinking.

***SAFETY FIRST!*** Remember to wear your safety equipment and mix the lye water outside. Tell everyone you live with that where you're working is off limits. Give yourself enough time to complete the recipe.

### EQUIPMENT

- kitchen scale
- measuring spoons
- glass bowls
- large spoon
- large stainless steel pot
- small zip-top plastic bag
- thermometer
- mold
- parchment paper
- stick blender (or hand mixer)
- whisk
- rubber spatula
- blanket

### INGREDIENTS

- 10 ounces olive oil
- 10 ounces tallow
- 9 ounces coconut oil
- 3 ounces avocado oil
- 4.6 ounces lye
- 12 ounces filtered water
- 0.5 ounce tea tree essential oil
- 0.5 ounce lemon essential oil
- 1 tablespoon activated charcoal

**1. HEAT THE FATS/OILS** In a large pot, combine the olive oil, tallow, coconut oil, and avocado oil. Heat over medium-low heat until they are melted and incorporated. Remove from the heat and allow to cool to 100° to 110°F.

**2. MIX THE LYE WATER** Put on safety gear, including protective eyewear, a mask, gloves, and long sleeves. Outside, carefully add the lye crystals to the water and stir until dissolved. Allow to cool to 100° to 110°F. If the oils and lye water cool at different rates, you can use a cold- or hot-water bath in the sink.

**3. PREPARE THE MOLD** While the oils and lye water cool, line the mold with parchment paper.

**4. COMBINE AND BRING TO TRACE** When both the oils and lye water are 90° to 100°F, carefully pour the lye water into the pot of oils. Use a stick blender (or hand mixer) to mix for 1 to 2 minutes and then let the mixture rest or 4 to 5 minutes. Repeat mixing and resting until light trace.

**5. MIX IN NATURAL ADDITIVES** When the soap reaches light to medium trace, add the tea tree and lemon essential oils and blend for 30 seconds.

**6. MIX IN COLORANTS** When the soap reaches medium trace, divide the batch in half. (This is where extra-large glass measuring cups come in handy.) Add the activated charcoal to one bowl and whisk until there are no lumps. If you want it to be darker, add a little more. It doesn't change much after saponification.

**7. MOLD THE SOAP AND LAYER** When both bowls are at thick trace (a pudding-like consistency), pour and scrape one layer into the mold and flatten with a rubber spatula. Make sure the first layer is really thick. If not, wait a few minutes or proceed very slowly. Carefully spoon the second layer onto the first. Texture or flatten as desired with a rubber spatula or spoon. Cover with a lid or parchment paper and insulate with a blanket for 24 hours.

**8. CUT AND CURE** Remove the soap from the mold. If it seems too soft to remove, wait another 12 to 24 hours before removing. Cut the soap into 12 (4-ounce) bars. Allow the bars to cure in a well-ventilated location for 4 to 6 weeks.

**TIP:** While you don't want to wait too long and have soap that's too thick to scoop out nicely, thicker is better than too thin, otherwise your second layer will just sink.

## Troubleshooting

- If your soap is too thin and seems to sink into the first layer a little bit, pour your second layer into the mold over a wide spatula. The wide spatula will guide it gently onto the first layer so it doesn't sink.
- If you're worried about getting the thickness just right, or if you want perfectly straight-lined layers, consider making two batches. Make the first batch to medium trace so that it's thin enough to have a smooth top, and pour it into the mold. Make the second batch immediately after. By the time you pour the second batch, the first batch will be hard enough that your lines will be straight. I like the look of semi-straight layers, but if you don't mind the extra work, then this is how to get very straight layers.
- If you want mountain layers, use a spatula to "fluff" the first layer as you would when icing a cake and allow it to stiffen before adding your second layer.
- If you want a small decorative swirl going down the middle of your two layers, add only ½ inch of your second layer and swirl by gently stirring one time down the middle of your bars. Then gently add the rest of the second layer over the top.

## WHAT'S NEXT?

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Congratulations! You have worked your way through the tutorials. You've familiarized yourself with all the basic processes for making soap and some techniques for decorating. You now have knowledge about all the ingredients and natural additives that you'll see in the recipes that follow.

The following recipes are divided into four sections: [Basic](#) , [Special](#) , [Creative](#) , and [Seasonal](#) . The Basics chapter will give you experience using different ingredients. The simplest recipes are listed first. We will slowly add color, scent, and decorative designs to these recipes to make your soaps unique.

You will find specialty soaps like shampoo bars and shaving bars in the next chapter. These are not necessarily more difficult, but are beautifully designed for specific purposes. The recipes in the final two chapters have a few extra steps, but I tried to keep them pretty simple. Once you've gained confidence with some of the basic soap recipes and specialty bars, you'll be well equipped to dive right in and make gifts and scents for your house for the holidays.

And remember to have a lot of fun with your soapmaking!

PART

3



## *The Recipes*

Now that you've learned the basics of soapmaking and all about the ingredients and techniques that will be used in this book, it's time to get started making your own soap. The recipes start with the easiest and progress throughout the book. While they become slightly more involved in design—from creating one solid color to creating swirl designs and using natural additives like goat milk, honey, loofahs, and more—I'll explain each detail, making sure the recipe is still easy to follow. Start at the beginning for the simplest recipes and work your way through. Don't forget to check out [chapter 11](#) , which covers how to wrap and label your soaps, as well as how to create your own recipes with instructions, tips, and charts.



*Goat Milk and Honey Soap (left), [here](#) ; Basic and Lovely Soap (right), [here](#)*

## *chapter seven* | **THE BASICS**

*Basic and Lovely Soap*

*Castile Soap*

*Bastille Soap*

*Gentle Baby Soap*

*Nut-Free Soap*

*Sensual Rose Soap*

*Coconut Milk Soap*

*Goat Milk and Vanilla Soap*

*Goat Milk and Honey Soap*

*Goat Milk, Cinnamon, Oats, and Honey Soap*

*Aloe and Nettle Herbal Soap*

*Relaxing Lavender Soap*

These are your beginning recipes, sure to give you success and help you fall in love with soapmaking. The recipes start simple, with only a few ingredients (as the Simple Life Mom, I believe simple is often the best). The recipes start off without scents or colors, just good, nourishing soap. I've included some vegan options, as well as seven soaps specifically designed for those with nut allergies. Though the recipes start simple, I will slowly introduce scents, milk, honey, and natural colorants that can be added. I'll give you step-by-step instructions and extra insider tips to make sure your first batches of soap turn out wonderfully.

There are literally hundreds of base oils and butters out there, yet just as with the essential oils, I tried to keep the list used in this book to a manageable size so that when you buy oils or butters for one recipe, they can also be used in many other recipes as well. If you'd like to mix and match essential oil blends of your own, use the same amount called for in the recipe until you are able to judge the strength of the oil and your

own preference. *Don't interchange any other ingredients without using a lye calculator.*

# BASIC AND LOVELY SOAP

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• GENTLE

**YIELD:** 3 POUNDS  
OR 12 (4-OUNCE)  
BARS

**LYE DISCOUNT:** 10%

**SCENT:**  
UNSCENTED

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**START TO FINISH TIME:** 1 to 2 hours, 24 hours insulation, 4 to 6 weeks to cure

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This is my go-to recipe for many reasons. It doesn't take very long to come to trace, and it makes a gentle but cleansing soap that lasts a long time. I also like it because I can play around with natural additives to give it a unique look and smell.

***SAFETY FIRST!*** Remember to wear your safety equipment and mix the lye water outside. Tell everyone you live with that where you're working is off limits. Give yourself enough time to complete the recipe.

## EQUIPMENT

- kitchen scale
- glass bowls
- large spoon
- large stainless steel pot
- small zip-top plastic bag
- thermometer
- mold
- parchment paper
- stick blender (or hand mixer)
- rubber spatula
- blanket

## INGREDIENTS

- 12 ounces olive oil
- 11 ounces lard
- 10 ounces coconut oil
- 4.5 ounces lye
- 12.5 ounces filtered water

**1. HEAT THE FATS/OILS** In a large pot, combine the olive oil, lard, and coconut oil. Heat over medium-low heat until they are melted and incorporated. Remove from the heat and allow to cool to 100° to 110°F.

**2. MIX THE LYE WATER** Put on safety gear, including protective eyewear, a mask, gloves, and long sleeves. Outside, carefully add the lye crystals to the water and stir until dissolved. Allow to cool to 100° to 110°F. If the oils and lye water cool at different rates, you can use a cold- or hot-water bath in the sink.

**3. PREPARE THE MOLD** While the oils and lye water cool, line the mold with parchment paper.

**4. COMBINE AND BRING TO TRACE** When both the oils and lye water are 100° to 110°F, carefully pour the lye water into the pot of oils. Use a stick blender (or hand mixer) to mix for 1 to 2 minutes and then let the mixture rest for 4 to 5 minutes. Repeat mixing and resting until light trace.

**5. MOLD THE SOAP** Pour the soap mixture into the mold, cover with a lid or parchment paper and insulate with a blanket for 24 hours.

**6. CUT AND CURE** Remove the soap from the mold. If it seems too soft to remove, wait another 12 to 24 hours before removing. Cut the soap into 12 (4-ounce) bars. Allow the bars to cure in a well-ventilated location for 4 to 6 weeks.

**TIP:** Remember to weigh ingredients carefully and wait for the right temperatures before mixing the lye water with the oils. This will minimize the possibility of any type of problem occurring.

# CASTILE SOAP

- GENTLE
- VEGAN

**YIELD:** 3 POUNDS  
OR 12 (4-OUNCE)  
BARS

**LYE DISCOUNT:** 15%

**SCENT:** LAVENDER  
AND EUCALYPTUS

**START TO FINISH TIME:** 1 to 2 hours, 24 hours insulation, 4 to 6 weeks to cure

Chances are that you've heard of Castile soap and have wanted to make it. They are very gentle soaps that cleanse but do not strip the skin of its natural oils. Lavender and eucalyptus are known to be simultaneously calming and stimulating scents and add a lot to this soap to make it special.

***SAFETY FIRST!*** Remember to wear your safety equipment and mix the lye water outside. Tell everyone you live with that where you're working is off limits. Give yourself enough time to complete the recipe.

## EQUIPMENT

- kitchen scale
- glass bowls
- large spoon
- large stainless steel pot
- small zip-top plastic bag
- thermometer
- mold
- parchment paper
- stick blender (or hand mixer)
- rubber spatula
- blanket

## INGREDIENTS

- 25 ounces olive oil
- 7 ounces coconut oil
- 4 ounces lye
- 12 ounces filtered water
- 0.5 ounce lavender essential oil

- 0.5 ounce eucalyptus essential oil

**1. HEAT THE FATS/OILS** In a large pot, combine the olive oil and coconut oil. Heat over medium-low heat until they are melted and incorporated. Remove from the heat and allow to cool to 100° to 110°F.

**2. MIX THE LYE WATER** Put on safety gear, including protective eyewear, a mask, gloves, and long sleeves. Outside, carefully add the lye crystals to the water and stir until dissolved. Allow to cool to 100° to 110°F. If the oils and lye water cool at different rates, you can use a cold- or hot-water bath in the sink.

**3. PREPARE THE MOLD** While the oils and lye water cool, line the mold with parchment paper.

**4. COMBINE AND BRING TO TRACE** When both the oils and lye water are 100° to 110°F, carefully pour the lye water into the pot of oils. Use a stick blender (or hand mixer) to mix for 1 to 2 minutes and then let the mixture rest for 4 to 5 minutes. Repeat mixing and resting until light trace.

**5. MIX IN NATURAL ADDITIVES** When the soap reaches light trace, add the lavender and eucalyptus essential oils and blend for 30 seconds.

**6. MOLD THE SOAP** Pour the soap mixture into the mold, cover with a lid or parchment paper, and insulate with a blanket for 24 hours.

**7. CUT AND CURE** Remove the soap from the mold. If it seems too soft to remove, wait another 12 to 24 hours before removing. Cut the soap into 12 (4-ounce) bars. Allow the bars to cure in a well-ventilated location for 4 to 6 weeks.

**TIP:** Castile soap is a softer soap that is very gentle on the skin. It can take longer to come to trace, so watch carefully for light trace. When you see a slight trail that looks like a glaze when you dribble soap over the top of the batch, then you've reached light trace and are ready to pour it into the mold.

# BASTILLE SOAP

- GENTLE
- VEGAN

**YIELD:** 3 POUNDS  
OR 12 (4-OUNCE)  
BARS

**LYE DISCOUNT:** 15%

**SCENT:** LEMON AND  
ROSEMARY

**START TO FINISH TIME:** 1 to 2 hours, 24 hours insulation, 4 to 6 weeks to  
cure

Bastille is a name given to soaps that have a very high olive oil content, but not as high as a Castile soap. This makes them a little harder and more cleansing. It is still a very gentle soap. I've added lemon and rosemary to create a fresh, stimulating scent.

***SAFETY FIRST!*** Remember to wear your safety equipment and mix the lye water outside. Tell everyone you live with that where you're working is off limits. Give yourself enough time to complete the recipe.

## EQUIPMENT

- kitchen scale
- glass bowls
- large spoon
- large stainless steel pot
- small zip-top plastic bag
- thermometer
- mold
- parchment paper
- stick blender (or hand mixer)
- rubber spatula
- blanket

## INGREDIENTS

- 22 ounces olive oil
- 9 ounces coconut oil
- 3 ounces mango butter
- 4.3 ounces lye
- 13 ounces filtered water
- 0.5 ounce lemon essential oil

- 0.5 ounce rosemary essential oil

**1. HEAT THE FATS/OILS** In a large pot, combine the olive oil, coconut oil, and mango butter. Heat over medium-low heat until they are melted and incorporated. Remove from the heat and allow to cool to 100° to 110°F.

**2. MIX THE LYE WATER** Put on safety gear, including protective eyewear, a mask, gloves, and long sleeves. Outside, carefully add the lye crystals to the water and stir until dissolved. Allow to cool to 100° to 110°F. If the oils and lye water cool at different rates, you can use a cold- or hot-water bath in the sink.

**3. PREPARE THE MOLD** While the oils and lye water cool, line the mold with parchment paper.

**4. COMBINE AND BRING TO TRACE** When both the oils and lye water are 100° to 110°F, carefully pour the lye water into the pot of oils. Use a stick blender (or hand mixer) to mix for 1 to 2 minutes and then let the mixture rest for 4 to 5 minutes. Repeat mixing and resting until light trace.

**5. MIX IN NATURAL ADDITIVES** When the soap reaches light trace, add the lemon and rosemary essential oils and blend for 30 seconds.

**6. MOLD THE SOAP** Pour the soap mixture into the mold, cover with a lid or parchment paper, and insulate with a blanket for 24 hours.

**7. CUT AND CURE** Remove the soap from the mold. If it seems too soft to remove, wait another 12 to 24 hours before removing. Cut the soap into 12 (4-ounce) bars. Allow the bars to cure in a well-ventilated location for 4 to 6 weeks.

**TIP:** Don't forget that you can check the troubleshooting tips in chapter 5 ([here](#)) if you have any questions about the outcome of your soap. Also, if you'd like to try a different scent, you can easily substitute a different essential oil or combination of essential oils that total 1 ounce.

# GENTLE BABY SOAP

- GENTLE
- VEGAN

**YIELD:** 3 POUNDS  
OR 12 (4-OUNCE)  
BARS

**LYE DISCOUNT:** 15%

**SCENT:**  
UNSCENTED

**START TO FINISH TIME:** 1 to 2 hours, 24 hours insulation, 4 to 6 weeks to cure

This soap is exactly what its name says: a gentle soap that is great for babies (or those with sensitive skin). It is kept unscented so that babies and those with allergies will not have any problems. I also use this as a shaving bar since it is so creamy and smooth.

***SAFETY FIRST!*** Remember to wear your safety equipment and mix the lye water outside. Tell everyone you live with that where you're working is off limits. Give yourself enough time to complete the recipe.

## EQUIPMENT

- kitchen scale
- glass bowls
- large spoon
- large stainless steel pot
- small zip-top plastic bag
- thermometer
- mold
- parchment paper
- stick blender (or hand mixer)
- rubber spatula
- blanket

## INGREDIENTS

- 18 ounces olive oil
- 8 ounces coconut oil
- 5 ounces castor oil
- 3 ounces cocoa butter
- 2 ounces shea butter
- 4.4 ounces lye

- 13.7 ounces filtered water

**1. HEAT THE FATS/OILS** In a large pot, combine the olive oil, coconut oil, castor oil, cocoa butter, and shea butter. Heat over medium-low heat until they are melted and incorporated. Remove from the heat and allow to cool to 100° to 110°F.

**2. MIX THE LYE WATER** Put on safety gear, including protective eyewear, a mask, gloves, and long sleeves. Outside, carefully add the lye crystals to the water and stir until dissolved. Allow to cool to 100° to 110°F. If the oils and lye water cool at different rates, you can use a cold- or hot-water bath in the sink.

**3. PREPARE THE MOLD** While the oils and lye water cool, line the mold with parchment paper.

**4. COMBINE AND BRING TO TRACE** When both the oils and lye water are 100° to 110°F, carefully pour the lye water into the pot of oils. Use a stick blender (or hand mixer) to mix for 1 to 2 minutes and then let the mixture rest for 4 to 5 minutes. Repeat mixing and resting until light trace.



**5. MOLD THE SOAP** Pour the soap mixture into the mold, cover with a lid or parchment paper, and insulate with a blanket for 24 hours.

**6. CUT AND CURE** Remove the soap from the mold. If it seems too soft to remove, wait another 12 to 24 hours before removing. Cut the soap into 12 (4-ounce) bars. Allow the bars to cure in a well-ventilated location for 4 to 6 weeks.

# NUT-FREE SOAP

- NUT-FREE
- VEGAN

**YIELD:** 3 POUNDS  
OR 12 (4-OUNCE)  
BARS

**LYE DISCOUNT:** 5%

**SCENT:** LAVENDER  
AND LEMONGRASS

**START TO FINISH TIME:** 1 to 2 hours, 24 hours insulation, 4 to 6 weeks to cure

This recipe was specifically designed for anyone with nut allergies, including coconut. When you get confident with it, you can add varying natural additives and have fun! There are other soaps in this book that are nut-free—just look for the nut-free label.

**SAFETY FIRST!** Remember to wear your safety equipment and mix the lye water outside. Tell everyone you live with that where you're working is off limits. Give yourself enough time to complete the recipe.

## EQUIPMENT

- kitchen scale
- glass bowls
- large spoon
- large stainless steel pot
- small zip-top plastic bag
- thermometer
- mold
- parchment paper
- stick blender (or hand mixer)
- rubber spatula
- blanket

## INGREDIENTS

- 12 ounces olive oil
- 9 ounces babassu oil
- 5 ounces castor oil
- 3 ounces cocoa butter
- 2 ounces shea butter
- 2 ounces avocado oil

- 4.5 ounces lye
- 12.5 ounces filtered water
- 0.05 ounce lavender essential oil
- 0.05 ounce lemongrass essential oil

**1. HEAT THE FATS/OILS** In a large pot, combine the olive oil, babassu oil, castor oil, cocoa butter, shea butter, and avocado oil. Heat over medium-low heat until they are melted and incorporated. Remove from the heat and allow to cool to 100° to 110°F.

**2. MIX THE LYE WATER** Put on safety gear, including protective eyewear, a mask, gloves, and long sleeves. Outside, carefully add the lye crystals to the water and stir until dissolved. Allow to cool to 100° to 110°F. If the oils and lye water cool at different rates, you can use a cold- or hot-water bath in the sink.

**3. PREPARE THE MOLD** While the oils and lye water cool, line the mold with parchment paper.

**4. COMBINE AND BRING TO TRACE** When both the oils and lye water are 100° to 110°F, carefully pour the lye water into the pot of oils. Use a stick blender (or hand mixer) to mix for 1 to 2 minutes and then let the mixture rest for 4 to 5 minutes. Repeat mixing and resting until light trace.

**5. MIX IN NATURAL ADDITIVES** When the soap reaches light trace, add the lavender and lemongrass essential oils and blend for 30 seconds.

**6. MOLD THE SOAP** Pour the soap mixture into the mold, cover with a lid or parchment paper, and insulate with a blanket for 24 hours.

**7. CUT AND CURE** Remove the soap from the mold. If it seems too soft to remove, wait another 12 to 24 hours before removing. Cut the soap into 12 (4-ounce) bars. Allow the bars to cure in a well-ventilated location for 4 to 6 weeks.

# SENSUAL ROSE SOAP

---

• GENTLE

**YIELD:** 3 POUNDS  
OR 12 (4-OUNCE)  
BARS

**LYE DISCOUNT:** 10%

**SCENT:** ROSE

---

**START TO FINISH TIME:** 1 to 2 hours, 24 hours insulation, 4 to 6 weeks to cure

---

In aromatherapy, rose is used to uplift and calm the mind. This recipe will produce a pretty pink soap containing that wonderfully sensual rose scent. It makes a great hard and bubbly bar. Rose essential oil can be very expensive, so don't be afraid to buy a dilution as low as 3 percent.

***SAFETY FIRST!*** Remember to wear your safety equipment and mix the lye water outside. Tell everyone you live with that where you're working is off limits. Give yourself enough time to complete the recipe.

## EQUIPMENT

- kitchen scale
- measuring spoons
- glass bowls
- large spoon
- large stainless steel pot
- small zip-top plastic bag
- thermometer
- mold
- parchment paper
- stick blender (or hand mixer)
- whisk
- rubber spatula
- blanket

## INGREDIENTS

- 10 ounces olive oil
- 10 ounces tallow
- 9 ounces coconut oil

- 3 ounces avocado oil
- 4.4 ounces lye
- 12.2 ounces filtered water
- 1 ounce rose essential oil (3% dilution)
- 1 tablespoon rose clay

**1. HEAT THE FATS/OILS** In a large pot, combine the olive oil, tallow, coconut oil, and avocado oil. Heat over medium-low heat until they are melted and incorporated. Remove from the heat and allow to cool to 100° to 110°F.

**2. MIX THE LYE WATER** Put on safety gear, including protective eyewear, a mask, gloves, and long sleeves. Outside, carefully add the lye crystals to the water and stir until dissolved. Allow to cool to 100° to 110°F. If the oils and lye water cool at different rates, you can use a cold- or hot-water bath in the sink.

**3. PREPARE THE MOLD** While the oils and lye water cool, line the mold with parchment paper.

**4. COMBINE AND BRING TO TRACE** When both the oils and lye water are 100° to 110°F, carefully pour the lye water into the pot of oils. Use a stick blender (or hand mixer) to mix for 1 to 2 minutes and then let the mixture rest for 4 to 5 minutes. Repeat mixing and resting until light trace.

**5. MIX IN NATURAL ADDITIVES** When the soap reaches light to medium trace, add the rose essential oil and blend for 30 seconds.

**6. MIX IN COLORANTS** Transfer 1 cup of soap to a separate bowl. Add the rose clay and whisk until there are no lumps. Return the rose-colored soap to the larger batch and blend until fully incorporated.

**7. MOLD THE SOAP** Pour the soap mixture into the mold, cover with a lid or parchment paper, and insulate with a blanket for 24 hours.

**8. CUT AND CURE** Remove the soap from the mold. If it seems too soft to remove, wait another 12 to 24 hours before removing. Cut the soap into 12 (4-ounce) bars. Allow the bars to cure in a well-ventilated location for 4 to 6 weeks.

**TIP:** Watch for light trace so that you have time to add the rose clay before the batch gets too thick.

# COCONUT MILK SOAP

- GENTLE
- VEGAN

**YIELD:** 3 POUNDS  
OR 12 (4-OUNCE)  
BARS

**LYE DISCOUNT:** 5%

**SCENT:**  
PEPPERMINT AND  
LEMON

**START TO FINISH TIME:** 2 hours, 24 hours in mold, 4 to 6 weeks to cure

Coconut milk has a lot of nourishing qualities like vitamins and minerals that can be absorbed by our skin. It also makes a wonderfully hydrating soap. I've paired it with an energizing scent made from peppermint and lemon essential oils in a recipe that is gentle and moisturizing.

***SAFETY FIRST!*** Remember to wear your safety equipment and mix the lye water outside. Tell everyone you live with that where you're working is off limits. Give yourself enough time to complete the recipe.

## EQUIPMENT

- kitchen scale
- glass bowls
- large spoon
- large stainless steel pot
- small zip-top plastic bag
- thermometer
- mold
- parchment paper
- stick blender (or hand mixer)
- rubber spatula

## INGREDIENTS

- 7.5 ounces filtered water
- 5 ounces coconut milk
- 15 ounces olive oil
- 9 ounces coconut oil
- 4 ounces cocoa butter
- 3 ounces apricot kernel oil
- 2 ounces sweet almond oil

- 4.7 ounces lye
- 0.5 ounce peppermint essential oil
- 0.5 ounce lemon essential oil

**PREP AHEAD** *Combine the water and coconut milk in a large glass, plastic, or stainless steel container. Place the container in the freezer for 1 to 2 hours. It is okay if a slush forms, as long as it doesn't freeze solid. The colder your milk-water, the lighter your soap will be after adding the lye.*

**1. HEAT THE FATS/OILS** In a large pot, combine the olive oil, coconut oil, cocoa butter, apricot kernel oil, and sweet almond oil. Heat over medium-low heat until they are melted and incorporated. Remove from the heat and allow to cool to 90° to 100°F.

**2. MIX THE LYE WATER** Put on safety gear, including protective eyewear, a mask, gloves, and long sleeves. Outside, very slowly pour only about ¼ of the lye crystals into the cold milk-water and stir until dissolved. Let cool for 20 minutes. Repeat until all the lye is dissolved into the milk-water. If the milk-water browns, don't worry; your soap will just be darker. Allow to cool to 90° to 100°F. If the oils and lye water cool at different rates, you can use a cold- or hot-water bath in the sink.

**3. PREPARE THE MOLD** While the oils and lye water cool, line the mold with parchment paper.

**4. COMBINE AND BRING TO TRACE** When both the oils and lye water are 90° to 100°F, carefully pour the lye water into the pot of oils. Use a stick blender (or hand mixer) to mix for 1 to 2 minutes and then let the mixture rest for 4 to 5 minutes. Repeat mixing and resting until light trace.

**5. MIX IN NATURAL ADDITIVES** When the soap reaches light trace, add the peppermint and lemon essential oils and blend for 30 seconds.

**6. MOLD THE SOAP** Pour the soap mixture into the mold and cover with a lid or parchment paper for 24 hours. Do not insulate unless your house is below 65°F, in which case insulate by placing a towel around the outside edges of the mold to avoid a partial gel.

**7. CUT AND CURE** Remove the soap from the mold. If it seems too soft to remove, wait another 12 to 24 hours before removing. Cut the soap into 12 (4-ounce) bars. Allow the bars to cure in a well-ventilated location for 4 to 6 weeks.

**TIP:** Milk can scald when lye is added. Placing the milk-water in the freezer until it's very cold helps prevent this. Be sure to add the lye slowly. It is okay to really take your time, coming back every 20 minutes to add a little more. Milk can also make your batch

get hotter than usual, so just insulate a milk recipe lightly with a towel if you're concerned about getting a good gel for color.

# GOAT MILK AND VANILLA SOAP

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• MOISTURIZING	<b>YIELD:</b> 3 POUNDS OR 12 (4-OUNCE) BARS	<b>LYE DISCOUNT:</b> 5%	<b>SCENT:</b> VANILLA
<b>START TO FINISH TIME:</b> 2 hours, 24 hours in mold, 4 to 6 weeks to cure			

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Here is our first goat milk soap! The key is to get the lye water to almost freezing temperatures before starting and to be sure to add it slowly. It's worth the patience because goat milk adds wonderful properties to soap. It makes for a moisturizing bar that contains many vitamins and lovely alpha hydroxy acids that help soften skin.

***SAFETY FIRST!*** Remember to wear your safety equipment and mix the lye water outside. Tell everyone you live with that where you're working is off limits. Give yourself enough time to complete the recipe.

## EQUIPMENT

- kitchen scale
- glass bowls
- large spoon
- large stainless steel pot
- small zip-top plastic bag
- thermometer
- mold
- parchment paper
- stick blender (or hand mixer)
- rubber spatula

## INGREDIENTS

- 7.5 ounces filtered water
- 5 ounces goat milk
- 10 ounces tallow
- 9 ounces olive oil
- 8 ounces coconut oil
- 4 ounces shea butter
- 2 ounces cocoa butter

- 4.6 ounces lye
- 1 ounce vanilla oil (not vanilla extract)
- 0.5 ounce benzoin essential oil

**PREP AHEAD** *Combine the water and goat milk in a large glass, plastic, or stainless steel container. Place the container in the freezer for 1 to 2 hours. It is okay if a slush forms, as long as it doesn't freeze solid. The colder your milk-water, the lighter your soap will be after adding the lye.*

**1. HEAT THE FATS/OILS** In a large pot, combine the tallow, olive oil, coconut oil, shea butter, and cocoa butter. Heat over medium-low heat until they are melted and incorporated. Remove from the heat and allow to cool to 90° to 100°F.

**2. MIX THE LYE WATER** Put on safety gear, including protective eyewear, a mask, gloves, and long sleeves. Outside, very slowly pour only about ¼ of the lye crystals into the cold milk-water and stir until dissolved. Let cool for 20 minutes. Repeat until all the lye is dissolved into the milk-water. If the milk-water browns, don't worry; your soap will just be darker. Allow to cool to 90° to 100°F. If the oils and lye water cool at different rates, you can use a cold- or hot-water bath in the sink.

**3. PREPARE THE MOLD** While the oils and lye water cool, line the mold with parchment paper.

**4. COMBINE AND BRING TO TRACE** When both the oils and lye water are 90° to 100°F, carefully pour the lye water into the pot of oils. Use a stick blender (or hand mixer) to mix for 1 to 2 minutes and then let the mixture rest for 4 to 5 minutes. Repeat mixing and resting until light trace.

**5. MIX IN NATURAL ADDITIVES** When the soap reaches light trace, add the vanilla oil and benzoin essential oil and blend for 30 seconds.

**6. MOLD THE SOAP** Pour the soap mixture into the mold and cover with a lid or parchment paper for 24 hours. Do not insulate unless your house is below 75°F, in which case insulate by placing a towel around the outside edges to avoid a partial gel.

**7. CUT AND CURE** Remove the soap from the mold. If it seems too soft to remove, wait another 12 to 24 hours before removing. Cut the soap into 12 (4-ounce) bars. Allow the bars to cure in a well-ventilated location for 4 to 6 weeks.

**TIP:** Milk can scald when lye is added. Placing the milk-water in the freezer until it's very cold helps prevent this. Be sure to add the lye slowly. It is okay to really take your time, coming back every 20 minutes to add a little more. Milk can also make your batch get hotter than usual, so just insulate a milk recipe lightly with a towel if you're concerned about getting a good gel for color.

# GOAT MILK AND HONEY SOAP

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• MOISTURIZING	<b>YIELD:</b> 3 POUNDS OR 12 (4-OUNCE) BARS	<b>LYE DISCOUNT:</b> 15%	<b>SCENT:</b> ORANGE
<b>START TO FINISH TIME:</b> 2 hours, 24 hours in mold, 4 to 6 weeks to cure			

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Though a Castile bar was the first soap recipe I made, I dreamed of making a goat milk and honey soap bar. Well, here it is. Using milk and honey in a recipe means you need to be aware of a few more things, but it's pretty easy once you get the hang of it. Enjoy the many nourishing benefits of this soap!

**SAFETY FIRST!** Remember to wear your safety equipment and mix the lye water outside. Tell everyone you live with that where you're working is off limits. Give yourself enough time to complete the recipe.

## EQUIPMENT

- kitchen scale
- measuring spoons
- glass bowls
- large spoon
- large stainless steel pot
- small zip-top plastic bag
- thermometer
- mold
- parchment paper
- stick blender (or hand mixer)
- rubber spatula

## INGREDIENTS

- 8 ounces filtered water
- 4 ounces goat milk
- 10 ounces olive oil
- 8 ounces lard
- 8 ounces coconut oil
- 4 ounces sweet almond oil

- 2 ounces beeswax
- 4 ounces lye
- 1 ounce orange essential oil
- 1 tablespoon raw honey

**PREP AHEAD** *Combine the water and goat milk in a large glass, plastic, or stainless steel container.*

*Place the container in the freezer for 1 to 2 hours. It is okay if a slush forms, as long as it doesn't freeze solid. The colder your milk-water, the lighter your soap will be after adding the lye.*

**1. HEAT THE FATS/OILS** In a large pot, combine the olive oil, lard, coconut oil, sweet almond oil, and beeswax. Heat over medium-low heat until they are melted and incorporated. Remove from the heat and allow to cool to 90° to 100°F.

**2. MIX THE LYE WATER** Put on safety gear, including protective eyewear, a mask, gloves, and long sleeves. Outside, very slowly pour only ¼ of the lye crystals into the cold milk-water and stir until dissolved. Let cool for 20 minutes. Repeat until all the lye is dissolved into the milk-water. If the milk-water browns, don't worry; your soap will just be darker. Allow to cool to 90° to 100°F. If the oils and lye water cool at different rates, you can use a cold- or hot-water bath in the sink.

**3. PREPARE THE MOLD** While the oils and lye water cool, line the mold with parchment paper.

**4. COMBINE AND BRING TO TRACE** When both the oils and lye water are 90° to 100°F, carefully pour the lye water into the pot of oils. Use a stick blender (or hand mixer) to mix for 1 to 2 minutes and then let the mixture rest for 4 to 5 minutes. Repeat mixing and resting until light trace.

**5. MIX IN NATURAL ADDITIVES** When the soap reaches light trace, add the orange essential oil and honey and blend for 30 seconds.

**6. MOLD THE SOAP** Pour the soap mixture into the mold and cover with a lid or parchment paper for 24 hours. Do not insulate unless your house is below 75°F, in which case insulate by placing a towel around the outside edges to avoid a partial gel.

**7. CUT AND CURE** Remove the soap from the mold. If it seems too soft to remove, wait another 12 to 24 hours before removing. Cut the soap into 12 (4-ounce) bars. Allow the bars to cure in a well-ventilated location for 4 to 6 weeks.

**TIP:** Milk can scald when lye is added. Placing the milk-water in the freezer until it's very cold helps prevent this. Be sure to add the lye slowly. It is okay to really take your time, coming back every 20 minutes to add a little more. Milk can also make your batch get hotter than usual, so just insulate a milk recipe lightly with a towel if you're

concerned about getting a good gel for color. Honey can also make soap come to trace faster, so add it and blend really well right before pouring the soap into the mold.

# GOAT MILK, CINNAMON, OATS, AND HONEY SOAP

- ACNE-FIGHTING

**YIELD:** 3 POUNDS  
OR 12 (4-OUNCE)  
BARS

**LYE DISCOUNT:** 15%

**SCENT:** CINNAMON

**START TO FINISH TIME:** 2 hours, 24 hours in mold, 4 to 6 weeks to cure

In this recipe, goat milk and honey team up to hydrate and soften the skin, while providing their natural antibacterial properties. The blended oats create a nice gentle exfoliation. While cinnamon leaf just seems to go naturally with oats and honey, aromatherapists also consider it a concentration-enhancing scent.

***SAFETY FIRST!*** Remember to wear your safety equipment and mix the lye water outside. Tell everyone you live with that where you're working is off limits. Give yourself enough time to complete the recipe.

## EQUIPMENT

- kitchen scale
- measuring spoons
- glass bowls
- blender or food processor
- large spoon
- large stainless steel pot
- small zip-top plastic bag
- thermometer
- mold
- parchment paper
- stick blender (or hand mixer)
- rubber spatula

## INGREDIENTS

- 8 ounces filtered water
- 4 ounces goat milk
- ½ cup ground oats

- 9 ounces olive oil
- 8 ounces coconut oil
- 8 ounces lard
- 5 ounces castor oil
- 3 ounces grapeseed oil
- 4 ounces lye
- 1 ounce cinnamon leaf essential oil
- 1 tablespoon raw honey

**PREP AHEAD:**

*1. Combine the water and goat milk in a large glass, plastic, or stainless steel container. Place the container in the freezer for 1 to 2 hours. It is okay if a slush forms, as long as it doesn't freeze solid. The colder your milk-water, the lighter your soap will be after adding the lye.*

*2. In a blender or food processor, grind ½ to ¾ cup rolled oats into a fine powder; you will need ½ cup ground oats.*

**1. HEAT THE FATS/OILS** In a large pot, combine the olive oil, coconut oil, lard, castor oil, and grapeseed oil. Heat over medium-low heat until they are melted and incorporated. Remove from the heat and allow to cool to 90° to 100°F.

**2. MIX THE LYE WATER** Put on safety gear, including protective eyewear, a mask, gloves, and long sleeves. Outside, very slowly pour only ¼ of the lye crystals into the cold milk-water and stir until dissolved. Let cool for 20 minutes. Repeat until all the lye is dissolved into the milk-water. If the milk-water still browns, don't worry; your soap will just be darker. Allow to cool to 90° to 100°F. If the oils and lye water cool at different rates, you can use a cold- or hot-water bath in the sink.

**3. PREPARE THE MOLD** While the oils and lye water cool, line the mold with parchment paper.

**4. COMBINE AND BRING TO TRACE** When both the oils and lye water are 90° to 100°F, carefully pour the lye water into the pot of oils. Use a stick blender (or hand mixer) to mix for 1 to 2 minutes and then let the mixture rest for 4 to 5 minutes. Repeat mixing and resting until light trace.

**5. MIX IN NATURAL ADDITIVES** When the soap reaches light trace, add the cinnamon leaf essential oil, oats, and honey, and blend for 30 seconds.

**6. MOLD THE SOAP** Pour the soap mixture into the mold, cover with a lid or parchment paper for 24 hours. Do not insulate unless your house is below 75°F, in which case insulate by placing a towel around the outside edges to avoid a partial gel.

**7. CUT AND CURE** Remove the soap from the mold. If it seems too soft to remove, wait another 12 to 24 hours before removing. Cut the soap into 12 (4-ounce) bars. Allow the bars to cure in a well-ventilated location for 4 to 6 weeks.

**TIP:** Milk can scald when lye is added. Placing the milk-water in the freezer until it's very cold helps prevent this. Be sure to add the lye slowly. It is okay to really take your time, coming back every 20 minutes to add a little more. Milk can also make your batch get hotter than usual, so just insulate a milk recipe lightly with a towel if you're concerned about getting a good gel for color. Honey can also make soap come to trace faster, so add it and blend really well right before pouring the soap into the mold.

# ALOE AND NETTLE HERBAL SOAP

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• ACNE-FIGHTING	<b>YIELD:</b> 3 POUNDS OR 12 (4-OUNCE) BARS	<b>LYE DISCOUNT:</b> 5%	<b>SCENT:</b> GERANIUM AND LEMONGRASS
<b>START TO FINISH TIME:</b> 1 to 2 hours, 24 hours insulation, 4 to 6 weeks to cure			

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Nettle is high in vitamins and minerals. Its astringent and anti-inflammatory properties make it excellent for skin and hair. Aloe is also anti-inflammatory and is calming for your skin, making it great for acne. I've chosen to use lemongrass and geranium essential oils in this recipe because they are natural aromatherapy stress relievers.

**SAFETY FIRST!** Remember to wear your safety equipment and mix the lye water outside. Tell everyone you live with that where you're working is off limits. Give yourself enough time to complete the recipe.

## EQUIPMENT

- kitchen scale
- measuring spoons
- glass bowls
- large spoon
- large stainless steel pot
- small zip-top plastic bag
- thermometer
- mold
- parchment paper
- stick blender (or hand mixer)
- rubber spatula
- blanket

## INGREDIENTS

- 9 ounces water
- 4 ounces aloe liquid
- 13 ounces tallow
- 9 ounces olive oil

- 6 ounces coconut oil
- 3 ounces cocoa butter
- 3 ounces mango butter
- 4.7 ounces lye
- 0.05 ounce geranium essential oil
- 0.05 ounce lemongrass essential oil
- 1 tablespoon dried nettle leaf

**PREP AHEAD** *Combine the water and aloe liquid in a glass, plastic, or stainless steel container and chill in your refrigerator for 1 to 2 hours.*

**1. HEAT THE FATS/OILS** In a large pot, combine the tallow, olive oil, coconut oil, cocoa butter, and mango butter. Heat over medium-low heat until they are melted and incorporated. Remove from the heat and allow to cool to 100° to 110°F.

**2. MIX THE LYE WATER** Put on safety gear, including protective eyewear, a mask, gloves, and long sleeves. Outside, carefully add the lye crystals to the cold aloe-water and stir until dissolved. Allow to cool to 100° to 110°F. If the oils and lye water cool at different rates, you can use a cold- or hot-water bath in the sink.

**3. PREPARE THE MOLD** While the oils and lye water cool, line the mold with parchment paper.

**4. COMBINE AND BRING TO TRACE** When both the oils and lye water are 100° to 110°F, carefully pour the lye water into the pot of oils. Use a stick blender (or hand mixer) to mix for 1 to 2 minutes and then let the mixture rest for 4 to 5 minutes. Repeat mixing and resting until light trace.

**5. MIX IN NATURAL ADDITIVES** When the soap reaches light trace, add the geranium and lemongrass essential oils and the nettle, and blend for 30 seconds.

**6. MOLD THE SOAP** Pour the soap mixture into the mold, cover with a lid or parchment paper, and insulate with a blanket for 24 hours.

**7. CUT AND CURE** Remove the soap from the mold. If it seems too soft to remove, wait another 12 to 24 hours before removing. Cut the soap into 12 (4-ounce) bars. Allow the bars to cure in a well-ventilated location for 4 to 6 weeks.

# RELAXING LAVENDER SOAP

- GENTLE
- MOISTURIZING

**YIELD:** 3 POUNDS  
OR 12 (4-OUNCE)  
BARS

**LYE DISCOUNT:** 5%

**SCENT:** LAVENDER

**START TO FINISH TIME:** 1 to 2 hours, 24 hours insulation, 4 to 6 weeks to cure

This is a recipe for a velvety purple soap that has a pure lavender scent. It will make for a very relaxing shower. It is a pretty soap that can be made lighter or darker depending on the amount of alkanet root powder used and how it is swirled. It's also good for those with sensitive skin and allergies.

**SAFETY FIRST!** Remember to wear your safety equipment and mix the lye water outside. Tell everyone you live with that where you're working is off limits. Give yourself enough time to complete the recipe.

## EQUIPMENT

- kitchen scale
- measuring spoons
- glass bowls
- large spoon
- large stainless steel pot
- small zip-top plastic bag
- thermometer
- mold
- parchment paper
- stick blender (or hand mixer)
- whisk
- rubber spatula
- blanket

## INGREDIENTS

- 9 ounces olive oil
- 9 ounces lard
- 7 ounces coconut oil

- 3 ounces castor oil
- 2 ounces hazelnut oil
- 2 ounces cocoa butter
- 1 ounce shea butter
- 4.6 ounces lye
- 12.5 ounces filtered water
- 1 ounce lavender essential oil
- 1 tablespoon dried alkanet root powder

**1. HEAT THE FATS/OILS** In a large pot, combine the olive oil, lard, coconut oil, castor oil, hazelnut oil, cocoa butter, and shea butter. Heat over medium-low heat until they are melted and incorporated. Remove from the heat and allow to cool to 100° to 110°F.

**2. MIX THE LYE WATER** Put on safety gear, including protective eyewear, a mask, gloves, and long sleeves. Outside, carefully add the lye crystals to the water and stir until dissolved. Allow to cool to 100° to 110°F. If the oils and lye water cool at different rates, you can use a cold- or hot-water bath in the sink.

**3. PREPARE THE MOLD** While the oils and lye water cool, line the mold with parchment paper.

**4. COMBINE AND BRING TO TRACE** When both the oils and lye water are 100° to 110°F, carefully pour the lye water into the pot of oils. Use a stick blender (or hand mixer) to mix for 1 to 2 minutes and then let the mixture rest for 4 to 5 minutes. Repeat mixing and resting until light trace.

**5. MIX IN NATURAL ADDITIVES** When the soap reaches light to medium trace, add the lavender essential oil and blend for 30 seconds.

**6. MIX IN COLORANTS** Transfer 1 cup of the soap to a separate bowl. Add the alkanet root powder and whisk until there are no lumps. Set aside.

**7. MOLD AND LAYER THE SOAP** Pour the large batch into the mold, using a rubber spatula to scrape the sides of the pot. Slowly pour the alkanet root soap over the mold, moving back and forth evenly over the surface. Use a whisk to turn swirls into the top layer. You will end up with a dark purple top that fades to a lighter purple. Cover with a lid or parchment paper and insulate with a blanket for 24 hours.



**8. CUT AND CURE** Remove the soap from the mold. If it seems too soft to remove, wait another 12 to 24 hours before removing. Cut the soap into 12 (4-ounce) bars. Allow the bars to cure in a well-ventilated location for 4 to 6 weeks.

**TIP:** If this is your first time swirling, be sure to relax and have fun. If you'd like to use the basic swirl method described in chapter 6 ([here](#)) instead, remove only  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of soap to add the alkanet root. Alkanet root will turn a pretty blue before returning to purple, so make sure to peek at it within the first 24 hours.



*Mocha-Coffee Scrub Bar (front), [here](#) ; Acne Charcoal and Tea Tree Soap (rear), [here](#)*

## *chapter eight* | **SPECIALTY BARS**

*Sensitive Skin Body Bar with Coconut Milk*

*Anti-Aging Face Bar*

*Avocado and Shea Face Bar with Aloe*

*Creamy Goat Milk and Honey Shaving Bar*

*Luxurious Shampoo Bar*

*Goat Milk and Honey Shampoo Bar*

*Jewelweed Soap for Poison Ivy*

*Bug-Away Camping Soap*

*Allergy Relief Bar*

*Mocha-Coffee Scrub Bar*

*Loofah Exfoliant Soap*

*Laundry Bar*

*Pet Shampoo*

*Antibacterial Hand Soap*

*Acne Bentonite Clay and Charcoal Soap*

*Acne Charcoal and Tea Tree Soap*

This is my favorite recipe chapter in the book because soapmaking can encompass so much more than just body bars to use in the bath. Bars can be formulated to nourish the sensitive skin of the face. You can also make extra bubbly and creamy shaving bars, shampoo bars, exfoliating bars, as well as soap for pets, soap that repels bugs while you are camping, and even laundry soap for everyday use. I've also included a few soaps that have been shown time and time again to work amazingly well for those suffering from acne and other skin issues like eczema and psoriasis by adding ingredients like activated charcoal, bentonite clay, and essential oils like tea tree. I always have a jewelweed soap in stock in my Simple Life Mom Etsy shop as soon as summer hits so that those, like my

kids, who suffer from poison ivy can stop the rash before it even begins. Enjoy this chapter and take soapmaking into new parts of your life.

# SENSITIVE SKIN BODY BAR WITH COCONUT MILK

- GENTLE

**YIELD:** 3 POUNDS  
OR 12 (4-OUNCE)  
BARS

**LYE DISCOUNT:** 15%

**SCENT:** LAVENDER  
AND CAMPHOR

**START TO FINISH TIME:** 1 to 2 hours, 24 hours in mold, 4 to 6 weeks to cure

As someone who has sensitive skin, all store-bought products give me acne, lead to a rash, or cause me to itch! It's very frustrating. While I can use all my homemade soaps, I especially like this one because the mango butter gives it a creamy feeling and the coconut milk is very moisturizing. I chose camphor and lavender oils because they are both calming to the skin. With a 15 percent lye discount, this recipe is gentle and moisturizing.

***SAFETY FIRST!*** Remember to wear your safety equipment and mix the lye water outside. Tell everyone you live with that where you're working is off limits. Give yourself enough time to complete the recipe.

## EQUIPMENT

- kitchen scale
- glass bowls
- large spoon
- large stainless steel pot
- small zip-top plastic bag
- thermometer
- mold
- parchment paper
- stick blender (or hand mixer)
- rubber spatula

## INGREDIENTS

- 8.7 ounces water
- 5 ounces coconut milk
- 18 ounces olive oil

- 6 ounces tallow
- 5 ounces coconut oil
- 5 ounces castor oil
- 2 ounces mango butter
- 4.4 ounces lye
- 0.5 ounce lavender essential oil
- 0.5 ounce camphor essential oil

**PREP AHEAD** *Combine the water and coconut milk in a large glass, plastic, or stainless steel container. Place the container in the freezer for 1 to 2 hours. It is okay if a slush forms, as long as it doesn't freeze solid. The colder your milk-water, the lighter your soap will be after adding the lye.*

**1. HEAT THE FATS/OILS** In a large pot, combine the olive oil, tallow, coconut oil, castor oil, and mango butter. Heat over medium-low heat until they are melted and incorporated. Remove from the heat and allow to cool to 90° to 100°F.

**2. MIX THE LYE WATER** Put on safety gear, including protective eyewear, a mask, gloves, and long sleeves. Outside, very slowly pour only about ¼ of the lye into the cold milk-water and stir until dissolved. Let cool for 20 minutes. Repeat until all the lye is dissolved into the milk-water. If the milk-water still browns, don't worry; your soap will just be darker. Allow to cool to 90° to 100°F. If the oils and lye water cool at different rates, you can use a cold- or hot-water bath in the sink.

**3. PREPARE THE MOLD** While the oils and lye water cool, line the mold with parchment paper.

**4. COMBINE AND BRING TO TRACE** When both the oils and lye water are 90° to 100°F, carefully pour the lye water into the pot of oils. Use a stick blender (or hand mixer) to mix for 1 to 2 minutes and then let the mixture rest for 4 to 5 minutes. Repeat mixing and resting until light trace.

**5. MIX IN NATURAL ADDITIVES** When the soap reaches light trace, add the lavender and camphor essential oils and blend for 30 seconds.

**6. MOLD THE SOAP** Pour the soap mixture into the mold and cover with a lid or parchment paper for 24 hours. Do not insulate unless your house is below 75°F, in which case insulate by placing a towel around the outside edges of the mold to avoid a partial gel.

**7. CUT AND CURE** Remove the soap from the mold. If it seems too soft to remove, wait another 12 to 24 hours before removing. Cut the soap into 12 (4-ounce) bars. Allow the bars to cure in a well-ventilated location for 4 to 6 weeks.

**TIP:** Milk can scald when lye is added. Placing the milk-water in the freezer until it's very cold helps prevent this. Be sure to add the lye slowly. It is okay to really take your time, coming back every 20 minutes to add a little more. Milk can also make your batch get hotter than usual, so just insulate a milk recipe lightly with a towel if you're concerned about getting a good gel for color.

# ANTI-AGING FACE BAR

- MOISTURIZING
- VEGAN

**YIELD:** 3 POUNDS  
OR 12 (4-OUNCE)  
BARS

**LYE DISCOUNT:** 18%

**SCENT:** CARROT,  
FRANKINCENSE,  
MYRRH, AND  
GERANIUM

**START TO FINISH TIME:** 1 to 2 hours, 24 hours insulation, 4 to 6 weeks to cure

The apricot kernel oil and carrot seed, frankincense, myrrh, and geranium essential oils were chosen specifically in this recipe to aid the repair of mature skin. The ingredients are known to strengthen skin by providing nutrients like enriching oleic and linoleic acid, vitamin A, and other beneficial properties. These qualities, along with the moisturizing and gentle cleansing ability, make this a great face bar.

***SAFETY FIRST!*** Remember to wear your safety equipment and mix the lye water outside. Tell everyone you live with that where you're working is off limits. Give yourself enough time to complete the recipe.

## EQUIPMENT

- kitchen scale
- glass bowls
- large spoon
- large stainless steel pot
- small zip-top plastic bag
- thermometer
- mold
- parchment paper
- stick blender (or hand mixer)
- rubber spatula
- blanket

## INGREDIENTS

- 10 ounces olive oil
- 9 ounces coconut oil
- 5 ounces apricot kernel oil

- 4 ounces castor oil
- 4 ounces cocoa butter
- 2 ounces shea butter
- 4.1 ounces lye
- 12.9 ounces filtered water
- 0.25 ounce carrot seed essential oil
- 0.25 ounce frankincense essential oil
- 0.15 ounce myrrh essential oil
- 0.5 ounce geranium essential oil

**1. HEAT THE FATS/OILS** In a large pot, combine the olive oil, coconut oil, apricot kernel oil, castor oil, cocoa butter, and shea butter. Heat over medium-low heat until they are melted and incorporated. Remove from the heat and allow to cool to 100° to 110° F.

**2. MIX THE LYE WATER** Put on safety gear, including protective eyewear, a mask, gloves, and long sleeves. Outside, carefully add the lye crystals to the water and stir until dissolved. Allow to cool to 100° to 110° F. If the oils and lye water cool at different rates, you can use a cold or hot-water bath in the sink.

**3. PREPARE THE MOLD** While the oils and lye water cool, line the mold with parchment paper.

**4. COMBINE AND BRING TO TRACE** When both the oils and lye water are 100° to 110° F, carefully pour the lye water into the pot of oils. Use a stick blender (or hand mixer) to mix for 1 to 2 minutes and then let the mixture rest for 4 to 5 minutes. Repeat mixing and resting until light trace.

**5. MIX IN NATURAL ADDITIVES** When the soap reaches light trace, add the carrot seed, frankincense, myrrh, and geranium essential oils, and blend for 30 seconds.

**6. MOLD THE SOAP** Pour the soap mixture into the mold, cover with a lid or parchment paper, and insulate with a blanket for 24 hours.

**7. CUT AND CURE** Remove the soap from the mold. If it seems too soft to remove, wait another 12 to 24 hours before removing. Cut the soap into 12 (4-ounce) bars. Allow the bars to cure in a well-ventilated location for 4 to 6 weeks.

# AVOCADO AND SHEA FACE BAR WITH ALOE

- ACNE-FIGHTING
- GENTLE

**YIELD:** 3 POUNDS  
OR 12 (4-OUNCE)  
BARS

**LYE DISCOUNT:** 15%

**SCENT:** LIME AND  
BASIL

**START TO FINISH TIME:** 1 to 2 hours, 24 hours insulation, 4 to 6 weeks to cure

Face bars should be cleansing without drying out your skin or being too harsh. A good face bar rids your skin of bacteria while providing nourishment to your skin. This face bar contains aloe, which calms the skin, as well as shea butter and avocado, which provide vitamins, antioxidants, and great moisturizing ability. Basil and lime have traditionally been used to treat acne and kill bacteria. They have a very energizing yet calming scent.

***SAFETY FIRST!*** Remember to wear your safety equipment and mix the lye water outside. Tell everyone you live with that where you're working is off limits. Give yourself enough time to complete the recipe.

## EQUIPMENT

- kitchen scale
- measuring spoons
- glass bowls
- large spoon
- large stainless steel pot
- small zip-top plastic bag
- thermometer
- mold
- parchment paper
- stick blender (or hand mixer)
- whisk
- rubber spatula
- blanket

## INGREDIENTS

- 9 ounces water
- 3.5 ounces aloe liquid
- 8 ounces tallow
- 8 ounces coconut oil
- 7 ounces olive oil
- 5 ounces shea butter
- 4 ounces avocado oil
- 2 ounces avocado, puréed
- 4.2 ounces lye
- 0.5 ounce lime essential oil
- 0.5 ounce basil essential oil
- 1 teaspoon spirulina powder (optional)

**PREP AHEAD** *Combine the water and aloe liquid in a glass, plastic, or stainless steel container and chill in your refrigerator for 1 to 2 hours.*

**1. HEAT THE FATS/OILS** In a large pot, combine the tallow, coconut oil, olive oil, shea butter, and avocado oil. Heat over medium-low heat until they are melted and incorporated. Remove from the heat and allow to cool to 100° to 110°F.

**2. MIX THE LYE WATER** Put on safety gear, including protective eyewear, a mask, gloves, and long sleeves. Outside, carefully add the lye crystals to the cold aloe-water and stir until dissolved. Allow to cool to 100° to 110°F. If the oils and lye water cool at different rates, you can use a cold- or hot-water bath in the sink.

**3. PREPARE THE MOLD** While the oils and lye water cool, line the mold with parchment paper.

**4. COMBINE AND BRING TO TRACE** When both the oils and lye water are 100° to 110°F, carefully pour the lye water into the pot of oils. Use a stick blender (or hand mixer) to mix for 1 to 2 minutes and then let the mixture rest for 4 to 5 minutes. Repeat mixing and resting until light trace.

**5. MIX IN NATURAL ADDITIVES** When the soap reaches light trace, add the avocado purée and the lime and basil essential oils, and blend for 30 seconds.

**6. ADD THE COLORANTS** If you choose to add the spirulina, transfer 1 cup of the soap to a separate bowl. Add the spirulina and whisk until there are no lumps. Return the colored soap to the full batch and blend.

**7. MOLD THE SOAP** Pour the soap mixture into the mold, cover with a lid or parchment paper, and insulate with a blanket for 24 hours.

**8. CUT AND CURE** Remove the soap from the mold. If it seems too soft to remove, wait another 12 to 24 hours before removing. Cut the soap into 12 (4-ounce) bars. Allow the bars to cure in a well-ventilated location for 4 to 6 weeks.

**TIP:** You are adding fresh avocado, essential oils, and spirulina all at trace. You don't want your soap to thicken too quickly while you're working, so watch it very carefully and stop to add those ingredients as soon as it just starts to thicken at light trace.

# CREAMY GOAT MILK AND HONEY SHAVING BAR

- GENTLE
- MOISTURIZING
- NUT-FREE

**YIELD:** 3 POUNDS  
OR 12 (4-OUNCE)  
BARS

**LYE DISCOUNT:** 15%

**SCENT:**  
CEDARWOOD AND  
BERGAMOT

**START TO FINISH TIME:** 2 hours, 24 hours in mold, 4 to 6 weeks to cure

I've tried to use shea lotions and other oils as shaving creams, but they usually gum up the drain and tub. This shaving bar is formulated to create a creamy, low-bubble lather that gently coats the skin while conditioning and moisturizing, making this a wonderful-feeling body and face bar. I've chosen cedarwood and bergamot for a bright, clean scent, but feel free to substitute 1 total ounce of your favorite essential oil(s) to give it the scent that you prefer.

***SAFETY FIRST!*** Remember to wear your safety equipment and mix the lye water outside. Tell everyone you live with that where you're working is off limits. Give yourself enough time to complete the recipe.

## EQUIPMENT

- kitchen scale
- measuring spoons
- glass bowls
- large spoon
- large stainless steel pot
- small zip-top plastic bag
- thermometer
- mold
- parchment paper
- stick blender (or hand mixer)
- rubber spatula

## INGREDIENTS

- 8.3 ounces water
- 5 ounces goat milk

- 15 ounces olive oil
- 8 ounces babassu oil
- 6 ounces castor oil
- 3 ounces cocoa butter
- 3 ounces shea butter
- 4.25 ounces lye
- 0.5 ounce cedarwood essential oil
- 0.5 ounce bergamot essential oil
- 1 tablespoon raw honey

**PREP AHEAD** *Combine the water and goat milk in a large glass, plastic, or stainless steel container.*

*Place the container in the freezer for 1 to 2 hours. It is okay if a slush forms, as long as it doesn't freeze solid. The colder your milk-water, the lighter your soap will be after adding the lye.*

**1. HEAT THE FATS/OILS** In a large pot, combine the olive oil, babassu oil, castor oil, cocoa butter, and shea butter. Heat over medium-low heat until they are melted and incorporated. Remove from the heat and allow to cool to 90° to 100°F.

**2. MIX THE LYE WATER** Put on safety gear, including protective eyewear, a mask, gloves, and long sleeves. Outside, very slowly pour only about ¼ of the lye crystals into the cold milk-water and stir until dissolved. Let cool for 20 minutes. Repeat until all the lye is dissolved into the milk-water. If the milk-water still browns, don't worry; your soap will just be darker. Allow to cool to 90° to 100°F. If the oils and lye water cool at different rates, you can use a cold- or hot-water bath in the sink.

**3. PREPARE THE MOLD** While the oils and lye water cool, line the mold with parchment paper.

**4. COMBINE AND BRING TO TRACE** When both the oils and lye water are 90° to 100°F, carefully pour the lye water into the pot of oils. Use a stick blender (or hand mixer) to mix for 1 to 2 minutes and then let the mixture rest for 4 to 5 minutes. Repeat mixing and resting until light trace.

**5. MIX IN NATURAL ADDITIVES** When the soap reaches light trace, add the cedarwood and bergamot essential oils and the honey, and blend for 30 seconds.

**6. MOLD THE SOAP** Pour the soap mixture into the mold and cover with a lid or parchment paper for 24 hours. Do not insulate unless your house is below 75°F, in which case insulate by placing a towel around the outside edges of the mold to avoid a partial gel.

**7. CUT AND CURE** Remove the soap from the mold. If it seems too soft to remove, wait another 12 to 24 hours before removing. Cut the soap into 12 (4-ounce) bars. Allow the

bars to cure in a well-ventilated location for 4 to 6 weeks.

**TIP:** Milk can scald when lye is added. Placing the milk-water in the freezer until it's very cold helps prevent this. Be sure to add the lye slowly. It is okay to really take your time, coming back every 20 minutes to add a little more. Milk can also make your batch get hotter than usual, so just insulate a milk recipe lightly with a towel if you're concerned about getting a good gel for color. Honey can also make soap come to trace faster, so add it and blend really well right before pouring the soap into the mold.

# LUXURIOUS SHAMPOO BAR

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• GENTLE	<b>YIELD:</b> 3 POUNDS OR 12 (4-OUNCE) BARS	<b>LYE DISCOUNT:</b> 15%	<b>SCENT:</b> LAVENDER
<b>START TO FINISH TIME:</b> 1 to 2 hours, 24 hours insulation, 4 to 6 weeks to cure			

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I don't call this *luxurious* for nothing! Ingredients like olive oil and shea butter make this shampoo bar nourishing for any hair type, while coconut boosts cleansing power and castor ensures that it is creamy and bubbly. Simply lather in your hand or on a washcloth and rub into your hair, massaging and cleansing as you normally would. Rinse and then spray a mixture of half apple cider vinegar and half water to condition your hair and balance the pH level.

**SAFETY FIRST!** Remember to wear your safety equipment and mix the lye water outside. Tell everyone you live with that where you're working is off limits. Give yourself enough time to complete the recipe.

## EQUIPMENT

- kitchen scale
- glass bowls
- large spoon
- large stainless steel pot
- small zip-top plastic bag
- thermometer
- mold
- parchment paper
- stick blender (or hand mixer)
- rubber spatula
- blanket

## INGREDIENTS

- 10 ounces olive oil
- 9 ounces coconut oil
- 5 ounces castor oil

- 1 ounce beeswax
- 3 ounces jojoba oil
- 2 ounces cocoa butter
- 2 ounces shea butter
- 4 ounces lye
- 12 ounces filtered water
- 1 ounce lavender essential oil

**1. HEAT THE FATS/OILS** In a large pot, combine the olive oil, coconut oil, apricot kernel oil, castor oil, cocoa butter, and shea butter. Heat over medium-low heat until they are melted and incorporated. Remove from the heat and allow to cool to 100° to 110°F.

**2. MIX THE LYE WATER** Put on safety gear, including protective eyewear, a mask, gloves, and long sleeves. Outside, carefully add the lye crystals to the water and stir until dissolved. Allow to cool to 100° to 110°F. If the oils and lye water cool at different rates, you can use a cold- or hot-water bath in the sink.

**3. PREPARE THE MOLD** While the oils and lye water cool, line the mold with parchment paper.

**4. COMBINE AND BRING TO TRACE** When both the oils and lye water are 100° to 110°F, carefully pour the lye water into the pot of oils. Use a stick blender (or hand mixer) to mix for 1 to 2 minutes and then let the mixture rest for 4 to 5 minutes. Repeat mixing and resting until light trace.

**5. MIX IN NATURAL ADDITIVES** When the soap reaches light trace, add the carrot seed, frankincense, myrrh, and geranium essential oils, and blend for 30 seconds.

**6. MOLD THE SOAP** Pour the soap mixture into the mold, cover with a lid or parchment paper, and insulate with a blanket for 24 hours.

**7. CUT AND CURE** Remove the soap from the mold. If it seems too soft to remove, wait another 12 to 24 hours before removing. Cut the soap into 12 (4-ounce) bars. Allow the bars to cure in a well-ventilated location for 4 to 6 weeks.

# GOAT MILK AND HONEY SHAMPOO BAR

- GENTLE
- MOISTURIZING

**YIELD:** 3 POUNDS  
OR 12 (4-OUNCE)  
BARS

**LYE DISCOUNT:** 15%

**SCENT:** LIME,  
YLANG-YLANG,  
AND CLOVE

**START TO FINISH TIME:** 2 hours, 24 hours in mold, 4 to 6 weeks to cure

This is the most popular shampoo bar in my Etsy shop. People have discovered that it lathers wonderfully and has extra nourishing vitamin benefits from the goat milk. As with all shampoo bars, lather in your hand or washcloth and rub through hair. Wash and rinse. Spray a mixture of half apple cider vinegar and half water onto your hair to condition and balance the pH level.

**SAFETY FIRST!** Remember to wear your safety equipment and mix the lye water outside. Tell everyone you live with that where you're working is off limits. Give yourself enough time to complete the recipe.

## EQUIPMENT

- kitchen scale
- measuring spoons
- glass bowls
- large spoon
- large stainless steel pot
- small zip-top plastic bag
- thermometer
- mold
- parchment paper
- stick blender (or hand mixer)
- rubber spatula

## INGREDIENTS

- 8 ounces water
- 4 ounces goat milk
- 11 ounces olive oil

- 10 ounces coconut oil
- 5 ounces castor oil
- 4 ounces avocado oil
- 2 ounces shea butter
- 4 ounces lye
- 0.5 ounce lime essential oil
- 0.5 ounce ylang-ylang essential oil
- 0.25 ounce clove essential oil
- 1 tablespoon raw honey

**PREP AHEAD** *Combine the water and goat milk in a large glass, plastic, or stainless steel container.*

*Place the container in the freezer for 1 to 2 hours. It is okay if a slush forms, as long as it doesn't freeze solid. The colder your milk-water, the lighter your soap will be after adding the lye.*

**1. HEAT THE FATS/OILS** In a large pot, combine the olive oil, coconut oil, castor oil, avocado oil, and shea butter. Heat over medium-low heat until they are melted and incorporated. Remove from the heat and allow to cool to 90° to 100°F.

**2. MIX THE LYE WATER** Put on safety gear, including protective eyewear, a mask, gloves, and long sleeves. Outside, very slowly pour only about ¼ of the lye crystals into the cold milk-water and stir until dissolved. Let cool for 20 minutes. Repeat until all the lye is dissolved into the milk-water. If the milk-water still browns, don't worry; your soap will just be darker. Allow to cool to 90° to 100°F. If the oils and lye water cool at different rates, you can use a cold- or hot-water bath in the sink.

**3. PREPARE THE MOLD** While the oils and lye water cool, line the mold with parchment paper.

**4. COMBINE AND BRING TO TRACE** When both the oils and lye water are 90° to 100°F, carefully pour the lye water into the pot of oils. Use a stick blender (or hand mixer) to mix for 1 to 2 minutes and then let the mixture rest for 4 to 5 minutes. Repeat mixing and resting until light trace.

**5. MIX IN NATURAL ADDITIVES** When the soap reaches light trace, add the lime, ylang-ylang, and clove essential oils and the honey, and blend for 30 seconds.

**6. MOLD THE SOAP** Pour the soap mixture into the mold and cover with a lid or parchment paper for 24 hours. Do not insulate unless your house is below 75°F, in which case insulate by placing a towel around the outside edges of the mold to avoid a partial gel.

**7. CUT AND CURE** Remove the soap from the mold. If it seems too soft to remove, wait another 12 to 24 hours before removing. Cut the soap into 12 (4-ounce) bars. Allow the

bars to cure in a well-ventilated location for 4 to 6 weeks.

**TIP:** Milk can scald when lye is added. Placing the milk-water in the freezer until it's very cold helps prevent this. Be sure to add the lye slowly. It is okay to really take your time, coming back every 20 minutes to add a little more. Milk can also make your batch get hotter than usual, so just insulate a milk recipe lightly with a towel if you're concerned about getting a good gel for color. Honey can also make soap come to trace faster, so add it and blend really well right before pouring the soap into the mold.

# JEWELWEED SOAP FOR POISON IVY

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• GENTLE	<b>YIELD:</b> 3 POUNDS OR 12 (4-OUNCE) BARS	<b>LYE DISCOUNT:</b> 5%	<b>SCENT:</b> CAMPHOR AND CHAMOMILE
<b>START TO FINISH TIME:</b> 2 hours, 24 hours insulation, 4 to 6 weeks to cure			

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The best thing to do when you've come in contact with poison ivy or poison oak is to wash thoroughly in order to remove the urushiol oil from your skin. Jewelweed naturally breaks down and dissolves urushiol oil. This soap is formulated to be very cleansing but not harsh on the skin. Neem oil and camphor essential oil are added to calm any irritation or itchiness. If you can't find jewelweed, you can substitute a goldenseal or comfrey leaf infusion, which can be made from powder or dried leaf. Both can easily be found online.

## EQUIPMENT

- small saucepans
- kitchen scale
- glass bowls
- large spoon
- large stainless steel pot
- small zip-top plastic bag
- thermometer
- mold
- parchment paper
- stick blender (or hand mixer)
- rubber spatula
- blanket

## INGREDIENTS

### *For the infusion*

- 16 ounces water
- 8 ounces olive oil
- 4 stalks jewelweed, divided (3 for water, 1 for oil)

### *For the soap*

- 12 ounces lard

- 10 ounces coconut oil
- 8 ounces jewelweed-infused olive oil
- 2 ounces neem oil
- 4.6 ounces lye
- 12 ounces jewelweed water
- 0.5 ounce camphor essential oil
- 0.5 ounce chamomile essential oil (optional)

**SAFETY FIRST!** Remember to wear your safety equipment and mix the lye water outside. Tell everyone you live with that where you're working is off limits. Give yourself enough time to complete the recipe.

**PREP AHEAD** *You will need fresh jewelweed for 2 infusions of water and oil. You need only a few stalks for this recipe, unless you want to infuse oil for other batches. If you do not have any growing around your house (see the tip below), ask friends. It must be fresh.*

**FOR THE HOT WATER INFUSION** *Cut off the roots of half of the jewelweed stalks and discard. Fold or chop the stalks, leaves, and flowers. Place them in a small saucepan and cover with 16 ounces of water. Heat over low heat for 1 hour, but don't allow the water to boil. Strain, reserving the jewelweed-infused water and discarding the spent jewelweed stalks, and allow to cool. Measure out 12 ounces of the jewelweed-infused water and place it in the refrigerator to chill.*

**FOR THE HOT OIL INFUSION** *Cut off the roots of the remaining jewelweed stalks and discard. Fold or chop the stalks, leaves, and flowers. Place them in a small saucepan and cover with 8 ounces of olive oil. Heat over low heat for 20 minutes; you want to heat the plant gently, not fry it. Strain, reserving the jewelweed-infused oil and discarding the spent jewelweed stalks, and allow to cool. You should have 8 ounces of jewelweed-infused oil; add a little more olive oil if necessary.*

**1. HEAT THE FATS/OILS** In a large pot, combine the lard, coconut oil, jewelweed-infused olive oil, and neem oil. Heat over medium-low heat until they are melted and incorporated. Remove from the heat and allow to cool to 100° to 110°F.

**2. MIX THE LYE WATER** Put on safety gear, including protective eyewear, a mask, gloves, and long sleeves. Outside, very slowly pour only about ¼ of the lye crystals into the cold jewelweed-infused water and stir until dissolved. Let cool for 20 minutes. Repeat until all the lye is dissolved into the jewelweed water. If the oils and lye water cool at different rates, you can use a cold- or hot-water bath in the sink.

**3. PREPARE THE MOLD** While the oils and lye water cool, line the mold with parchment paper.

**4. COMBINE AND BRING TO TRACE** When both the oils and lye water are 100° to 110°F, carefully pour the lye water into the pot of oils. Use a stick blender (or hand mixer) to mix for 1 to 2 minutes and then let the mixture rest for 4 to 5 minutes. Repeat mixing and resting until light trace.

**5. MIX IN NATURAL ADDITIVES** When the soap reaches light trace, add the camphor and chamomile (if using) essential oils, and blend for 30 seconds.

**6. MOLD THE SOAP** Pour the soap mixture into the mold, cover with a lid or parchment paper, and insulate with a blanket for 24 hours.

**7. CUT AND CURE** Remove the soap from the mold. If it seems too soft to remove, wait another 12 to 24 hours before removing. Cut the soap into 12 (4-ounce) bars. Allow the bars to cure in a well-ventilated location for 4 to 6 weeks.

**TIP:** Jewelweed is also called touch-me-not. It grows along or near water and grows well in full sun near roads and streams. It can be found all over eastern North America from Canada all the way down to northern Florida. The herbal water can brown if the lye is added too quickly, which is why I recommend adding the lye slowly.

# BUG-AWAY CAMPING SOAP

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• MOISTURIZING	<b>YIELD:</b> 3 POUNDS OR 12 (4-OUNCE) BARS	<b>LYE DISCOUNT:</b> 15%	<b>SCENT:</b> CITRONELLA, PEPPERMINT, AND LEMONGRASS
<b>START TO FINISH TIME:</b> 1 to 2 hours, 24 hours insulation, 4 to 6 weeks to cure			

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Camping can be miserable if you're busy fighting bug bites, so we take this all-natural insect-repelling soap when we go camping. No one cares if they smell like citronella while camping, but you don't have to because I add other insect-repelling scents like peppermint and lemongrass. It makes the soap smell much better to us and is just as effective. This makes a great gift for those friends who love the outdoors.

**SAFETY FIRST!** Remember to wear your safety equipment and mix the lye water outside. Tell everyone you live with that where you're working is off limits. Give yourself enough time to complete the recipe.

## EQUIPMENT

- kitchen scale
- glass bowls
- large spoon
- large stainless steel pot
- small zip-top plastic bag
- thermometer
- mold
- parchment paper
- stick blender (or hand mixer)
- rubber spatula
- blanket

## INGREDIENTS

- 12 ounces tallow
- 9 ounces sweet almond oil
- 8 ounces coconut oil

- 5 ounces mango butter
- 4.3 ounces lye
- 12.9 ounces filtered water
- 0.5 ounce citronella essential oil
- 0.25 ounce peppermint essential oil
- 0.25 ounce lemongrass essential oil

**1. HEAT THE FATS/OILS** In a large pot, combine the olive oil, coconut oil, castor oil, beeswax, jojoba oil, cocoa butter, and shea butter. Heat over medium-low heat until they are melted and incorporated. Remove from the heat and allow to cool to 100° to 110°F.

**2. MIX THE LYE WATER** Put on safety gear, including protective eyewear, a mask, gloves, and long sleeves. Outside, carefully add the lye crystals to the water and stir until dissolved. Allow to cool to 100° to 110°F. If the oils and lye water cool at different rates, you can use a cold- or hot-water bath in the sink.

**3. PREPARE THE MOLD** While the oils and lye water cool, line the mold with parchment paper.

**4. COMBINE AND BRING TO TRACE** When both the oils and lye water are 100° to 110°F, carefully pour the lye water into the pot of oils. Use a stick blender (or hand mixer) to mix for 1 to 2 minutes and then let the mixture rest for 4 to 5 minutes. Repeat mixing and resting until light trace.

**5. MIX IN NATURAL ADDITIVES** When the soap reaches light trace, add the lavender essential oil and blend for 30 seconds.

**6. MOLD THE SOAP** Pour the soap mixture into the mold, cover with a lid or parchment paper, and insulate with a blanket for 24 hours.

**7. CUT AND CURE** Remove the soap from the mold. If it seems too soft to remove, wait another 12 to 24 hours before removing. Cut the soap into 12 (4-ounce) bars. Allow the bars to cure in a well-ventilated location for 4 to 6 weeks.

# ALLERGY RELIEF BAR

- GENTLE
- VEGAN

**YIELD:** 3 POUNDS  
OR 12 (4-OUNCE)  
BARS

**LYE DISCOUNT:** 15%

**SCENT:**  
PEPPERMINT,  
LAVENDER, AND  
LEMONGRASS

**START TO FINISH TIME:** 1 to 2 hours, 24 hours insulation, 4 to 6 weeks to cure

Certain essential oils help calm the sinuses and reactions of those who suffer from environmental allergies. Top among them are peppermint, lavender, and lemon. I always keep this soap around since my family members suffer from mold allergies during the winter and from tree and grass blooms in the spring. It is very soothing and helps open up your sinuses when combined with the steam of your shower.

***SAFETY FIRST!*** Remember to wear your safety equipment and mix the lye water outside. Tell everyone you live with that where you're working is off limits. Give yourself enough time to complete the recipe.

## EQUIPMENT

- kitchen scale
- glass bowls
- large spoon
- large stainless steel pot
- small zip-top plastic bag
- thermometer
- mold
- parchment paper
- stick blender (or hand mixer)
- rubber spatula
- blanket

## INGREDIENTS

- 10 ounces olive oil
- 9 ounces coconut oil
- 4 ounces jojoba oil

- 4 ounces cocoa butter
- 3 ounces shea butter
- 4.1 ounces lye
- 12.5 ounces filtered water
- 0.35 ounce peppermint essential oil
- 0.35 ounce lavender essential oil
- 0.35 ounce lemon essential oil

**1. HEAT THE FATS/OILS** In a large pot, combine the olive oil, coconut oil, jojoba oil, cocoa butter, and shea butter. Heat over medium-low heat until they are melted and incorporated. Remove from the heat and allow to cool to 100° to 110°F.

**2. MIX THE LYE WATER** Put on safety gear, including protective eyewear, a mask, gloves, and long sleeves. Outside, carefully add the lye crystals to the water and stir until dissolved. Allow to cool to 100° to 110°F. If the oils and lye water cool at different rates, you can use a cold or hot-water bath in the sink.

**3. PREPARE THE MOLD** While the oils and lye water cool, line the mold with parchment paper.

**4. COMBINE AND BRING TO TRACE** When both the oils and lye water are 100° to 110°F, carefully pour the lye water into the pot of oils. Use a stick blender (or hand mixer) to mix for 1 to 2 minutes and then let the mixture rest for 4 to 5 minutes. Repeat mixing and resting until light trace.

**5. MIX IN NATURAL ADDITIVES** When the soap reaches light trace, add the peppermint, lavender, and lemon essential oils, and blend for 30 seconds.

**6. MOLD THE SOAP** Pour the soap mixture into the mold, cover with a lid or parchment paper, and insulate with a blanket for 24 hours.

**7. CUT AND CURE** Remove the soap from the mold. If it seems too soft to remove, wait another 12 to 24 hours before removing. Cut the soap into 12 (4-ounce) bars. Allow the bars to cure in a well-ventilated location for 4 to 6 weeks.

# MOCHA-COFFEE SCRUB BAR

• VEGAN

**YIELD:** 3 POUNDS  
OR 12 (4-OUNCE)  
BARS

**LYE DISCOUNT:** 5%

**SCENT:** MOCHA

**START TO FINISH TIME:** 1 to 2 hours, 24 hours insulation, 4 to 6 weeks to cure

This bar is a gentle exfoliant using coffee grounds. The macadamia nut oil and cocoa butter work together with the caffeine from the coffee and cocoa powder to soften and smooth skin. I love drinking mocha, so I enjoy how the cocoa powder and cocoa butter give a chocolaty scent that pairs well with the coffee. It feels really luxurious during and after use.

***SAFETY FIRST!*** Remember to wear your safety equipment and mix the lye water outside. Tell everyone you live with that where you're working is off limits. Give yourself enough time to complete the recipe.

## EQUIPMENT

- kitchen scale
- measuring spoons
- glass bowls
- large spoon
- large stainless steel pot
- small zip-top plastic bag
- thermometer
- mold
- parchment paper
- stick blender (or hand mixer)
- whisk
- rubber spatula
- blanket

## INGREDIENTS

- 2 tablespoons coffee grounds
- 12.9 ounces brewed coffee

- 10 ounces olive oil
- 9 ounces coconut oil
- 8 ounces cocoa butter
- 7 ounces macadamia nut oil
- 4.8 ounces lye
- 1 ounce coffee oil (CO2 extracted)
- 1 tablespoon cocoa powder

**PREP AHEAD** *Brew a cup of coffee using 2 tablespoons of coffee or a single-serving coffee pod. Keep the used coffee grounds to use in the recipe. If you're not a coffee drinker, you can use a tea strainer, slowly running hot water through the strainer a few times. Add enough cold water to the coffee to make 12.9 ounces and refrigerate until very cold or place in the freezer until slushy, but not frozen solid.*

**1. HEAT THE FATS/OILS** In a large pot, combine the olive oil, coconut oil, cocoa butter, and macadamia nut oil. Heat over medium-low heat until they are melted and incorporated. Remove from the heat and allow to cool to 100° to 110°F.

**2. MIX THE LYE WATER** Put on safety gear, including protective eyewear, a mask, gloves, and long sleeves. Outside, carefully add the lye crystals to the cold coffee-water and stir until dissolved. Allow to cool to 100° to 110°F. If the oils and lye water cool at different rates, you can use a cold- or hot-water bath in the sink.

**3. PREPARE THE MOLD** While the oils and lye water cool, line the mold with parchment paper.

**4. COMBINE AND BRING TO TRACE** When both the oils and lye water are 100° to 110°F, carefully pour the lye water into the pot of oils. Use a stick blender (or hand mixer) to mix for 1 to 2 minutes and then let the mixture rest for 4 to 5 minutes. Repeat mixing and resting until light trace.

**5. MIX IN NATURAL ADDITIVES** When the soap reaches light trace, add the coffee oil and used coffee grounds and blend for 30 seconds.

**6. MIX IN COLORANTS** Transfer 1 cup of the soap to a separate bowl. Add the cocoa powder and whisk until there are no lumps. Return the cocoa-colored soap to the larger batch and blend until fully incorporated.

**7. MOLD THE SOAP** Pour the soap mixture into the mold, cover with a lid or parchment paper, and insulate with a blanket for 24 hours.

**8. CUT AND CURE** Remove the soap from the mold. If it seems too soft to remove, wait another 12 to 24 hours before removing. Cut the soap into 12 (4-ounce) bars. Allow the bars to cure in a well-ventilated location for 4 to 6 weeks.



**TIP:** The coffee-water can burn if it is not cold when the lye is added, so be sure to refrigerate or freeze it until slushy, but not frozen solid, before adding with lye.

# LOOFAH EXFOLIANT SOAP

- NUT-FREE

**YIELD:** 3 POUNDS  
OR 12 (4-OUNCE)  
BARS

**LYE DISCOUNT:** 5%

**SCENT:** LIME,  
BERGAMOT,  
YLANG-YLANG,  
AND PEPPERMINT

**START TO FINISH TIME:** 1 to 2 hours, 24 hours insulation, 4 to 6 weeks to cure

Loofahs are tropical gourds that look like sponges. In this recipe you will place slices of loofah into each bar of soap. You can design these bars to suit your preferences. One option is to use a lot of loofah and a little soap. I like mine as a soap bar with a loofah surprise inside: Once you start to lather you can use it as a scrub bar. This recipe has an uplifting, energizing scent of lime, bergamot, ylang-ylang, and peppermint.

## EQUIPMENT

- kitchen scale
- measuring spoons
- small saucepan or glass jar
- glass bowls
- large spoon
- large stainless steel pot
- small zip-top plastic bag
- thermometer
- mold
- parchment paper
- stick blender (or hand mixer)
- rubber spatula
- blanket

## INGREDIENTS

### *For the infusion*

- 8 ounces olive oil
- 1 heaping tablespoon parsley leaf powder

### *For the soap*

- 10 ounces lard

- 8 ounces olive oil
- 2 ounces parsley leaf–olive oil infusion
- 8 ounces babassu oil
- 4 ounces argan oil
- 2 ounces castor oil
- 4.7 ounces lye
- 12.9 ounces filtered water
- 0.25 ounce lime essential oil
- 0.25 ounce bergamot essential oil
- 0.25 ounce ylang-ylang essential oil
- 0.25 ounce peppermint essential oil
- 1 loofah, cut crosswise into 12 slices

**SAFETY FIRST!** Remember to wear your safety equipment and mix the lye water outside. Tell everyone you live with that where you're working is off limits. Give yourself enough time to complete the recipe.

**PREP AHEAD** *Create a green oil infusion using parsley leaf powder. (You can also use comfrey, alfalfa, or dandelion leaf powder.)*

**FOR A HOT INFUSION** *Heat 8 ounces of olive oil in a saucepan to around 200°F and remove from the heat. Add 1 heaping tablespoon of parsley leaf powder, stir, and allow to cool.*

**FOR A COLD INFUSION** *Place 1 heaping tablespoon of parsley powder in an 8-ounce jar. Pour in enough olive oil to fill the jar, seal, and leave on your windowsill for 6 weeks, shaking occasionally. Whichever method you choose, measure out 2 ounces of the parsley leaf infusion (reserve the remainder for another batch).*

**1. HEAT THE FATS/OILS** In a large pot, combine the lard, olive oil, parsley leaf–infused oil, babassu oil, argan oil, and castor oil. Heat over medium-low heat until they are melted and incorporated. Remove from the heat and allow to cool to 100° to 110°F.

**2. MIX THE LYE WATER** Put on safety gear, including protective eyewear, a mask, gloves, and long sleeves. Outside, carefully add the lye crystals to the water and stir until dissolved. Allow to cool to 100° to 110°F. If the oils and lye water cool at different rates, you can use a cold- or hot-water bath in the sink.

**3. PREPARE THE MOLD** While the oils and lye water cool, line the mold with parchment paper.

**4. COMBINE AND BRING TO TRACE** When both the oils and lye water are 100° to 110°F, carefully pour the lye water into the pot of oils. Use a stick blender (or hand mixer) to mix for 1 to 2 minutes and then let the mixture rest for 4 to 5 minutes. Repeat mixing and resting until light trace.

**5. MIX IN NATURAL ADDITIVES** When the soap reaches light trace, add the lime, bergamot, ylang-ylang, and peppermint essential oils, and blend for 30 seconds.

**6. MOLD THE SOAP** Pour the soap mixture into the mold. Quickly add the slices of loofah, being aware of where you plan to cut your soap so that each bar will have one piece. Push the loofah pieces into the soap with a rubber spatula, not your fingers! Cover with a lid or parchment paper and insulate with a blanket for 24 hours.

**7. CUT AND CURE** Remove the soap from the mold. If it seems too soft to remove, wait another 12 to 24 hours before removing. Cut the soap into 12 (4-ounce) bars. Allow the bars to cure in a well-ventilated location for 4 to 6 weeks.

# LAUNDRY BAR

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• VEGAN

**YIELD:** 3 POUNDS  
OR 12 (4-OUNCE)  
BARS

**LYE DISCOUNT:** 1%

**SCENT:** LAVENDER  
AND LEMON

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**START TO FINISH TIME:** 1 to 2 hours, 24 hours insulation, 4 to 6 weeks to cure

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Making your own laundry soap is a very frugal choice. I give lots of options on [SimpleLifeMom.com](http://SimpleLifeMom.com) for how to use these bars. My favorite is grating one bar with a cheese grater and mixing it with 4 pounds of borax and 4 pounds of baking soda in a 1-gallon container. You can also find my recipe for using these bars to make liquid laundry soap on my site. This bar is mainly made of coconut oil to pump up the cleansing power and has only a 1 percent lye discount because you don't want leftover oils to clog your machine. I use a simple lavender-lemon scent here, but you can use 1 ounce total of any scent(s) of your choice.

***SAFETY FIRST!*** Remember to wear your safety equipment and mix the lye water outside. Tell everyone you live with that where you're working is off limits. Give yourself enough time to complete the recipe.

## EQUIPMENT

- kitchen scale
- glass bowls
- large spoon
- large stainless steel pot
- small zip-top plastic bag
- thermometer
- mold
- parchment paper
- stick blender (or hand mixer)
- rubber spatula
- blanket

## INGREDIENTS

- 24 ounces coconut oil

- 10 ounces olive oil
- 5.7 ounces lye
- 12.9 ounces filtered water
- 0.5 ounce lavender essential oil
- 0.5 ounce lemon essential oil

**1. HEAT THE FATS/OILS** In a large pot, combine the olive oil, coconut oil, jojoba oil, cocoa butter, and shea butter. Heat over medium-low heat until they are melted and incorporated. Remove from the heat and allow to cool to 100° to 110°F.

**2. MIX THE LYE WATER** Put on safety gear, including protective eyewear, a mask, gloves, and long sleeves. Outside, carefully add the lye crystals to the water and stir until dissolved. Allow to cool to 100° to 110°F. If the oils and lye water cool at different rates, you can use a cold- or hot-water bath in the sink.

**3. PREPARE THE MOLD** While the oils and lye water cool, line the mold with parchment paper.

**4. COMBINE AND BRING TO TRACE** When both the oils and lye water are 100° to 110°F, carefully pour the lye water into the pot of oils. Use a stick blender (or hand mixer) to mix for 1 to 2 minutes and then let the mixture rest for 4 to 5 minutes. Repeat mixing and resting until light trace.

**5. MIX IN NATURAL ADDITIVES** When the soap reaches light trace, add the peppermint, lavender, and lemon essential oils, and blend for 30 seconds.

**6. MOLD THE SOAP** Pour the soap mixture into the mold, cover with a lid or parchment paper, and insulate with a blanket for 24 hours.

**7. CUT AND CURE** Remove the soap from the mold. If it seems too soft to remove, wait another 12 to 24 hours before removing. Cut the soap into 12 (4-ounce) bars. Allow the bars to cure in a well-ventilated location for 4 to 6 weeks.

# PET SHAMPOO

- GENTLE
- VEGAN

**YIELD:** 3 POUNDS  
OR 12 (4-OUNCE)  
BARS

**LYE DISCOUNT:** 10%

**SCENT:**  
CEDARWOOD AND  
GERANIUM

**START TO FINISH TIME:** 1 to 2 hours, 24 hours insulation, 4 to 6 weeks to cure

No sulfates or harsh perfumes! This shampoo bar is nourishing to your pets' skin and hair, while cleansing them of any icky animal smells. You should never apply undiluted essential oils directly, as some animals, especially cats, can be seriously hurt. Diluted essential oils, on the other hand, are fine, and when used in a soap are actually a lot more gentle than many store-bought pet shampoos. I've used cedarwood and geranium in this recipe to kill odors and help repel fleas.

***SAFETY FIRST!*** Remember to wear your safety equipment and mix the lye water outside. Tell everyone you live with that where you're working is off limits. Give yourself enough time to complete the recipe.

## EQUIPMENT

- kitchen scale
- glass bowls
- large spoon
- large stainless steel pot
- small zip-top plastic bag
- thermometer
- mold
- parchment paper
- stick blender (or hand mixer)
- rubber spatula
- blanket

## INGREDIENTS

- 24 ounces olive oil
- 8 ounces coconut oil
- 2 ounces castor oil

- 4.5 ounces lye
- 12.9 ounces filtered water
- 0.5 ounce cedarwood essential oil
- 0.5 ounce geranium essential oil

**1. HEAT THE FATS/OILS** In a large pot, combine the olive oil, coconut oil, and castor oil. Heat over medium-low heat until they are melted and incorporated. Remove from the heat and allow to cool to 100° to 110°F.

**2. MIX THE LYE WATER** Put on safety gear, including protective eyewear, a mask, gloves, and long sleeves. Outside, carefully add the lye crystals to the water and stir until dissolved. Allow to cool to 100° to 110°F. If the oils and lye water cool at different rates, you can use a cold- or hot-water bath in the sink.

**3. PREPARE THE MOLD** While the oils and lye water cool, line the mold with parchment paper.

**4. COMBINE AND BRING TO TRACE** When both the oils and lye water are 90° to 100°F, carefully pour the lye water into the pot of oils. Use a stick blender (or hand mixer) to mix for 2 to 3 minutes and then let the mixture rest for 4 to 5 minutes. Repeat mixing and resting until light trace.

**5. MIX IN NATURAL ADDITIVES** When the soap reaches light trace, add the cedarwood and geranium essential oils and blend for 30 seconds.

**6. MOLD THE SOAP** Pour the soap mixture into the mold, cover with a lid or parchment paper, and insulate with a blanket for 24 hours.

**7. CUT AND CURE** Remove the soap from the mold. If it seems too soft to remove, wait another 12 to 24 hours before removing. Cut the soap into 12 (4-ounce) bars. Allow the bars to cure in a well-ventilated location for 4 to 6 weeks.

# ANTIBACTERIAL HAND SOAP

- ACNE-FIGHTING

**YIELD:** 3 POUNDS  
OR 12 (4-OUNCE)  
BARS

**LYE DISCOUNT:** 10%

**SCENT:** LEMON,  
ORANGE,  
ROSEMARY, AND  
TEA TREE

**START TO FINISH TIME:** 1 to 2 hours, 24 hours insulation, 4 to 6 weeks to cure

One of the things a friend of mine was worried about when I switched to all-natural products was how I was going to kill germs. I can confidently say that it is possible to kill germs without using harsh chemicals. For both those short winter days inside or active summer months, this makes a great soap to keep in the bathroom or kitchen.

***SAFETY FIRST!*** Remember to wear your safety equipment and mix the lye water outside. Tell everyone you live with that where you're working is off limits. Give yourself enough time to complete the recipe.

## EQUIPMENT

- kitchen scale
- glass bowls
- large spoon
- large stainless steel pot
- small zip-top plastic bag
- thermometer
- mold
- parchment paper
- stick blender (or hand mixer)
- rubber spatula
- blanket

## INGREDIENTS

- 10 ounces tallow
- 8 ounces coconut oil
- 5 ounces olive oil
- 5 ounces grapeseed oil

- 4 ounces sweet almond oil
- 1 ounce beeswax
- 4.4 ounces lye
- 12.5 ounces filtered water
- 0.25 ounce lemon essential oil
- 0.25 ounce orange essential oil
- 0.25 ounce rosemary essential oil
- 0.25 ounce tea tree essential oil

**1. HEAT THE FATS/OILS** In a large pot, combine the tallow, coconut oil, olive oil, grapeseed oil, sweet almond oil, and beeswax. Heat over medium-low heat until they are melted and incorporated. Remove from the heat and allow to cool to 100° to 110°F.

**2. MIX THE LYE WATER** Put on safety gear, including protective eyewear, a mask, gloves, and long sleeves. Outside, carefully add the lye crystals to the water and stir until dissolved. Allow to cool to 100° to 110°F. If the oils and lye water cool at different rates, you can use a cold- or hot-water bath in the sink.

**3. PREPARE THE MOLD** While the oils and lye water cool, line the mold with parchment paper.

**4. COMBINE AND BRING TO TRACE** When both the oils and lye water are 100° to 110°F, carefully pour the lye water into the pot of oils. Use a stick blender (or hand mixer) to mix for 1 to 2 minutes and then let the mixture rest for 4 to 5 minutes. Repeat mixing and resting until light trace.

**5. MIX IN NATURAL ADDITIVES** When the soap reaches light trace, add the lemon, orange, rosemary, and tea tree essential oils, and blend for 30 seconds.

**6. MOLD THE SOAP** Pour the soap mixture into the mold, cover with a lid or parchment paper, and insulate with a blanket for 24 hours.

**7. CUT AND CURE** Remove soap from the mold. If it seems too soft to remove, wait another 12 to 24 hours before removing. Cut the soap into 12 (4-ounce) bars. Allow the bars to cure for 4 to 6 weeks.

# ACNE BENTONITE CLAY AND CHARCOAL SOAP

- ACNE-FIGHTING
- MOISTURIZING

**YIELD:** 3 POUNDS  
OR 12 (4-OUNCE)  
BARS

**LYE DISCOUNT:** 10%

**SCENT:** TEA TREE  
AND LEMON

**START TO FINISH TIME:** 1 to 2 hours, 24 hours insulation, 4 to 6 weeks to cure

This is a really beautiful swirl soap that is highly effective at cleansing and killing bacteria. Bentonite clay and activated charcoal are two of my favorite ingredients because they draw out impurities while soothing irritated skin. This soap has both ingredients, plus tea tree and lemon essential oil, which have been shown to kill bacteria.

***SAFETY FIRST!*** Remember to wear your safety equipment and mix the lye water outside. Tell everyone you live with that where you're working is off limits. Give yourself enough time to complete the recipe.

## EQUIPMENT

- kitchen scale
- measuring spoons
- glass bowls
- large spoon
- large stainless steel pot
- small zip-top plastic bag
- thermometer
- mold
- parchment paper
- stick blender (or hand mixer)
- whisk
- rubber spatula
- chopstick
- blanket

## INGREDIENTS

- 10 ounces tallow
- 8 ounces coconut oil
- 5 ounces mango butter
- 5 ounces apricot kernel oil
- 5 ounces avocado oil
- 4.4 ounces lye
- 12.5 ounces filtered water
- 0.5 ounce tea tree essential oil
- 0.5 ounce lemon essential oil
- 1 teaspoon bentonite clay
- 1 teaspoon activated charcoal
- 1 teaspoon Moroccan orange clay

**1. HEAT THE FATS/OILS** In a large pot, combine the tallow, coconut oil, mango butter, apricot kernel oil, and avocado oil. Heat over medium-low heat until they are melted and incorporated. Remove from the heat and allow to cool to 90° to 100°F.

**2. MIX THE LYE WATER** Put on safety gear, including protective eyewear, a mask, gloves, and long sleeves. Outside, carefully add the lye crystals to the water and stir until dissolved. Allow to cool to 90° to 100°F. If the oils and lye water cool at different rates, you can use a cold- or hot-water bath in the sink.

**3. PREPARE THE MOLD** While the oils and lye water cool, line the mold with parchment paper.

**4. COMBINE AND BRING TO TRACE** When both the oils and lye water are 90° to 100°F, carefully pour the lye water into the pot of oils. Use a stick blender (or hand mixer) to mix for 2 to 3 minutes and then let the mixture rest for 4 to 5 minutes. Repeat mixing and resting until light trace.

**5. MIX IN NATURAL ADDITIVES** When the soap reaches light trace, add the tea tree and lemon essential oils and the bentonite clay, and blend for a few seconds.

**6. MIX IN COLORANTS** Transfer ½ cup of the soap into 2 separate bowls. Add the activated charcoal to one bowl and the Moroccan orange clay to the other. Whisk both until there are no lumps. Set aside.

**7. MOLD THE SOAP AND SWIRL** Pour the main batch of soap batter into the mold. Pour the activated-charcoal-colored soap horizontally, back and forth, over the main soap. Insert a chopstick into the batter until it reaches the bottom of the mold. Drag the chopstick vertically, back and forth, across the length of the mold. Then return to the

starting point and make tiny circles to swirl the soap even more. Cover with a lid or parchment paper and insulate with a blanket for 24 hours.

**8. CUT AND CURE** Remove the soap from the mold. If it seems too soft to remove, wait another 12 to 24 hours before removing. Cut the soap into 12 (4-ounce) bars. Allow the bars to cure in a well-ventilated location for 4 to 6 weeks.

**TIP:** I like to use the basic swirl method for this recipe, but with two colors you can use any of the other methods described in [chapter 6](#) . Watch carefully for light trace so that the batter does not get too thick while you're working on colors and swirls. Have fun!

# ACNE CHARCOAL AND TEA TREE SOAP

- ACNE-FIGHTING
- MOISTURIZING

**YIELD:** 3 POUNDS  
OR 12 (4-OUNCE)  
BARS

**LYE DISCOUNT:** 10%

**SCENT:** TEA TREE

**START TO FINISH TIME:** 1 to 2 hours, 24 hours insulation, 4 to 6 weeks to cure

This is the most popular soap in my shop—and for good reason. People with different skin conditions frequently come back to tell me about their amazing results after using this soap. The high amount of activated charcoal, combined with tea tree essential oil, is great for those suffering from acne and other skin conditions.

***SAFETY FIRST!*** Remember to wear your safety equipment and mix the lye water outside. Tell everyone you live with that where you're working is off limits. Give yourself enough time to complete the recipe.

## EQUIPMENT

- kitchen scale
- measuring spoons
- glass bowls
- large spoon
- large stainless steel pot
- small zip-top plastic bag
- thermometer
- mold
- parchment paper
- stick blender (or hand mixer)
- whisk
- rubber spatula
- blanket

## INGREDIENTS

- 12 ounces tallow

- 10 ounces olive oil
- 8 ounces coconut oil
- 3 ounces argan oil
- 4.5 ounces lye
- 12.5 ounces filtered water
- 1 ounce tea tree essential oil
- 1 tablespoon activated charcoal

**1. HEAT THE FATS/OILS** In a large pot, combine the tallow, olive oil, coconut oil, and argan oil. Heat over medium-low heat until they are melted and incorporated. Remove from the heat and allow to cool to 100° to 110°F.

**2. MIX THE LYE WATER** Put on safety gear, including protective eyewear, a mask, gloves, and long sleeves. Outside, carefully add the lye crystals to the water and stir until dissolved. Allow to cool to 100° to 110°F. If the oils and lye water cool at different rates, you can use a cold- or hot-water bath in the sink.

**3. PREPARE THE MOLD** While the oils and lye water cool, line the mold with parchment paper.

**4. COMBINE AND BRING TO TRACE** When both the oils and lye water are 100° to 110°F, carefully pour the lye water into the pot of oils. Use a stick blender (or hand mixer) to mix for 1 to 2 minutes and then let the mixture rest for 4 to 5 minutes. Repeat mixing and resting until light trace.

**5. MIX IN NATURAL ADDITIVES** When the soap reaches light trace, add the tea tree essential oil and blend for 30 seconds.

**6. MIX IN COLORANTS** Transfer 1 cup of the soap to a separate bowl. Add the activated charcoal and whisk until there are no lumps. Return the charcoal soap to the larger batch and blend until fully incorporated.

**7. MOLD THE SOAP** Pour the soap mixture into the mold, cover with a lid or parchment paper, and insulate with a blanket for 24 hours.

**8. CUT AND CURE** Remove the soap from the mold. If it seems too soft to remove, wait another 12 to 24 hours before removing. Cut the soap into 12 (4-ounce) bars. Allow the bars to cure in a well-ventilated location for 4 to 6 weeks.



*Chamomile Tea Soap with Chamomile Flowers, [here](#)*

## chapter nine

# GET CREATIVE

*Patchouli, Charcoal, and Spirulina Swirl Soap*

*Energizing Peppermint and Basil Soap*

*Green Tea, Comfrey, and Aloe Soap*

*Chamomile Tea Soap with Chamomile Flowers*

*Blackberry-Vanilla Goat Milk Soap*

*Spring Cutouts*

*Uplifting Salt Soap*

*Ocean Salt Soap*

*Kombucha Face Bar*

*Beer Soap*

*Mulled Wine Soap*

*Pink Grapefruit Wedding Soap*

This chapter is all about adding colors, swirls, and layers! I introduced these techniques earlier in the book, and in this chapter you'll get to be really creative and have fun with your beautiful soap creations. You'll be adding teas and fruit purées, cutting out fun shapes from other soaps with vegetable cutters to add to new soap batches, and using ingredients you may have never used before like beer or kombucha. Why? Because both of these ingredients add amazing bubbles and nourishment to your skin, and it's just plain fun to use them. I'll show you how to add dried herbs, and even make the wonderful spa treatment: salt soap. Get ready to dive into some new ideas that will make great gifts to show off your creative side.

# PATCHOULI, CHARCOAL, AND SPIRULINA SWIRL SOAP

- ACNE-FIGHTING
- MOISTURIZING

**YIELD:** 3 POUNDS  
OR 12 (4-OUNCE)  
BARS

**LYE DISCOUNT:** 15%

**SCENT:** PATCHOULI

**START TO FINISH TIME:** 1 to 2 hours, 24 hours insulation, 4 to 6 weeks to cure

This cream-colored soap is swirled with activated charcoal and spirulina to make for a beautiful presentation. Pure patchouli essential oil smells nothing like those fake, chemical-laden candles or incense sticks. Instead, it's a deep, rich, earthy scent that is very relaxing. Hemp and jojoba are added, making this soap nourishing for your skin and the perfect "hippie" soap.

***SAFETY FIRST!*** Remember to wear your safety equipment and mix the lye water outside. Tell everyone you live with that where you're working is off limits. Give yourself enough time to complete the recipe.

## EQUIPMENT

- kitchen scale
- measuring spoons
- glass bowls
- large spoon
- large stainless steel pot
- small zip-top plastic bag
- thermometer
- mold
- parchment paper
- stick blender (or hand mixer)
- whisk
- rubber spatula
- chopstick

## INGREDIENTS

- 14 ounces tallow
- 8 ounces coconut oil
- 5 ounces hazelnut oil
- 3 ounces castor oil
- 2 ounces hemp seed oil
- 2 ounces jojoba oil
- 4.7 ounces lye
- 12.9 ounces filtered water
- 1 ounce patchouli essential oil
- ½ teaspoon spirulina powder
- ½ teaspoon activated charcoal powder

**1. HEAT THE FATS/OILS** In a large pot, combine the tallow, coconut oil, hazelnut oil, castor oil, hemp seed oil, and jojoba oil. Heat over medium-low heat until they are melted and incorporated. Remove from the heat and allow to cool to 100° to 110°F.

**2. MIX THE LYE WATER** Put on safety gear, including protective eyewear, a mask, gloves, and long sleeves. Outside, carefully add the lye crystals to the water and stir until dissolved. Allow to cool to 100° to 110°F. If the oils and lye water cool at different rates, you can use a cold- or hot-water bath in the sink.

**3. PREPARE THE MOLD** While the oils and lye water cool, line the mold with parchment paper.

**4. COMBINE AND BRING TO TRACE** When both the oils and lye water are 100° to 110°F, carefully pour the lye water into the pot of oils. Use a stick blender (or hand mixer) to mix for 1 to 2 minutes and then let the mixture rest for 4 to 5 minutes. Repeat mixing and resting until light trace.

**5. MIX IN NATURAL ADDITIVES** When the soap reaches light trace, add the patchouli essential oil and blend for 30 seconds.

**6. MIX IN COLORANTS** When the soap reaches medium trace (just a little thinner than pudding), transfer ½ cup of the soap into 2 separate bowls. Add the spirulina to one bowl and the activated charcoal to the other. Whisk both until there are no lumps. Set aside.

**7. MOLD THE SOAP AND SWIRL** Pour the main batch of soap batter into the mold. Pour each colored soap horizontally back and forth over the soap. Insert a chopstick into the batter until it reaches the bottom of the mold. Drag the chopstick vertically back and forth across the length of the mold. Cover with a lid or parchment paper and insulate with a blanket for 24 hours.

**8. CUT AND CURE** Remove the soap from the mold. If it seems too soft to remove, wait another 12 to 24 hours before removing. Cut the soap into 12 (4-ounce) bars. Allow the bars to cure in a well-ventilated location for 4 to 6 weeks.

**TIP:** Since you are adding swirls to the top, you want to make sure the soap is not so thin that the swirls sink, but not so thick that the colors sit completely on top of the soap.

# ENERGIZING PEPPERMINT AND BASIL SOAP

- MOISTURIZING

**YIELD:** 3 POUNDS  
OR 12 (4-OUNCE)  
BARS

**LYE DISCOUNT:** 15%

**SCENT:**  
PEPPERMINT AND  
BASIL

**START TO FINISH TIME:** 1 to 2 hours, 24 hours insulation, 4 to 6 weeks to cure

Adding herbs to soap creates an elegant and completely different look from a solid or swirled color. You can choose to add more to the top of your soap as I do in this recipe or just add the herbs inside. Peppermint and basil are mind-clearing, energizing essential oils. When combined they will also freshen your bathroom.

***SAFETY FIRST!*** Remember to wear your safety equipment and mix the lye water outside. Tell everyone you live with that where you're working is off limits. Give yourself enough time to complete the recipe.

## EQUIPMENT

- kitchen scale
- measuring spoons
- glass bowls
- large spoon
- large stainless steel pot
- small zip-top plastic bag
- thermometer
- mold
- parchment paper
- stick blender (or hand mixer)
- rubber spatula
- blanket

## INGREDIENTS

- 12 ounces lard
- 9 ounces coconut oil

- 4 ounces olive oil
- 3 ounces grapeseed oil
- 3 ounces castor oil
- 2 ounces cocoa butter
- 4.3 ounces lye
- 12.9 ounces filtered water
- 0.5 ounce peppermint essential oil
- 0.5 ounce basil essential oil
- 1 tablespoon dried peppermint flakes, plus more to sprinkle on top, if desired

**1. HEAT THE FATS/OILS** In a large pot, combine the lard, coconut oil, olive oil, grapeseed oil, castor oil, and cocoa butter. Heat over medium-low heat until they are melted and incorporated. Remove from the heat and allow to cool to 100° to 110°F.

**2. MIX THE LYE WATER** Put on safety gear, including protective eyewear, a mask, gloves, and long sleeves. Outside, carefully add the lye crystals to the water and stir until dissolved. Allow to cool to 100° to 110°F. If the oils and lye water cool at different rates, you can use a cold- or hot-water bath in the sink.

**3. PREPARE THE MOLD** While the oils and lye water cool, line the mold with parchment paper.

**4. COMBINE AND BRING TO TRACE** When both the oils and lye water are 100° to 110°F, carefully pour the lye water into the pot of oils. Use a stick blender (or hand mixer) to mix for 1 to 2 minutes and then let the mixture rest for 4 to 5 minutes. Repeat mixing and resting until light trace.

**5. MIX IN NATURAL ADDITIVES** When the soap reaches light trace, add the peppermint and basil essential oils and the dried peppermint, and blend for 30 seconds.

**6. MOLD THE SOAP** Pour the soap mixture into the mold. Sprinkle more peppermint flakes on the top if desired. Cover with a lid or parchment paper and insulate with a blanket for 24 hours.

**7. CUT AND CURE** Remove the soap from the mold. If it seems too soft to remove, wait another 12 to 24 hours before removing. Cut the soap into 12 (4-ounce) bars. Allow the bars to cure in a well-ventilated location for 4 to 6 weeks.

**TIP:** Make sure your herbs are very dry before adding them to the soap, as moisture left within herbs can bleed into the soap over time, leaving a brown halo. Don't worry if your soap has this; it's purely cosmetic.

# GREEN TEA, COMFREY, AND ALOE SOAP

- NUT-FREE
- VEGAN

**YIELD:** 3 POUNDS  
OR 12 (4-OUNCE)  
BARS

**LYE DISCOUNT:** 10%

**SCENT:** CYPRESS,  
VETIVER, AND  
LEMONGRASS

**START TO FINISH TIME:** 1 to 2 hours, 24 hours insulation, 4 to 6 weeks to cure

This soap has goodness coming from every direction. Comfrey and aloe have been used for centuries to soothe and smooth skin. Green tea brings a host of antioxidants to spread all over the largest organ of your body: your skin! You will need to infuse olive oil ahead of time to add a pretty green tint to the soap. Feel free to add those used tea leaves at trace or leave them out.

***SAFETY FIRST!*** Remember to wear your safety equipment and mix the lye water outside. Tell everyone you live with that where you're working is off limits. Give yourself enough time to complete the recipe.

## EQUIPMENT

- kitchen scale
- measuring spoons
- small saucepan or glass jar
- glass bowls
- large spoon
- large stainless steel pot
- small zip-top plastic bag
- thermometer
- mold
- parchment paper
- stick blender (or hand mixer)
- rubber spatula
- blanket

## INGREDIENTS

*For the infusion*

- 8 ounces olive oil
- 1 heaping tablespoon comfrey leaf powder
- 1 tablespoon green tea leaves or 1 green tea bag

*For the soap*

- 7 ounces olive oil
- 3 ounces comfrey leaf–olive oil infusion
- 8 ounces babassu oil
- 4 ounces shea butter
- 4 ounces apricot kernel oil
- 4 ounces cocoa butter
- 3 ounces castor oil
- 4.3 ounces lye
- 8.5 ounces green tea water
- 4 ounces aloe liquid
- 0.4 ounce cypress essential oil
- 0.4 ounce vetiver essential oil
- 0.2 ounce lemongrass essential oil

#### **PREP AHEAD**

**1. Prepare a green olive oil infusion using comfrey leaf. FOR A HOT INFUSION:** Heat 8 ounces of olive oil in a saucepan to around 200°F and remove from the heat. Add 1 heaping tablespoon of comfrey leaf powder, stir, and allow to cool. **FOR A COLD INFUSION:** Place 1 heaping tablespoon of comfrey leaf powder in an 8-ounce jar. Pour in enough olive oil to fill the jar, seal, and leave on your windowsill for 6 weeks, shaking occasionally. Whichever method you choose, measure out 3 ounces of the comfrey leaf infusion (reserve the remainder for another batch).

**2. Brew strong tea by pouring 8 ounces of hot water over 1 tablespoon of green tea leaves or 1 green tea bag and steeping for 15 minutes. Strain if using tea leaves or remove the tea bag; set aside the tea leaves (removed from the tea bag if necessary) and allow to cool. Add more water to the tea if needed to bring it up to 8.5 ounces. Add the aloe liquid to the tea and place it in the refrigerator or freezer, but don't allow it to freeze solid.**

**1. HEAT THE FATS/OILS** In a large pot, combine the olive oil, comfrey leaf–infused olive oil, babassu oil, shea butter, apricot kernel oil, cocoa butter, and castor oil. Heat over medium-low heat until they are melted and incorporated. Remove from the heat and allow to cool to 100° to 110°F.

**2. MIX THE LYE WATER** Put on safety gear, including protective eyewear, a mask, gloves, and long sleeves. Outside, carefully add the lye crystals to the cold aloe-tea-water and stir until dissolved. Allow to cool to 100° to 110°F. If the oils and lye water cool at different rates, you can use a cold- or hot-water bath in the sink.

**3. PREPARE THE MOLD** While the oils and lye water cool, line the mold with parchment paper.

**4. COMBINE AND BRING TO TRACE** When both the oils and lye water are 100° to 110°F, carefully pour the lye water into the pot of oils. Use a stick blender (or hand mixer) to mix for 1 to 2 minutes and then let the mixture rest for 4 to 5 minutes. Repeat mixing and resting until light trace.

**5. MIX IN NATURAL ADDITIVES** When the soap reaches light trace, add the cypress, vetiver, and lemongrass essential oils and the used green tea leaves, and blend for 30 seconds.

**6. MOLD THE SOAP** Pour the soap mixture into the mold. Cover with a lid or parchment paper and insulate with a blanket for 24 hours.

**7. CUT AND CURE** Remove the soap from the mold. If it seems too soft to remove, wait another 12 to 24 hours before removing. Cut the soap into 12 (4-ounce) bars. Allow the bars to cure in a well-ventilated location for 4 to 6 weeks.

**TIP:** The green tea can burn when lye is added, so make sure it is very cold, but not frozen solid, before adding the lye crystals.

# CHAMOMILE TEA SOAP WITH CHAMOMILE FLOWERS

- GENTLE
- VEGAN

**YIELD:** 3 POUNDS  
OR 12 (4-OUNCE)  
BARS

**LYE DISCOUNT:** 5%

**SCENT:**  
EUCALYPTUS,  
LEMON, AND  
CEDARWOOD

**START TO FINISH TIME:** 1 to 2 hours, 24 hours insulation, 4 to 6 weeks to cure

Chamomile has been used for centuries as a cure for rashes, burns, and blemishes. It is also traditionally used as a sleep aid and allergy suppressant. This recipe uses wonderful oils to nourish the skin and essential oils that calm the mind for clarity and focus. It's also really pretty! I like to use chamomile tea within the soap to give it some interest and texture, then place dried chamomile flowers on top.

***SAFETY FIRST!*** Remember to wear your safety equipment and mix the lye water outside. Tell everyone you live with that where you're working is off limits. Give yourself enough time to complete the recipe.

## EQUIPMENT

- kitchen scale
- measuring spoons
- small saucepan
- glass bowls
- large spoon
- large stainless steel pot
- small zip-top plastic bag
- thermometer
- mold
- parchment paper
- stick blender (or hand mixer)
- rubber spatula
- blanket

## INGREDIENTS

*For the infusion*

- 8 ounces olive oil
- 1 heaping tablespoon annatto seeds

*For the soap*

- 8 ounces olive oil
- 2 ounces annatto seed–infused olive oil
- 10 ounces coconut oil
- 5 ounces cocoa butter
- 5 ounces sweet almond oil
- 2 ounces mango butter
- 4.5 ounces lye
- 12 ounces filtered water
- 0.3 ounce eucalyptus essential oil
- 0.4 ounce lemon essential oil
- 0.3 ounce cedarwood essential oil
- 1 tablespoon chamomile tea leaves or 1 chamomile tea bag
- 2 tablespoons dried chamomile flowers

#### **PREP AHEAD**

**1. Prepare an annatto seed infusion in olive oil. FOR A HOT INFUSION:** Combine 1 heaping tablespoon of annatto seeds and 8 ounces of olive oil in a small saucepan and heat over low heat to 250°F, stirring occasionally, for about 20 minutes. Remove the pan from the heat and allow to cool to room temperature. **FOR A COLD INFUSION:** Place 1 heaping tablespoon of annatto seeds in an 8-ounce glass jar. Pour in enough olive oil to fill the jar, seal, and leave on your windowsill for 6 weeks, shaking occasionally. Whichever method you choose, measure out 2 ounces of the annatto seed infusion (reserve the remainder for another batch).

**2. Steep the chamomile tea leaves or tea bag in hot water for 20 minutes. Remove the tea leaves and allow to drain. Save the tea leaves for the recipe.**

**1. HEAT THE FATS/OILS** In a large pot, combine the olive oil, annatto seed–infused olive oil, coconut oil, cocoa butter, sweet almond oil, and mango butter. Heat over medium-low heat until they are melted and incorporated. Remove from the heat and allow to cool to 100° to 110°F.

**2. MIX THE LYE WATER** Put on safety gear, including protective eyewear, a mask, gloves, and long sleeves. Outside, carefully add the lye crystals to the very cold water

and stir until dissolved. Allow to cool to 100° to 110°F. If the oils and lye water cool at different rates, you can use a cold- or hot-water bath in the sink.

**3. PREPARE THE MOLD** While the oils and lye water cool, line the mold with parchment paper.

**4. COMBINE AND BRING TO TRACE** When both the oils and lye water are 100° to 110°F, carefully pour the lye water into the pot of oils. Use a stick blender (or hand mixer) to mix for 1 to 2 minutes and then let the mixture rest for 4 to 5 minutes. Repeat mixing and resting until light trace.

**5. MIX IN NATURAL ADDITIVES** When the soap reaches light trace, add the eucalyptus, lemon, and cedarwood essential oils and 1 tablespoon of the used chamomile tea leaves, and blend for 30 seconds.

**6. MOLD THE SOAP** Pour the soap mixture into the mold. Sprinkle with the dried chamomile flowers. Using a glove, gently pat the flowers so that they adhere to the soap. Cover with a lid or parchment paper and insulate with a blanket for 24 hours.

**7. CUT AND CURE** Remove the soap from the mold. If it seems too soft to remove, wait another 12 to 24 hours before removing. Cut the soap into 12 (4-ounce) bars. Allow the bars to cure in a well-ventilated location for 4 to 6 weeks.

**TIP:** Make sure your tea leaves are fully drained before adding them to the soap, as moisture left within them can bleed into the soap over time, leaving a brown halo. Don't worry if your soap has this; it's purely cosmetic.

# BLACKBERRY-VANILLA GOAT MILK SOAP

- GENTLE
- VEGAN

**YIELD:** 3 POUNDS  
OR 12 (4-OUNCE)  
BARS

**LYE DISCOUNT:** 10%

**SCENT:** VANILLA  
AND ORANGE

**START TO FINISH TIME:** 2 hours, 24 hours in mold, 4 to 6 weeks to cure

This pretty soap has a purple, white, and cream swirl. I've added puréed blackberries and goat milk for moisture, nutrients, and fun. It is topped off with vanilla and orange oils to give it a natural, yummy dessert-smelling scent.

***SAFETY FIRST!*** Remember to wear your safety equipment and mix the lye water outside. Tell everyone you live with that where you're working is off limits. Give yourself enough time to complete the recipe.

## EQUIPMENT

- kitchen scale
- measuring spoons
- glass bowls
- large spoon
- large stainless steel pot
- small zip-top plastic bag
- thermometer
- mold
- parchment paper
- stick blender (or hand mixer)
- whisk
- rubber spatula

## INGREDIENTS

- 6.2 ounces water
- 4 ounces goat milk
- 20 ounces olive oil
- 9 ounces coconut oil

- 3 ounces cocoa butter
- 4.3 ounces lye
- 0.75 ounce vanilla oil (not vanilla extract)
- 0.5 ounce orange essential oil
- 2 ounces blackberries, puréed in blender
- 1 teaspoon alkanet root powder
- 1 tablespoon white kaolin clay

**PREP AHEAD** *Combine the water and goat milk in a large glass, plastic, or stainless steel container. Place the container in the freezer for 1 to 2 hours. It is okay if a slush forms, as long as it doesn't freeze solid. The colder your milk-water, the lighter your soap will be after adding the lye.*

- 1. HEAT THE FATS /OILS** In a large pot, combine the olive oil, coconut oil, and cocoa butter. Heat over medium-low heat until they are melted and incorporated. Remove from the heat and allow to cool to 90° to 100°F.
- 2. MIX THE LYE WATER** Put on safety gear, including protective eyewear, a mask, gloves, and long sleeves. Outside, very slowly pour only about ¼ of the lye crystals into the cold milk-water and stir until dissolved. Let cool for 20 minutes. Repeat until all the lye is dissolved into the milk-water. If the milk-water still browns, don't worry; your soap will just be darker. Allow to cool to 90° to 100°F. If the oils and lye water cool at different rates, you can use a cold- or hot-water bath in the sink.
- 3. PREPARE THE MOLD** While the oils and lye water cool, line the mold with parchment paper.
- 4. COMBINE AND BRING TO TRACE** When both the oils and lye water are 90° to 100°F, carefully pour the lye water into the pot of oils. Use a stick blender (or hand mixer) to mix for 1 to 2 minutes and then let the mixture rest for 4 to 5 minutes. Repeat mixing and resting until light trace. Remember, you need the soap to be very thin to be able to mix the colors and swirl before it thickens, so watch carefully!
- 5. MIX IN NATURAL ADDITIVES** When the soap reaches light trace, add the vanilla oil and orange essential oil and blend for a few seconds.
- 6. MIX IN COLORANTS** Transfer 2 cups of the soap into 2 separate bowls. Add the blackberry purée and alkanet root powder to one bowl and the white kaolin clay to the other. Whisk both until there are no lumps. Set aside.
- 7. MOLD THE SOAP AND SWIRL** Using the slide method for swirling (see [here](#) ), slowly and gently alternate pouring the white kaolin soap and the blackberry soap back into

the pot of cream-colored soap. Do not stir. Slowly pour the soap into the mold and cover with a lid or parchment paper. Do not insulate unless your house is below 70°F, in which case insulate only by placing a towel around the outside edges of the mold to avoid a partial gel.

**8. CUT AND CURE** Remove the soap from the mold. If it seems too soft to remove, wait another 12 to 24 hours before removing. Cut the soap into 12 (4-ounce) bars. Allow the bars to cure in a well-ventilated location for 4 to 6 weeks.

# SPRING CUTOUTS

- MOISTURIZING

**YIELD:** 3 POUNDS  
OR 12 (4-OUNCE)  
BARS

**LYE DISCOUNT:** 10%

**SCENT:** ROSE,  
LAVENDER, AND  
ORANGE

**START TO FINISH TIME:** 1 to 2 hours, 24 hours insulation, 4 to 6 weeks to cure

For these soaps I used vegetable cutters from when my kids were little to make fun shapes out of other soaps I'd already made. I needed only three bars from a previous batch of soap for this entire recipe. Whether you've bought natural soap or have already made a batch or two from this book, grab a few out of the cupboard. They don't have to be fully cured since this batch will need time to cure as well. These are scented with rose and lavender, with orange to balance the floral scents. Get ready for super-cute soaps that are easy to make.

**SAFETY FIRST!** Remember to wear your safety equipment and mix the lye water outside. Tell everyone you live with that where you're working is off limits. Give yourself enough time to complete the recipe.

## EQUIPMENT

- kitchen scale
- measuring spoons
- small saucepan
- 1-inch vegetable cutters with flower designs
- glass bowls
- large spoon
- large stainless steel pot
- small zip-top plastic bag
- thermometer
- mold
- parchment paper
- stick blender (or hand mixer)
- rubber spatula
- blanket

## INGREDIENTS

### *For the infusion*

- 8 ounces olive oil
- 1 heaping tablespoon annatto seeds

### *For the soap*

- 3 to 6 bars of soap (white or other color besides yellow)
- 9 ounces tallow
- 9 ounces coconut oil
- 5 ounces olive oil
- 4 ounces annatto seed–infused olive oil
- 4 ounces macadamia nut oil
- 3 ounces grapeseed oil
- 4.6 ounces lye
- 12.9 ounces filtered water
- 0.4 ounce rose essential oil (3% dilution)
- 0.4 ounce lavender essential oil
- 0.4 ounce orange essential oil

## PREP AHEAD

**1. Prepare an annatto seed infusion in olive oil. FOR A HOT INFUSION** Combine 1 heaping tablespoon of annatto seeds and 8 ounces of oil in a small saucepan and heat over low heat to 250°F, stirring occasionally, for about 20 minutes. Remove the pan from the heat and allow to cool to room temperature. **FOR A COLD INFUSION** Place 1 heaping tablespoon of annatto seeds in an 8-ounce glass jar. Pour in enough olive oil to fill the jar, seal, and leave on your windowsill for 6 weeks, shaking occasionally. Whichever method you choose, measure out 4 ounces of the annatto seed infusion (reserve the remainder for another batch).

**2. Use the vegetable cutters to cut out 12 to 24 shapes from the bars of white or colored soap, depending on whether you want one or two cutouts per finished bar of soap.**

**1. HEAT THE FATS/OILS** In a large pot, combine the tallow, coconut oil, olive oil, annatto seed–infused olive oil, macadamia nut oil, and grapeseed oil. Heat over medium-low heat until they are melted and incorporated. Remove from the heat and allow to cool to 100° to 110°F.

**2. MIX THE LYE WATER** Put on safety gear, including protective eyewear, a mask, gloves, and long sleeves. Outside, carefully add the lye crystals to the water and stir

until dissolved. Allow to cool to 100° to 110°F. If the oils and lye water cool at different rates, you can use a cold- or hot-water bath in the sink.

**3. PREPARE THE MOLD** While the oils and lye water cool, line the mold with parchment paper.

**4. COMBINE AND BRING TO TRACE** When both the oils and lye water are 100° to 110°F, carefully pour the lye water into the pot of oils. Use a stick blender (or hand mixer) to mix for 1 to 2 minutes and then let the mixture rest for 4 to 5 minutes. Repeat mixing and resting until light trace.

**5. MIX IN NATURAL ADDITIVES** When the soap reaches light trace, add the rose, lavender, and orange essential oils, and blend for 30 seconds.

**6. MOLD THE SOAP** Pour the soap mixture into the mold. Wearing gloves, gently add the cutouts, pushing down just enough to make them level with the top of the soap. Cover with a lid or parchment paper and insulate with a blanket for 24 hours.

**7. CUT AND CURE** Remove the soap from the mold. If it seems too soft to remove, wait another 12 to 24 hours before removing. Cut the soap into 12 (4-ounce) bars. Allow the bars to cure in a well-ventilated location for 4 to 6 weeks.

**TIP:** The soap needs to be thick enough that the cutouts stay exactly where you want them. Look for a thin pudding consistency. Too thick and the soap will suck down beside your cutouts, leaving a gap. If you want the soap to be a brighter orange, exchange more infused annatto seed olive oil for the pure olive oil.

# UPLIFTING SALT SOAP

- ACNE-FIGHTING
- VEGAN

**YIELD:** 3 POUNDS  
OR 12 (4-OUNCE)  
BARS

**LYE DISCOUNT:** 20%

**SCENT:** ORANGE  
AND YLANG-YLANG

**START TO FINISH TIME:** 1 to 2 hours, 4 hours in mold, 4 to 6 weeks to cure

Salt soap bars are known as spa bars because they exfoliate, help balance the natural oils of your skin, detoxify, and reduce acne and inflammation. They are also full of beneficial minerals, and lather wonderfully. Salt soaps do not dry your skin. The 20 percent lye discount ensures that this recipe is gentle and moisturizing, while the orange and ylang-ylang scent brightens and uplifts.

***SAFETY FIRST!*** Remember to wear your safety equipment and mix the lye water outside. Tell everyone you live with that where you're working is off limits. Give yourself enough time to complete the recipe.

## EQUIPMENT

- kitchen scale
- measuring spoons
- glass bowls
- large spoon
- large stainless steel pot
- small zip-top plastic bag
- thermometer
- mold
- parchment paper
- stick blender (or hand mixer)
- whisk
- rubber spatula

## INGREDIENTS

- 15 ounces coconut oil
- 5 ounces olive oil
- 1 ounce castor oil
- 2.8 ounces lye

- 9 ounces filtered water
- 1 tablespoon Moroccan orange clay
- 0.5 ounce orange essential oil
- 0.5 ounce ylang-ylang essential oil
- 19 ounces Himalayan or table salt (not sea salt)

**1. HEAT THE FATS/OILS** In a large pot, combine the coconut oil, olive oil, and castor oil. Heat over medium-low heat until they are melted and incorporated. Remove from the heat and allow to cool to 100° to 110°F.

**2. MIX THE LYE WATER** Put on safety gear, including protective eyewear, a mask, gloves, and long sleeves. Outside, carefully add the lye crystals to the water and stir until dissolved. Allow to cool to 100° to 110°F. If the oils and lye water cool at different rates, you can use a cold- or hot-water bath in the sink.

**3. PREPARE THE MOLD** While the oils and lye water cool, line the mold with parchment paper.

**4. COMBINE AND BRING TO TRACE** When both the oils and lye water are 100° to 110°F, carefully pour the lye water into the pot of oils. Use a stick blender (or hand mixer) to mix for 1 to 2 minutes and then let the mixture rest for 4 to 5 minutes. Repeat mixing and resting until light trace.

**5. MIX IN COLORANTS** Transfer 1 cup of the soap to a separate bowl and add the Moroccan orange clay. Whisk until there are no lumps. Return it to the large batch and blend until fully incorporated.

**6. MIX IN NATURAL ADDITIVES** Add the orange and ylang-ylang essential oils and the salt. Stir with a large spoon before using a stick blender to avoid breaking your stick blender. Blend until the color, essential oils, and salt are incorporated. The soap will be thick, so be careful of splashes.



**7. MOLD THE SOAP** Pour the soap mixture into the mold and cover with a lid or parchment paper for only 4 hours. Do not insulate.

**8. CUT AND CURE** Remove the soap from the mold. If it seems too soft to remove, check once every hour for firmness. Cut the soap into 12 (4-ounce) bars. Allow the bars to cure in a well-ventilated location for 4 to 6 weeks.

**TIP:** Note that this soap should be removed from the mold after only 4 hours, otherwise it can become so hard that it crumbles when you try to take it out.

# OCEAN SALT SOAP

- ACNE-FIGHTING
- GENTLE
- VEGAN

**YIELD:** 3 POUNDS  
OR 12 (4-OUNCE)  
BARS

**LYE DISCOUNT:** 20%

**SCENT:** YLANG-  
YLANG, ORANGE,  
ROSEMARY,  
CEDARWOOD, AND  
FRANKINCENSE

**START TO FINISH TIME:** 1 to 2 hours, 4 hours in mold, 4 to 6 weeks to cure

In the previous recipe I mentioned some of the benefits of salt soaps. This is one of my favorite looks and scents to make with salt. Natural blue colorants like indigo and woad can be expensive, but you can achieve a blue look by pairing a small amount of activated charcoal with rose clay. This soap is accented by a sweet ocean scent from the salt and essential oils.

**SAFETY FIRST!** Remember to wear your safety equipment and mix the lye water outside. Tell everyone you live with that where you're working is off limits. Give yourself enough time to complete the recipe.

## EQUIPMENT

- kitchen scale
- measuring spoons
- glass bowls
- large spoon
- large stainless steel pot
- small zip-top plastic bag
- thermometer
- mold
- parchment paper
- stick blender (or hand mixer)
- whisk
- rubber spatula

## INGREDIENTS

- 15 ounces coconut oil
- 2 ounces olive oil

- 1 ounce avocado oil
- 1 ounce castor oil
- 1 ounce shea butter
- 1 ounce sweet almond oil
- 2.8 ounces lye
- 8 ounces filtered water
- 0.25 ounce ylang-ylang essential oil
- 0.25 ounce orange essential oil
- 0.25 ounce rosemary essential oil
- 0.25 ounce cedarwood essential oil
- 0.25 ounce frankincense essential oil
- 19 ounces Himalayan or table salt (not sea salt)
- 2 teaspoons activated charcoal powder
- 2 teaspoons rose clay

**1. HEAT THE FATS/OILS** In a large pot, combine the coconut oil, olive oil, avocado oil, castor oil, shea butter, and sweet almond oil. Heat over medium-low heat until they are melted and incorporated. Remove from the heat and allow to cool to 100° to 110°F.

**2. MIX THE LYE WATER** Put on safety gear, including protective eyewear, a mask, gloves, and long sleeves. Outside, carefully add the lye crystals to the water and stir until dissolved. Allow to cool to 100° to 110°F. If the oils and lye water cool at different rates, you can use a cold- or hot-water bath in the sink.

**3. PREPARE THE MOLD** While the oils and lye water cool, line the mold with parchment paper.

**4. COMBINE AND BRING TO TRACE** When both the oils and lye water are 100° to 110°F, carefully pour the lye water into the pot of oils. Use a stick blender (or hand mixer) to mix for 1 to 2 minutes and then let the mixture rest for 4 to 5 minutes. Repeat mixing and resting until light trace.

**5. MIX IN NATURAL ADDITIVES** Add the ylang-ylang, orange, rosemary, cedarwood, and frankincense essential oils and the salt. Stir with a large spoon before using a stick blender. Blend until the essential oils and salt are incorporated. The soap will be thick, so be careful of splashes.

**6. MIX IN COLORANTS** Transfer equal amounts of the soap into 2 bowls. Add the activated charcoal to one bowl and the rose clay to the other, whisking each until there are no lumps.

**7. MOLD THE SOAP AND LAYER** Pour one color into the mold and smooth with a spatula. Slowly add the other color evenly on top of the first. Spread out evenly with a spatula and cover with a lid or parchment paper for only 4 hours. Do not insulate.

**8. CUT AND CURE** Remove the soap from the mold. If it seems too soft to remove, check once every hour for firmness. Cut the soap into 12 (4-ounce) bars. Allow the bars to cure in a well-ventilated location for 4 to 6 weeks.

**TIP:** Don't break your stick blender on the salt! Use a large spoon first, then your stick blender. This soap should be removed from the mold after only 4 hours, otherwise it can become so hard that it crumbles when you try to take it out.

# KOMBUCHA FACE BAR

• MOISTURIZING

**YIELD:** 3 POUNDS  
OR 12 (4-OUNCE)  
BARS

**LYE DISCOUNT:** 15%

**SCENT:**  
UNSCENTED

**START TO FINISH TIME:** 1 to 2 hours, 24 hours insulation, 4 to 6 weeks to cure

If you know what kombucha is, then you already know how wonderful it is for the body, inside and out. Kombucha is a fermented tea that is full of probiotics and vitamins. It has more vitamin C than orange juice. The amazing thing is that those nutrients can be passed to you through soap. It's a clean-feeling soap that rinses well. It has a light, natural herbal scent that I like, so I've left this recipe unscented. If you like, though, feel free to add up to 1 ounce of an essential oil of your choice.

***SAFETY FIRST!*** Remember to wear your safety equipment and mix the lye water outside. Tell everyone you live with that where you're working is off limits. Give yourself enough time to complete the recipe.

## EQUIPMENT

- kitchen scale
- glass bowls
- large spoon
- large stainless steel pot
- small zip-top plastic bag
- thermometer
- mold
- parchment paper
- stick blender (or hand mixer)
- rubber spatula
- blanket

## INGREDIENTS

- 6 ounces filtered water
- 6.5 ounces kombucha
- 12 ounces tallow

- 8 ounces coconut oil
- 5 ounces olive oil
- 4 ounces argan oil
- 4 ounces mango butter
- 4.2 ounces lye

**PREP AHEAD** *Combine the water and kombucha in a glass, plastic, or stainless steel container, and chill in the refrigerator for 1 to 2 hours.*

**1. HEAT THE FATS/OILS** In a large pot, combine the tallow, coconut oil, olive oil, argan oil, and mango butter. Heat over medium-low heat until they are melted and incorporated. Remove from the heat and allow to cool to 100° to 110°F.

**2. MIX THE LYE WATER** Put on safety gear, including protective eyewear, a mask, gloves, and long sleeves. Outside, carefully add the lye crystals to the cold kombucha-water and stir until dissolved. Allow to cool to 100° to 110°F. If the oils and lye water cool at different rates, you can use a cold- or hot-water bath in the sink.

**3. PREPARE THE MOLD** While the oils and lye water cool, line the mold with parchment paper.

**4. COMBINE AND BRING TO TRACE** When both the oils and lye water are 100° to 110°F, carefully pour the lye water into the pot of oils. Use a stick blender (or hand mixer) to mix for 1 to 2 minutes and then let the mixture rest for 4 to 5 minutes. Repeat mixing and resting until light trace.

**5. MOLD THE SOAP** Pour the soap mixture into the mold, cover with a lid or parchment paper, and insulate with a blanket for 24 hours.

**6. CUT AND CURE** Remove the soap from the mold. If it seems too soft to remove, wait another 12 to 24 hours before removing. Cut the soap into 12 (4-ounce) bars. Allow the bars to cure in a well-ventilated location for 4 to 6 weeks.

# BEER SOAP

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• GENTLE</li><li>• MOISTURIZING</li><li>• NUT-FREE</li><li>• VEGAN</li></ul>	<b>YIELD:</b> 3 POUNDS OR 12 (4-OUNCE) BARS	<b>LYE DISCOUNT:</b> 5%	<b>SCENT:</b> LEMONGRASS AND CEDARWOOD
<b>START TO FINISH TIME:</b> 2 hours, 24 hours in mold, 4 to 6 weeks to cure			

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Beer is a great ingredient to use in making soap. It adds bubbles, is a fabulous moisturizer, and soothes and softens irritated skin. I've chosen lemongrass and cedarwood essential oils to give this a light, uplifting, outdoorsy scent. The beer needs to be flat, but that's easy to do. It'll give this soap a rich creamy tan color.

***SAFETY FIRST!*** Remember to wear your safety equipment and mix the lye water outside. Tell everyone you live with that where you're working is off limits. Give yourself enough time to complete the recipe.

## EQUIPMENT

- kitchen scale
- saucepan
- glass bowls
- large spoon
- large stainless steel pot
- small zip-top plastic bag
- thermometer
- mold
- parchment paper
- stick blender (or hand mixer)
- rubber spatula

## INGREDIENTS

- 6.2 ounces water
- 6 ounces flat beer
- 13 ounces olive oil
- 8 ounces babassu oil
- 6 ounces cocoa butter
- 5 ounces shea butter

- 4.4 ounces lye
- 0.5 ounce lemongrass essential oil
- 0.5 ounce cedarwood essential oil

#### **PREP AHEAD**

*1. Pour 10 ounces of beer into a saucepan and allow to sit at room temperature for at least 24 hours. Bring to a boil over medium heat, reduce the heat, and simmer for 30 minutes. Cool to room temperature.*

*2. Weigh out 6 ounces of the flat beer and pour into a glass, plastic, or stainless steel container. Add 6.2 ounces of water and place in the freezer until slushy but not frozen solid. Check after 1 hour and then check every 20 minutes.*

**1. HEAT THE FATS/OILS** In a large pot, combine the olive oil, babassu oil, cocoa butter, and shea butter. Heat over medium-low heat until they are melted and incorporated. Remove from the heat and allow to cool to 90°F.

**2. MIX THE LYE WATER** Put on safety gear, including protective eyewear, a mask, gloves, and long sleeves. Outside, very slowly pour only about ¼ of the lye crystals into the cold beer-water and stir until dissolved. Let cool for 20 minutes. Repeat until all the lye is dissolved into the beer-water. Allow to cool to 90°F. If the oils and lye water cool at different rates, you can use a cold- or hot-water bath in the sink.

**3. PREPARE THE MOLD** While the oils and lye water cool, line the mold with parchment paper.

**4. COMBINE AND BRING TO TRACE** When both the oils and lye water are around 90°F, carefully pour the lye water into the pot of oils. Use a stick blender (or hand mixer) to mix for 1 to 2 minutes and then let the mixture rest for 4 to 5 minutes. Repeat mixing and resting until light trace.

**5. MIX IN NATURAL ADDITIVES** When the soap reaches light trace, add the lemongrass and cedarwood essential oils and blend for 30 seconds.

**6. MOLD THE SOAP** Pour the soap into the mold and cover with a lid or parchment paper. Do not insulate.

**7. CUT AND CURE** Remove the soap from the mold after 24 hours. If it seems too soft to remove, wait another 12 to 24 hours before removing. Cut the soap into 12 (4-ounce) bars. Allow the bars to cure in a well-ventilated location for 4 to 6 weeks.

**TIP:** Beer can cause the soap to overheat if not prepared well ahead of time, so do not skip the preparation step.

# MULLED WINE SOAP

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• MOISTURIZING	<b>YIELD:</b> 3 POUNDS OR 12 (4-OUNCE) BARS	<b>LYE DISCOUNT:</b> 5%	<b>SCENT:</b> CLOVE, CINNAMON, AND ORANGE
<b>START TO FINISH TIME:</b> 2 hours, 24 hours in mold, 4 to 6 weeks to cure			

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Wine soap is considered by some to be an advanced soap to make. But I believe that if you can make milk soap, then you can make wine soap. It was actually the second batch of soap I ever made. As with the beer soap recipe, wine adds a creamy lather and extra bubbles. It is also full of antioxidants. Just follow each of the steps to prepare and you will have a wonderful merlot soap to enjoy.

***SAFETY FIRST!*** Remember to wear your safety equipment and mix the lye water outside. Tell everyone you live with that where you're working is off limits. Give yourself enough time to complete the recipe.

## EQUIPMENT

- kitchen scale
- small saucepan
- measuring spoons
- glass bowls
- large spoon
- large stainless steel pot
- small zip-top plastic bag
- thermometer
- stick blender (or hand mixer)
- mold
- parchment paper
- whisk
- rubber spatula

## INGREDIENTS

- 7.5 ounces water
- 5 ounces merlot wine
- 11 ounces tallow

- 9 ounces olive oil
- 8 ounces coconut oil
- 3 ounces castor oil
- 4.2 ounces lye
- 0.4 ounce clove essential oil
- 0.4 ounce cinnamon leaf essential oil
- 0.5 ounce orange essential oil
- 2 teaspoons madder root powder

#### **PREP AHEAD**

*1. Pour 10 ounces of merlot wine into a saucepan and allow to sit at room temperature for at least 24 hours. Bring to a boil over medium heat, reduce the heat, and simmer for 30 minutes. Cool to room temperature.*

*2. Weigh out 5 ounces of the wine and pour into a glass, plastic, or stainless steel container. Add 7.5 ounces of water and place in the freezer until slushy but not frozen solid. Check after 1 hour and then check every 20 minutes.*

**1. HEAT THE FATS/OILS** In a large pot, combine the tallow, olive oil, coconut oil, and castor oil. Heat over medium-low heat until they are melted and incorporated. Remove from the heat and allow to cool to 80° to 90°F.

**2. MIX THE LYE WATER** Put on safety gear, including protective eyewear, a mask, gloves, and long sleeves. Outside, very slowly pour only about ¼ of the lye crystals into the cold wine-water and stir until dissolved. Let cool for 20 minutes. Repeat until all the lye is dissolved into the wine-water. Allow to cool to 80° to 90°F. If the oils and lye water cool at different rates, you can use a cold- or hot-water bath in the sink.

**3. PREPARE THE MOLD** While the oils and lye water cool, line the mold with parchment paper.

**4. COMBINE AND BRING TO TRACE** When both the oils and lye water are 80° to 90°F, carefully pour the lye water into the pot of oils. Use a stick blender (or hand mixer) to mix for 1 to 2 minutes and then let the mixture rest for 4 to 5 minutes. Repeat mixing and resting until light trace.

**5. MIX IN NATURAL ADDITIVES** When the soap reaches light trace, add the clove, cinnamon, and orange essential oils, and blend for 30 seconds.

**6. MIX IN COLORANTS** Transfer 1 cup of the soap to a small bowl and add the madder root. Whisk until there are no lumps. Return the madder root soap to the main batch and blend until fully incorporated.

**7. MOLD THE SOAP** Pour the soap into the mold and cover with a lid or parchment paper. Do not insulate.

**8. CUT AND CURE** Remove the soap from the mold after 24 hours. If it seems too soft to remove, wait another 12 to 24 hours before removing. Cut the soap into 12 (4-ounce) bars. Allow the bars to cure in a well-ventilated location for 4 to 6 weeks.

**TIP:** Wine can cause the soap to overheat if not prepared well ahead of time, so do not skip the preparation step. If the soap starts to crack or mound down the middle of the mold, it is starting to overheat. Place in the refrigerator, but be prepared for it to overflow.

# PINK GRAPEFRUIT WEDDING SOAP

- NUT-FREE

**YIELD:** 3 POUNDS  
OR 12 (4-OUNCE)  
BARS

**LYE DISCOUNT:** 15%

**SCENT:**  
GRAPEFRUIT AND  
GERANIUM

**START TO FINISH TIME:** 1 to 2 hours, 24 hours insulation, 4 to 6 weeks to cure

This layered soap is a beautiful cream and orange-pink color. I call it a wedding soap because it makes a wonderful gift that can be cut into 1-ounce wedding favors and wrapped with a pretty ribbon. Geranium is great for the skin and, when combined with grapefruit, it creates a bright aroma with herbal, rose, and citrus notes.

**SAFETY FIRST!** Remember to wear your safety equipment and mix the lye water outside. Tell everyone you live with that where you're working is off limits. Give yourself enough time to complete the recipe.

## EQUIPMENT

- kitchen scale
- measuring spoons
- glass bowls
- large spoon
- large stainless steel pot
- small zip-top plastic bag
- thermometer
- mold
- parchment paper
- stick blender (or hand mixer)
- whisk
- rubber spatula
- blanket

## INGREDIENTS

- 9 ounces tallow
- 9 ounces olive oil
- 6 ounces babassu oil

- 4 ounces mango butter
- 3 ounces jojoba oil
- 3 ounces castor oil
- 4 ounces lye
- 12.9 ounces filtered water
- 0.5 ounce geranium essential oil
- 0.5 ounce grapefruit essential oil
- 1 tablespoon rose clay
- 1 teaspoon Moroccan orange clay

**1. HEAT THE FATS/OILS** In a large pot, combine the tallow, olive oil, babassu oil, mango butter, jojoba oil, and castor oil. Heat over medium-low heat until they are melted and incorporated. Remove from the heat and allow to cool to 100° to 110°F.

**2. MIX THE LYE WATER** Put on safety gear, including protective eyewear, a mask, gloves, and long sleeves. Outside, carefully add the lye crystals to the water and stir until dissolved. Allow to cool to 100° to 110°F. If the oils and lye water cool at different rates, you can use a cold- or hot-water bath in the sink.

**3. PREPARE THE MOLD** While the oils and lye water cool, line the mold with parchment paper.

**4. COMBINE AND BRING TO TRACE** When both the oils and lye water are 100° to 110°F, carefully pour the lye water into the pot of oils. Use a stick blender (or hand mixer) to mix for 1 to 2 minutes and then let the mixture rest for 4 to 5 minutes. Repeat mixing and resting until light trace.

**5. MIX IN NATURAL ADDITIVES** When the soap reaches light to medium trace, add the geranium and grapefruit essential oils and blend for 30 seconds.

**6. MIX IN COLORANTS** Transfer equal amounts of the soap into 2 bowls. Add the rose clay and the Moroccan orange clay to one bowl, whisking until there are no lumps. Leave the second part of the batch in the other bowl cream-colored.

**7. MOLD THE SOAP AND LAYER** When both halves are at thick trace, pour one color into the mold and smooth the top with a spatula. Use a wide spatula to help guide the pour of the second half gently onto the first half. Smooth the top or add a frosted look with the spatula. Cover with a lid or parchment paper and insulate with a blanket for 24 hours.

**8. CUT AND CURE** Remove the soap from the mold. If it seems too soft to remove, wait another 12 to 24 hours before removing. Cut the soap into 12 (4-ounce) bars. Allow the bars to cure in a well-ventilated location for 4 to 6 weeks.



*Cocoa-Mint Soap (top), [here](#) ; Candy Cane Soap (bottom), [here](#)*

## *chapter ten*

# SOMETHING SEASONAL

*Pumpkin Spice Soap*

*Candy Cane Soap*

*Fall Sunset Soap*

*Cedarwood and Fir Soap*

*Walk in the Woods Soap*

*Cinnamon Roll Soap*

*Golden Frankincense and Myrrh Soap*

*Chocolate-Covered Strawberry Soap*

*Goat Milk, Cranberry, and Orange Soap*

*Red, White, and Blue Striped Soap*

*Goat Milk and Honey Confetti Soap*

*Champagne Soap*

Everyone likes fun and creative soaps around the holidays and for special events. For those of us who make soap, they add a lovely scent to your kitchen as you make and cure them. Your house will smell wonderfully festive. They also make great gifts. Who wouldn't like a present that is all-natural, healthy, and made personally by you? I've been making these seasonal soaps and selling them at my Simple Life Mom Etsy shop for a few years and they're always a big hit. They're not just for holidays like Christmas and Thanksgiving, but are also fantastic for birthdays, weddings, and showers. This chapter is celebration central—I'm sure you'll find a recipe that will be perfect for your special occasion.

# PUMPKIN SPICE SOAP

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• MOISTURIZING	<b>YIELD:</b> 3 POUNDS OR 12 (4-OUNCE) BARS	<b>LYE DISCOUNT:</b> 10%	<b>SCENT:</b> CINNAMON, CLOVE, ALLSPICE, AND NUTMEG
	<b>START TO FINISH TIME:</b> 1 to 2 hours, 24 hours insulation, 4 to 6 weeks to cure		

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I always have this soap in stock in my shop around the fall and early winter months. It just says “fall” with its earthy orange color and cinnamon, clove, nutmeg, and allspice scent. Every year, I purée pumpkins from my garden and set some aside to use for this soap. It makes a great thank-you gift for your Thanksgiving host.

**SAFETY FIRST!** Remember to wear your safety equipment and mix the lye water outside. Tell everyone you live with that where you’re working is off limits. Give yourself enough time to complete the recipe.

## EQUIPMENT

- kitchen scale
- glass bowls
- large spoon
- large stainless steel pot
- small zip-top plastic bag
- thermometer
- mold
- parchment paper
- stick blender (or hand mixer)
- rubber spatula
- blanket

## INGREDIENTS

- 9 ounces lard
- 9 ounces coconut oil
- 8 ounces olive oil
- 3 ounces shea butter
- 3 ounces castor oil

- 2 ounces sweet almond oil
- 4.5 ounces lye
- 8.9 ounces filtered water
- 0.25 ounce cinnamon leaf essential oil
- 0.25 ounce clove essential oil
- 0.25 ounce nutmeg essential oil
- 0.25 ounce allspice essential oil
- 4 ounces pumpkin purée

**1. HEAT THE FATS/OILS** In a large pot, combine the lard, coconut oil, olive oil, shea butter, castor oil, and sweet almond oil. Heat over medium-low heat until they are melted and incorporated. Remove from the heat and allow to cool to 100° to 110°F.

**2. MIX THE LYE WATER** Put on safety gear, including protective eyewear, a mask, gloves, and long sleeves. Outside, carefully add the lye crystals to the water and stir until dissolved. Allow to cool to 100° to 110°F. If the oils and lye water cool at different rates, you can use a cold- or hot-water bath in the sink.

**3. PREPARE THE MOLD** While the oils and lye water cool, line the mold with parchment paper.

**4. COMBINE AND BRING TO TRACE** When both the oils and lye water are 100° to 110°F, carefully pour the lye water into the pot of oils. Use a stick blender (or hand mixer) to mix for 1 to 2 minutes and then let the mixture rest for 4 to 5 minutes. Repeat mixing and resting until light trace.

**5. MIX IN NATURAL ADDITIVES** When the soap reaches light trace, add the cinnamon, clove, nutmeg, and allspice essential oils and the pumpkin purée, and blend for 30 seconds.

**6. MOLD THE SOAP** Pour the soap mixture into the mold, cover with a lid or parchment paper, and insulate with a blanket for 24 hours.

**7. CUT AND CURE** Remove the soap from the mold. If it seems too soft to remove, wait another 12 to 24 hours before removing. Cut the soap into 12 (4-ounce) bars. Allow the bars to cure in a well-ventilated location for 4 to 6 weeks.

**TIP:** Remember, when adding purées, always remove the same weight in water. I've already done that for you in this recipe.

# CANDY CANE SOAP

- GENTLE

**YIELD:** 3 POUNDS  
OR 12 (4-OUNCE)  
BARS

**LYE DISCOUNT:** 5%

**SCENT:**  
PEPPERMINT

**START TO FINISH TIME:** 1 to 2 hours, 24 hours insulation, 4 to 6 weeks to cure

This is a bright, eye-catching soap that has a candy cane swirl and a peppermint scent. You can make yours with minimal swirls so that they look more like a candy cane or you can swirl it up and make your own design. I always run out and have to make extra batches of these beauties around the holidays. They're pretty for Valentine's Day as well.

***SAFETY FIRST!*** Remember to wear your safety equipment and mix the lye water outside. Tell everyone you live with that where you're working is off limits. Give yourself enough time to complete the recipe.

## EQUIPMENT

- kitchen scale
- measuring spoons
- glass bowls
- large spoon
- large stainless steel pot
- small zip-top plastic bag
- thermometer
- mold
- parchment paper
- stick blender (or hand mixer)
- whisk
- rubber spatula
- chopstick
- blanket

## INGREDIENTS

- 12 ounces tallow

- 10 ounces olive oil
- 8 ounces coconut oil
- 3 ounces castor oil
- 4.4 ounces lye
- 12.5 ounces filtered water
- 1 ounce peppermint essential oil
- ½ to 1 tablespoon madder root powder

**1. HEAT THE FATS/OILS** In a large pot, combine the tallow, olive oil, coconut oil, and castor oil. Heat over medium-low heat until they are melted and incorporated. Remove from the heat and allow to cool to 100° to 110°F.

**2. MIX THE LYE WATER** Put on safety gear, including protective eyewear, a mask, gloves, and long sleeves. Outside, carefully add the lye crystals to the water and stir until dissolved. Allow to cool to 100° to 110°F. If the oils and lye water cool at different rates, you can use a cold- or hot-water bath in the sink.

**3. PREPARE THE MOLD** While the oils and lye water cool, line the mold with parchment paper.

**4. COMBINE AND BRING TO TRACE** When both the oils and lye water are 100° to 110°F, carefully pour the lye water into the pot of oils. Use a stick blender (or hand mixer) to mix for 1 to 2 minutes and then let the mixture rest for 4 to 5 minutes. Repeat mixing and resting until light trace.

**5. MIX IN NATURAL ADDITIVES** When the soap reaches light to medium trace, add the peppermint essential oil and blend for 30 seconds.

**6. MIX IN COLORANTS** Transfer ½ cup of the soap to a small bowl. Add the madder root powder and whisk until there are no lumps.

**7. MOLD THE SOAP AND SWIRL** When the soap is at medium trace (just a little thinner than pudding), pour the large batch into the mold. Pour the red soap horizontally, back and forth, over the surface of the soap. Insert a chopstick into the batter until it reaches the bottom of the mold. Drag the chopstick vertically, back and forth, across the length of the mold. Cover with a lid or parchment paper and insulate with a blanket for 24 hours.

**8. CUT AND CURE** Remove the soap from the mold. If it seems too soft to remove, wait another 12 to 24 hours before removing. Cut the soap into 12 (4-ounce) bars. Allow the bars to cure in a well-ventilated location for 4 to 6 weeks.

**TIP:** Your soap needs to be at medium trace to create the swirl on top or the color will sink inside the soap. If your soap is too thin, blend with the stick blender or wait a few minutes for it to thicken before pouring into the mold. If you have poured the red soap back and forth over the top of your batch and have extra, don't use it. Overuse will give you a solid red on top rather than pretty red stripes or swirls.

# FALL SUNSET SOAP

- GENTLE
- MOISTURIZING
- VEGAN

**YIELD:** 3 POUNDS  
OR 12 (4-OUNCE)  
BARS

**LYE DISCOUNT:** 10%

**SCENT:** ORANGE,  
CINNAMON, AND  
GINGER

**START TO FINISH TIME:** 1 to 2 hours, 24 hours insulation, 4 to 6 weeks to cure

This soap is an earthy variation of sunset colors like cream, yellow, orange, and rusty red. Orange, cinnamon, and ginger essential oils give it a spiced cider scent that really fits into the fall and holiday season. I used the spin-swirl method described in chapter 6 ([here](#)) to give this bar a horizon appearance. Remember to watch for light trace so that you have time to complete the layers, and be very gentle with the spin so that you don't spill the soap all over your kitchen.

**SAFETY FIRST!** Remember to wear your safety equipment and mix the lye water outside. Tell everyone you live with that where you're working is off limits. Give yourself enough time to complete the recipe.



## EQUIPMENT

- kitchen scale
- measuring spoons
- glass bowls
- large spoon

- large stainless steel pot
- small zip-top plastic bag
- thermometer
- mold
- parchment paper
- stick blender (or hand mixer)
- whisk
- rubber spatula
- blanket

#### INGREDIENTS

- 11 ounces olive oil
- 8 ounces coconut oil
- 5 ounces apricot kernel oil
- 4 ounces cocoa butter
- 3 ounces castor oil
- 4.1 ounces lye
- 11.8 ounces filtered water
- 0.4 ounce orange essential oil
- 0.4 ounce cinnamon leaf essential oil
- 0.4 ounce ginger essential oil
- 3 teaspoons ground turmeric
- 2 teaspoons rose clay
- 2 teaspoons Moroccan orange clay

**1. HEAT THE FATS/OILS** In a large pot, combine the olive oil, coconut oil, apricot kernel oil, cocoa butter, and castor oil. Heat over medium-low heat until they are melted and incorporated. Remove from the heat and allow to cool to 90° to 100°F.

**2. MIX THE LYE WATER** Put on safety gear, including protective eyewear, a mask, gloves, and long sleeves. Outside, carefully add the lye crystals to the water and stir until dissolved. Allow to cool to 90° to 100°F. If the oils and lye water cool at different rates, remember that you can use a cold- or hot-water bath in the sink.

**3. PREPARE THE MOLD** While the oils and lye water cool, line the mold with parchment paper.

**4. COMBINE AND BRING TO TRACE** When both the oils and lye water are 90° to 100°F, carefully pour the lye water into the pot of oils. Use a stick blender (or hand mixer) to

mix for 2 to 3 minutes and then let the mixture rest for 4 to 5 minutes. Repeat mixing and resting until light trace.

**5. MIX IN NATURAL ADDITIVES** When the soap reaches very light trace, add the orange, cinnamon, and ginger essential oils, and blend for a few seconds.

**6. MIX IN COLORANTS** Divide the soap evenly into 4 bowls. Leave the first alone, add the ground turmeric to the second, rose clay to the third, and Moroccan orange clay to the fourth. Whisk each until there are no lumps.

**7. MOLD THE SOAP AND SWIRL** Using the spin method to add swirls (see [here](#) ), pour the soap into the mold while your soap is still thin. Count to 3 while pouring one color in one corner of your mold. Take the same color and pour it into the opposite corner, counting to 3 again. Repeat with the next color. Continue, repeating colors until all the soap is poured into the mold. Very gently, turn the mold back and forth. It will spill if you do this too fast. Repeat a few times until you're happy with the swirl. Cover with a lid or parchment paper and insulate with a blanket for 24 hours.

**8. CUT AND CURE** Remove the soap from the mold. If it seems too soft to remove, wait another 12 to 24 hours before removing. Cut the soap into 12 (4-ounce) bars. Allow the bars to cure in a well-ventilated location for 4 to 6 weeks.

**TIP:** Your soap needs to be at very light trace when you start to pour, so watch carefully. These colors will become more muted after 24 hours (especially the turmeric), so feel free to add more color, ½ teaspoon at a time, if desired.

# CEDARWOOD AND FIR SOAP

- GENTLE
- MOISTURIZING

**YIELD:** 3 POUNDS  
OR 12 (4-OUNCE)  
BARS

**LYE DISCOUNT:** 10%

**SCENT:**  
CEDARWOOD AND  
FIR

**START TO FINISH TIME:** 1 to 2 hours, 24 hours insulation, 4 to 6 weeks to cure

This is a very light, cream-colored soap that has a Christmas tree scent. It is not a stark pine, but it has cedarwood and fir essential oils to give it more of a walk-in-the-woods feeling. I find myself taking deep breaths and feeling rejuvenated whenever I have it around. The men in my family really like it as well. This makes a hard bar with creamy, large bubbles and jojoba oil to help your skin maintain moisture.

***SAFETY FIRST!*** Remember to wear your safety equipment and mix the lye water outside. Tell everyone you live with that where you're working is off limits. Give yourself enough time to complete the recipe.

## EQUIPMENT

- kitchen scale
- glass bowls
- large spoon
- large stainless steel pot
- small zip-top plastic bag
- thermometer
- mold
- parchment paper
- stick blender (or hand mixer)
- rubber spatula
- blanket

## INGREDIENTS

- 10 ounces lard
- 8 ounces olive oil
- 8 ounces coconut oil
- 2 ounces jojoba

- 2 ounces shea butter
- 4 ounces castor oil
- 4.4 ounces lye
- 12.9 ounces filtered water
- 0.5 ounce cedarwood essential oil
- 0.5 ounce fir essential oil

- 1. HEAT THE FATS/OILS** In a large pot, combine the lard, olive oil, coconut oil, jojoba oil, shea butter, and castor oil. Heat over medium-low heat until they are melted and incorporated. Remove from the heat and allow to cool to 100° to 110°F.
- 2. MIX THE LYE WATER** Put on safety gear, including protective eyewear, a mask, gloves, and long sleeves. Outside, carefully add the lye crystals to the water and stir until dissolved. Allow to cool to 100° to 110°F. If the oils and lye water cool at different rates, you can use a cold- or hot-water bath in the sink.
- 3. PREPARE THE MOLD** While the oils and lye water cool, line the mold with parchment paper.
- 4. COMBINE AND BRING TO TRACE** When both the oils and lye water are 100° to 110°F, carefully pour the lye water into the pot of oils. Use a stick blender (or hand mixer) to mix for 1 to 2 minutes and then let the mixture rest for 4 to 5 minutes. Repeat mixing and resting until light trace.
- 5. MIX IN NATURAL ADDITIVES** When the soap reaches light trace, add the cedarwood and fir essential oils and blend for 30 seconds.
- 6. MOLD THE SOAP** Pour the soap mixture into the mold, cover with a lid or parchment paper, and insulate with a blanket for 24 hours.
- 7. CUT AND CURE** Remove the soap from the mold. If it seems too soft to remove, wait another 12 to 24 hours before removing. Cut the soap into 12 (4-ounce) bars. Allow the bars to cure in a well-ventilated location for 4 to 6 weeks.

# WALK IN THE WOODS SOAP

- VEGAN

**YIELD:** 3 POUNDS  
OR 12 (4-OUNCE)  
BARS

**LYE DISCOUNT:** 15%

**SCENT:** LAVENDER  
AND PATCHOULI

**START TO FINISH TIME:** 1 to 2 hours, 24 hours insulation, 4 to 6 weeks to cure

For your first swirl soap, you will remove the cream-colored soap for the swirl. You'll then add nettle leaf powder to the larger batch, and create a rich green soap with white swirls. Patchouli and lavender essential oils come together to make a wonderful, grounding floral and woody scent.

***SAFETY FIRST!*** Remember to wear your safety equipment and mix the lye water outside. Tell everyone you live with that where you're working is off limits. Give yourself enough time to complete the recipe.

## EQUIPMENT

- kitchen scale
- measuring spoons
- glass bowls
- large spoon
- large stainless steel pot
- small zip-top plastic bag
- thermometer
- mold
- parchment paper
- stick blender (or hand mixer)
- whisk
- rubber spatula
- chopstick
- blanket

## INGREDIENTS

- 10 ounces babassu oil
- 9 ounces olive oil

- 7 ounces macadamia nut oil
- 5 ounces castor oil
- 4 ounces shea butter
- 4.3 ounces lye
- 13.3 ounces water
- 0.5 ounce lavender essential oil
- 0.5 ounce patchouli essential oil
- 2 tablespoons nettle leaf powder

**1. HEAT THE FATS/OILS** In a large pot, combine the babassu oil, olive oil, macadamia nut oil, castor oil, and shea butter. Heat over medium-low heat until they are melted and incorporated. Remove from the heat and allow to cool to 90° to 100°F.

**2. MIX THE LYE WATER** Put on safety gear, including protective eyewear, a mask, gloves, and long sleeves. Outside, carefully add the lye crystals to the water and stir until dissolved. Allow to cool to 90° to 100°F. If the oils and lye water cool at different rates, you can use a cold- or hot-water bath in the sink.

**3. PREPARE THE MOLD** While the oils and lye water cool, line the mold with parchment paper.

**4. COMBINE AND BRING TO TRACE** When both the oils and lye water are 90° to 100°F, carefully pour the lye water into the pot of oils. Use a stick blender (or hand mixer) to mix for 1 to 2 minutes and then let the mixture rest for 4 to 5 minutes. Repeat mixing and resting until light trace.

**5. MIX IN NATURAL ADDITIVES** When the soap reaches light trace, add the lavender and patchouli essential oils and blend for 30 seconds.

**6. MIX IN COLORANTS** Transfer ½ cup of the soap to a separate bowl and set aside. Remove another ½ cup and add the nettle leaf. Whisk to remove any lumps. Return the green soap to the main batch and blend until fully incorporated.

**7. MOLD THE SOAP** When the soap is at medium trace (just a little thinner than pudding), pour the main batch of green-colored soap into the mold. Pour the cream soap in a line horizontally, back and forth, over the top of your batch, making stripes. Insert a chopstick into the batter until it reaches the bottom of the mold. Drag the chopstick vertically, back and forth, across the length of the mold. Stop there or add extra swirls by returning the chopstick to the starting point and retracing your steps, making small circles across the length of the soap. Cover with a lid or parchment paper and insulate with a blanket for 24 hours.

**8. CUT AND CURE** Remove the soap from the mold. If it seems too soft to remove, wait another 12 to 24 hours before removing. Cut the soap into 12 (4-ounce) bars. Allow the bars to cure in a well-ventilated location for 4 to 6 weeks.

# CINNAMON ROLL SOAP

- GENTLE
- MOISTURIZING
- VEGAN

**YIELD:** 3 POUNDS  
OR 12 (4-OUNCE)  
BARS

**LYE DISCOUNT:** 5%

**SCENT:** CINNAMON

**START TO FINISH TIME:** 1 to 2 hours, 24 hours insulation, 4 to 6 weeks to cure

Every Christmas my family makes cinnamon rolls from scratch, so this recipe makes me think of the holidays and being with my loved ones. It is a cream-colored soap with cinnamon swirls poured at light trace so that they sink into the batch, giving it a very different look than if it were poured at medium or thick trace. They look and smell good enough to eat!

***SAFETY FIRST!*** Remember to wear your safety equipment and mix the lye water outside. Tell everyone you live with that where you're working is off limits. Give yourself enough time to complete the recipe.

## EQUIPMENT

- kitchen scale
- measuring spoons
- glass bowls
- large spoon
- large stainless steel pot
- small zip-top plastic bag
- thermometer
- mold
- parchment paper
- stick blender (or hand mixer)
- whisk
- rubber spatula
- blanket

## INGREDIENTS

- 20 ounces olive oil
- 9 ounces coconut oil

- 3 ounces hazelnut oil
- 2 ounces castor oil
- 4.8 ounces lye
- 12.9 ounces filtered water
- 1 ounce cinnamon leaf essential oil
- 1 tablespoon ground cinnamon

**1. HEAT THE FATS/OILS** In a large pot, combine the olive oil, coconut oil, hazelnut oil, and castor oil. Heat over medium-low heat until they are melted and incorporated. Remove from the heat and allow to cool to 90° to 100°F.

**2. MIX THE LYE WATER** Put on safety gear, including protective eyewear, a mask, gloves, and long sleeves. Outside, carefully add the lye crystals to the water and stir until dissolved. Allow to cool to 90° to 100°F. If the oils and lye water cool at different rates, you can use a cold- or hot-water bath in the sink.

**3. PREPARE THE MOLD** While the oils and lye water cool, line the mold with parchment paper.

**4. COMBINE AND BRING TO TRACE** When both the oils and lye water are 90° to 100°F, carefully pour the lye water into the pot of oils. Use a stick blender (or hand mixer) to mix for 2 to 3 minutes and then let the mixture rest for 4 to 5 minutes. Repeat mixing and resting until light trace.

**5. MIX IN NATURAL ADDITIVES** When the soap reaches very light trace, add the cinnamon leaf essential oil and blend for a few seconds.

**6. MIX IN COLORANTS** Transfer 1 cup of the soap to a bowl. Add the cinnamon and whisk until there are no lumps. Set aside.

**7. MOLD THE SOAP AND SWIRL** While the soap is still at light trace, pour the main batch of soap into the mold. From 1 foot above the mold, carefully pour the cinnamon soap back and forth horizontally across the entire length of the mold. Insert a rubber spatula into the batter until it reaches the bottom of the mold. Drag the spatula vertically up and down through the soap and across the length of the mold. Don't overdo it or you will lose the design. Cover with a lid or parchment paper and insulate with a blanket for 24 hours.

**8. CUT AND CURE** Remove the soap from the mold. If it seems too soft to remove, wait another 12 to 24 hours before removing. Cut the soap into 12 (4-ounce) bars. Allow the bars to cure in a well-ventilated location for 4 to 6 weeks.

**TIP:** I keep telling you to make swirls when your batch is at medium trace. Well, here's the exception! You want to pour this soap at thin trace so those swirls sink beautifully into the middle and bottom, giving it that cinnamon roll look.

# GOLDEN FRANKINCENSE AND MYRRH SOAP

- MOISTURIZING

**YIELD:** 3 POUNDS  
OR 12 (4-OUNCE)  
BARS

**LYE DISCOUNT:** 5%

**SCENT:** ORANGE,  
FRANKINCENSE,  
AND MYRRH

**START TO FINISH TIME:** 1 to 2 hours, 24 hours insulation, 4 to 6 weeks to cure

Clever name, right? This is a perfect soap for the holiday season, and a big hit for everyone who understands the beneficial properties of turmeric, frankincense, and myrrh. I wanted to give this soap a golden color without it being orange, brown, or yellow. I achieved this by simply adding turmeric. When added at trace, turmeric always makes soap a bright yellow color, but within 24 hours it mellows to a light golden color. It's perfect!

***SAFETY FIRST!*** Remember to wear your safety equipment and mix the lye water outside. Tell everyone you live with that where you're working is off limits. Give yourself enough time to complete the recipe.

## EQUIPMENT

- kitchen scale
- measuring spoons
- glass bowls
- large spoon
- large stainless steel pot
- small zip-top plastic bag
- thermometer
- mold
- parchment paper
- stick blender (or hand mixer)
- whisk
- rubber spatula
- blanket

## INGREDIENTS

- 9 ounces tallow
- 9 ounces olive oil
- 6 ounces coconut oil
- 6 ounces mango butter
- 2 ounces castor oil
- 4.4 ounces lye
- 12.2 ounces filtered water
- 0.2 ounce frankincense essential oil
- 0.2 ounce myrrh essential oil
- 0.8 ounce orange essential oil
- 2 tablespoons ground turmeric

**1. HEAT THE FATS/OILS** In a large pot, combine the tallow, olive oil, coconut oil, mango butter, and castor oil. Heat over medium-low heat until they are melted and incorporated. Remove from the heat and allow to cool to 100° to 110°F.

**2. MIX THE LYE WATER** Put on safety gear, including protective eyewear, a mask, gloves, and long sleeves. Outside, carefully add the lye crystals to the water and stir until dissolved. Allow to cool to 100° to 110°F. If the oils and lye water cool at different rates, you can use a cold- or hot-water bath in the sink.

**3. PREPARE THE MOLD** While the oils and lye water cool, line the mold with parchment paper.

**4. COMBINE AND BRING TO TRACE** When both the oils and lye water are 100° to 110°F, carefully pour the lye water into the pot of oils. Use a stick blender (or hand mixer) to mix for 1 to 2 minutes and then let the mixture rest for 4 to 5 minutes. Repeat mixing and resting until light trace.

**5. MIX IN NATURAL ADDITIVES** When the soap reaches light to medium trace, add the frankincense, myrrh, and orange essential oils, and blend for 30 seconds.

**6. MIX IN COLORANTS** Transfer 1 cup of the soap to a bowl. Add the turmeric and whisk until there are no lumps. Return the turmeric soap to the large batch and blend until fully incorporated.

**7. MOLD THE SOAP** Pour the soap mixture into the mold, cover with a lid or parchment paper, and insulate with a blanket for 24 hours.

**8. CUT AND CURE** Remove the soap from the mold. If it seems too soft to remove, wait another 12 to 24 hours before removing. Cut the soap into 12 (4-ounce) bars. Allow the bars to cure in a well-ventilated location for 4 to 6 weeks.

# CHOCOLATE-COVERED STRAWBERRY SOAP

- GENTLE
- MOISTURIZING
- VEGAN

**YIELD:** 3 POUNDS  
OR 12 (4-OUNCE)  
BARS

**LYE DISCOUNT:** 5%

**SCENT:** LAVENDER  
AND VANILLA

**START TO FINISH TIME:** 1 to 2 hours, 24 hours insulation, 4 to 6 weeks to cure

Chocolate-covered strawberries are considered a decadent treat. This recipe has a chocolaty candy scent created completely naturally by using cocoa powder, cocoa butter, vanilla oil, and lavender essential oil. The addition of puréed strawberries makes this a soap for special occasions and gifts. You will divide the soap into two bowls to create a chocolate and strawberry swirl that sinks into the batter at light trace.

***SAFETY FIRST!*** Remember to wear your safety equipment and mix the lye water outside. Tell everyone you live with that where you're working is off limits. Give yourself enough time to complete the recipe.

## EQUIPMENT

- kitchen scale
- measuring spoons
- glass bowls
- large spoon
- large stainless steel pot
- small zip-top plastic bag
- thermometer
- mold
- parchment paper
- stick blender (or hand mixer)
- whisk
- rubber spatula
- chopstick
- blanket

## INGREDIENTS

- 13 ounces olive oil
- 8 ounces coconut oil
- 8 ounces cocoa butter
- 2 ounces sweet almond oil
- 2 ounces castor oil
- 4.6 ounces lye
- 12.5 ounces filtered water
- 0.5 ounce lavender essential oil
- 0.5 ounce vanilla oil (not vanilla extract)
- 1 tablespoon cocoa powder
- 2 ounces strawberries, puréed
- 1 tablespoon rose clay

**1. HEAT THE FATS/OILS** In a large pot, combine the olive oil, coconut oil, cocoa butter, sweet almond oil, and castor oil. Heat over medium-low heat until they are melted and incorporated. Remove from the heat and allow to cool to 100° to 110°F.

**2. MIX THE LYE WATER** Put on safety gear, including protective eyewear, a mask, gloves, and long sleeves. Outside, carefully add the lye crystals to the water and stir until dissolved. Allow to cool to 100° to 110°F. If the oil and lye water cool at different rates, you can use a cold- or hot-water bath in the sink.

**3. PREPARE THE MOLD** While the oils and lye water cool, line the mold with parchment paper.

**4. COMBINE AND BRING TO TRACE** When both the oils and lye water are 100° to 110°F, carefully pour the lye water into the pot of oils. Use a stick blender (or hand mixer) to mix for 1 to 2 minutes and then let the mixture rest for 4 to 5 minutes. Repeat mixing and resting until very light trace.

**5. MIX IN NATURAL ADDITIVES** When the soap reaches very light trace, add the lavender essential oil and vanilla oil, and blend for a few seconds.

**6. MIX IN COLORANTS** Divide the batch evenly into 2 bowls. Add the cocoa powder to one bowl and whisk until there are no lumps. Add the puréed strawberries and rose clay to the other and whisk until there are no lumps.

**7. MOLD THE SOAP AND SWIRL** While the soap is still at light trace, pour the chocolate soap into the mold. Carefully pour the strawberry soap over the chocolate soap, moving back and forth horizontally across the length of the mold. Insert a chopstick into the batter until it reaches the bottom of the mold. Drag the chopstick vertically back and

forth across the length of the mold. Gently swirl in large strokes with the chopstick. The less you swirl, the better. Cover with a lid or parchment paper and insulate lightly with a towel for 24 hours.

**8. CUT AND CURE** Remove the soap from the mold. If it seems too soft to remove, wait another 12 to 24 hours before removing. Cut the soap into 12 (4-ounce) bars. Allow the bars to cure in a well-ventilated location for 4 to 6 weeks.

**TIP:** The chocolate and strawberry swirls in this recipe are created at light trace so that they will sink into one another. You can give them a little swirl, but don't swirl too much or you will lose the effect. Cover but do not insulate heavily because the sugars from the purée can cause this soap to possibly overheat and turn wrinkly and dark.

# GOAT MILK, CRANBERRY, AND ORANGE SOAP

- 
- MOISTURIZING

**YIELD:** 3 POUNDS  
OR 12 (4-OUNCE)  
BARS

**LYE DISCOUNT:** 15%

**SCENT:** ORANGE

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**START TO FINISH TIME:** 2 hours, 24 hours in mold, 4 to 6 weeks to cure

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The first time I made this was actually at the request of someone in my shop. My customers always suggest wonderful ideas for soap varieties. This customer wanted an orange-scented soap that had pure cranberry juice and goat milk to create a bar that had a high amount of antioxidants, vitamins, and minerals. I decided to make it as a layered bar. It's been a huge hit, so I'm happy to pass along the recipe to you.

## EQUIPMENT

- kitchen scale
- small saucepan
- measuring spoons
- glass bowls
- large spoon
- large stainless steel pot
- small zip-top plastic bag
- thermometer
- mold
- parchment paper
- stick blender (or hand mixer)
- whisk
- rubber spatula

## INGREDIENTS

### *For the infusion*

- 8 ounces olive oil
- 1 heaping tablespoon annatto seeds

### *For the soap*

- peels from 1 orange, dehydrated and cut into small pieces

- 8.9 ounces water
- 2 ounces goat milk
- 2 ounces 100% pure cranberry juice
- 11 ounces lard
- 6 ounces olive oil
- 5 ounces annatto seed–infused olive oil
- 9 ounces coconut oil
- 3 ounces castor oil
- 4.3 ounces lye
- 1 ounce orange essential oil
- 2 teaspoons Moroccan orange clay
- 2 to 3 teaspoons rose clay

**SAFETY FIRST!** Remember to wear your safety equipment and mix the lye water outside. Tell everyone you live with that where you're working is off limits. Give yourself enough time to complete the recipe.

#### PREP AHEAD

*1. Preheat the oven to 200°F. Cut the peels from 1 orange into thin strips and spread them out on a rimmed baking sheet. Dehydrate in the oven for 1 to 2 hours, checking to make sure they don't burn. Set aside to cool, then cut into small pieces.*

*2. Prepare an annatto seed infusion in olive oil. **FOR A HOT INFUSION:** Combine 1 heaping tablespoon of annatto seeds and 8 ounces of olive oil in a small saucepan and heat over low heat to 250°F, stirring occasionally, for about 20 minutes. Remove the pan from the heat and allow to cool to room temperature. **FOR A COLD INFUSION:** Place 1 heaping tablespoon of annatto seeds in an 8-ounce jar. Pour in enough olive oil to fill the jar, seal, and set on your windowsill for 6 weeks, shaking occasionally. Whichever method you choose, measure out 5 ounces of the annatto seed infusion (reserve the remainder for another batch).*

*3. Combine the water, goat milk, and cranberry juice in a large glass, plastic, or stainless steel container. Place the container in the freezer for 1 to 2 hours. If it turns to slush that is okay, but you don't want it frozen solid. The colder your milk-water, the lighter your soap will be after adding the lye.*

**1. HEAT THE FATS/OILS** In a large pot, combine the lard, olive oil, annatto seed–infused olive oil, coconut oil, and castor oil. Heat over medium-low heat until they are melted and incorporated. Remove from the heat and allow to cool to 90° to 100°F.

**2. MIX THE LYE WATER** Put on safety gear, including protective eyewear, a mask, gloves, and long sleeves. Outside, very slowly pour only about  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the lye crystals into the cold milk-juice-water and stir until dissolved. Let cool for 20 minutes. Repeat until all the lye is dissolved into the milk-juice-water. If the milk-juice-water still browns, don't worry; your soap will just be darker. Allow to cool to 90° to 100°F. If the oils and lye water cool at different rates, you can use a cold- or hot-water bath in the sink.

**3. PREPARE THE MOLD** While the oils and lye water cool, line the mold with parchment paper.

**4. COMBINE AND BRING TO TRACE** When both the oils and lye water are 90° to 100°F, carefully pour the lye water into the pot of oils. Use a stick blender (or hand mixer) to mix for 2 to 3 minutes and then let the mixture rest for 4 to 5 minutes. Repeat mixing and resting until light trace.

**5. MIX IN NATURAL ADDITIVES** When the soap reaches light to medium trace, add the orange essential oil and blend for 30 seconds.

**6. MIX IN COLORANTS** Transfer 2 to 2½ cups of the soap to a bowl and add the Moroccan orange clay, whisking until there are no lumps. Set aside. Transfer an additional 1 cup from the large batch to another bowl and add the rose clay, whisking until there are no lumps. Set aside. You will have about 2½ cups of yellow annatto soap remaining in the pot.

**7. MOLD THE SOAP AND LAYER** When the soap is at thick trace, scoop one color at a time into the mold, using a wide spatula to gently guide each layer onto the other if necessary. The order of the layers is up to you. Top with dried orange peel down the center. Do not insulate unless your house is below 75°F, in which case insulate by placing a towel only around the outside edges of the mold to avoid a partial gel.

**8. CUT AND CURE** Remove the soap from the mold. If it seems too soft to remove, wait another 12 to 24 hours before removing. Cut the soap into 12 (4-ounce) bars. Allow the bars to cure in a well-ventilated location for 4 to 6 weeks.

**TIP:** Soap needs to be at thick trace (like pudding) before layering. Use a spatula to guide the pouring so that the soap doesn't go into the first layer, but lies on top. Goat milk soap can get hot because of the sugars. This soap also has sugars from the cranberry juice, so do not insulate or it may overheat.

# RED, WHITE, AND BLUE STRIPED SOAP

- MOISTURIZING

**YIELD:** 3 POUNDS  
OR 12 (4-OUNCE)  
BARS

**LYE DISCOUNT:** 15%

**SCENT:** VETIVER  
AND LEMON

**START TO FINISH TIME:** 1 to 2 hours, 24 hours insulation, 4 to 6 weeks to cure

This is a very festive layered soap that will introduce you to using woad. At light trace, you will divide the soap into three bowls, where woad, kaolin, and madder root will be added for color and then layered one on top of the other for a patriotic flag appearance. If desired, you can choose not to scrape the bowls after pouring and later scrape them onto the top of the batch evenly, swirling to create a confetti look to the top (see the tip below).

***SAFETY FIRST!*** Remember to wear your safety equipment and mix the lye water outside. Tell everyone you live with that where you're working is off limits. Give yourself enough time to complete the recipe.

## EQUIPMENT

- kitchen scale
- measuring spoons
- glass bowls
- large spoon
- large stainless steel pot
- small zip-top plastic bag
- thermometer
- mold
- parchment paper
- stick blender (or hand mixer)
- whisk
- rubber spatula
- blanket

## INGREDIENTS

- 10 ounces tallow
- 8 ounces olive oil
- 8 ounces coconut oil
- 5 ounces shea butter
- 3 ounces castor oil
- 4.5 ounces lye
- 12.9 ounces filtered water
- 0.5 ounce vetiver essential oil
- 0.5 ounce lemon essential oil
- 3 tablespoons madder root
- 1 tablespoon white kaolin clay
- 2 teaspoons woad powder

**1. HEAT THE FATS/OILS** In a large pot, combine the tallow, olive oil, coconut oil, shea butter, and castor oil. Heat over medium-low heat until they are melted and incorporated. Remove from the heat and allow to cool to 100° to 110°F.

**2. MIX THE LYE WATER** Put on safety gear, including protective eyewear, a mask, gloves, and long sleeves. Outside, carefully add the lye crystals to the water and stir until dissolved. Allow to cool to 100° to 110°F. If the oils and lye water cool at different rates, you can use a cold- or hot-water bath in the sink.

**3. PREPARE THE MOLD** While the oils and lye water cool, line the mold with parchment paper.

**4. COMBINE AND BRING TO TRACE** When both the oils and lye water are 100° to 110°F, carefully pour the lye water into the pot of oils. Use a stick blender (or hand mixer) to mix for 1 to 2 minutes and then let the mixture rest for 4 to 5 minutes. Repeat mixing and resting until light trace.

**5. MIX IN NATURAL ADDITIVES** When the soap reaches light trace, add the vetiver and lemon essential oils and blend for 30 seconds.

**6. MIX IN COLORANTS** Divide the soap into 3 equal parts. Add the madder root clay to one, the kaolin to the second, and the woad powder to the third. Whisk each until there are no lumps.

**7. MOLD THE SOAP AND LAYER** When the soaps are at thick trace, pour the red soap into the mold and smooth with a rubber spatula. Pour the white soap into the mold carefully, using a rubber spatula to guide the pour gently onto the soap. Repeat with the blue soap on top. Cover with a lid or parchment paper and insulate with a blanket for 24 hours.

**8. CUT AND CURE** Remove the soap from the mold. If it seems too soft to remove, wait another 12 to 24 hours before removing. Cut the soap into 12 (4-ounce) bars. Allow the bars to cure in a well-ventilated location for 4 to 6 weeks.

**TIP:** For a variation, when pouring the soap, don't scrape the white and red bowls until the end. Scrape the soap from the sides of the bowls evenly over the top of the blue layer. Use a chopstick to gently swirl the red and white into the top  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch of the blue soap.

# GOAT MILK AND HONEY CONFETTI SOAP

- MOISTURIZING

**YIELD:** 3 POUNDS  
OR 12 (4-OUNCE)  
BARS

**LYE DISCOUNT:** 15%

**SCENT:** ORANGE,  
ROSEMARY,  
LEMON, AND  
YLANG-YLANG

**START TO FINISH TIME:** 2 hours, 24 hours in mold, 4 to 6 weeks to cure

This soap is fun for every occasion because it has curls of whatever soap you want to use inside it. I like using a bar of the Acne Charcoal and Tea Tree Soap ([here](#)) and Sensual Rose Soap ([here](#)), but you can use whatever soaps you have on hand. The confetti look, combined with the uplifting and stimulating scents of orange, rosemary, lemon, and ylang-ylang, make this a really fun soap.

**SAFETY FIRST!** Remember to wear your safety equipment and mix the lye water outside. Tell everyone you live with that where you're working is off limits. Give yourself enough time to complete the recipe.

## EQUIPMENT

- potato peeler
- kitchen scale
- measuring spoons
- glass bowls
- large spoon
- large stainless steel pot
- small zip-top plastic bag
- thermometer
- mold
- parchment paper
- stick blender (or hand mixer)
- rubber spatula

## INGREDIENTS

- 2 bars of soap (not cream-colored), shaved

- 8.5 ounces filtered water
- 4 ounces goat milk
- 9 ounces olive oil
- 8 ounces coconut oil
- 8 ounces tallow
- 5 ounces castor oil
- 3 ounces grapeseed oil
- 4 ounces lye
- 0.25 ounce orange essential oil
- 0.25 ounce rosemary essential oil
- 0.25 ounce lemon essential oil
- 0.25 ounce ylang-ylang essential oil
- 1 tablespoon raw honey

#### **PREP AHEAD**

*1. Shave the 2 bars of soap with a potato peeler. Try to make curls. Set aside.*

*2. Combine the water and goat milk in a large glass, plastic, or stainless steel container. Place the container in the freezer for 1 to 2 hours. It is okay if a slush forms, as long as it doesn't freeze solid. The colder your milk-water, the lighter your soap will be after adding the lye.*

**1. HEAT THE FATS/OILS** In a large pot, combine the olive oil, coconut oil, tallow, castor oil, and grapeseed oil. Heat over medium-low heat until they are melted and incorporated. Remove from the heat and allow to cool to 90° to 100°F.

**2. MIX THE LYE WATER** Put on safety gear, including protective eyewear, a mask, gloves, and long sleeves. Outside, very slowly pour only about ¼ of the lye into the cold milk-water and stir until dissolved. Let cool for 20 minutes. Repeat until all the lye is dissolved into the milk-water. If the milk-water still browns, don't worry; your soap will just be darker. Allow to cool to 90° to 100°F. If the oils and lye water cool at different rates, you can use a cold- or hot-water bath in the sink.

**3. PREPARE THE MOLD** While the oils and lye water cool, line the mold with parchment paper.

**4. COMBINE AND BRING TO TRACE** When both the oils and lye water are 90° to 100°F, carefully pour the lye water into the pot of oils. Use a stick blender (or hand mixer) to mix for 2 to 3 minutes and then let the mixture rest for 4 to 5 minutes. Repeat mixing and resting until light trace.

**5. MIX IN NATURAL ADDITIVES** When the soap reaches light trace, add the orange, rosemary, lemon, and ylang-ylang essential oils and the honey, and blend for 30 seconds. Add the soap shavings and gently stir with a large spoon.

**6. MOLD THE SOAP** Pour the soap mixture into the mold and cover with a lid or parchment paper. Do not insulate unless your house is below 75°F, in which case insulate by placing a towel around the outside edges to avoid a partial gel.

**7. CUT AND CURE** Remove the soap from the mold. If it seems too soft to remove, wait another 12 to 24 hours before removing. Cut the soap into 12 (4-ounce) bars. Allow the bars to cure in a well-ventilated location for 4 to 6 weeks.

**TIP:** Milk can scald when lye is added. Placing the milk-water in the freezer until it's very cold helps prevent this. Be sure to add the lye slowly. It is okay to really take your time, coming back every 20 minutes to add a little more. Milk can also make your batch get hotter than usual, so just insulate a milk recipe lightly with a towel if you're concerned about getting a good gel for color. Honey can also make soap come to trace faster, so add it and blend really well right before pouring the soap into the mold.



# CHAMPAGNE SOAP

• GENTLE

**YIELD:** 3 POUNDS  
OR 12 (4-OUNCE)  
BARS

**LYE DISCOUNT:** 10%

**SCENT:** ROSE

**START TO FINISH TIME:** 2 hours, 24 hours in mold, 4 to 6 weeks to cure

This is a very elegant-looking soap. It has a light rose tint, with pink and white swirls dripped into the center at light trace. This causes them to sink into the soap and not lie on top. And the rose scent is very fitting for a pink champagne soap. Remember to fully prepare the champagne ahead of time and chill until slushy. This will ensure there is no overheating so your batch will turn out beautifully.

***SAFETY FIRST!*** Remember to wear your safety equipment and mix the lye water outside. Tell everyone you live with that where you're working is off limits. Give yourself enough time to complete the recipe.

## EQUIPMENT

- kitchen scale
- saucepan
- measuring spoons
- glass bowls
- large spoon
- large stainless steel pot
- small zip-top plastic bag
- thermometer
- mold
- parchment paper
- stick blender (or hand mixer)
- whisk
- rubber spatula

## INGREDIENTS

- 7.2 ounces filtered water
- 5 ounces champagne
- 10 ounces olive oil

- 10 ounces lard
- 9 ounces coconut oil
- 3 ounces castor oil
- 4.3 ounces lye
- 1 ounce rose essential oil (3% dilution)
- 4 teaspoons rose clay (divided)
- 1 tablespoon white kaolin clay

#### **PREP AHEAD**

*1. Pour 10 ounces of the champagne into a saucepan and allow it to sit at room temperature for at least 24 hours. Bring to a boil over medium heat, reduce the heat, and simmer for 30 minutes. Cool to room temperature.*

*2. Weigh out 5 ounces of the champagne and pour into a glass, plastic, or stainless steel container. Add 7.2 ounces of water and place in the freezer until slushy but not frozen solid. Check after 1 hour and then check every 20 minutes.*

**1. HEAT THE FATS/OILS** In a large pot, combine the olive oil, lard, coconut oil, and castor oil. Heat over medium-low heat until they are melted and incorporated. Remove from the heat and allow to cool to 80° to 90°F.

**2. MIX THE LYE WATER** Put on safety gear, including protective eyewear, a mask, gloves, and long sleeves. Outside, very slowly pour only about ¼ of the lye into the cold champagne-water and stir until dissolved. Let cool for 20 minutes. Repeat until all the lye is dissolved into the champagne-water. Allow to cool to 80° to 90°F. If the oils and lye water cool at different rates, you can use a cold- or hot-water bath in the sink.

**3. PREPARE THE MOLD** While the oils and lye water cool, line the mold with parchment paper.

**4. COMBINE AND BRING TO TRACE** When both the oils and lye water are 80° to 90°F, carefully pour the lye water into the pot of oils. Use a stick blender (or hand mixer) to mix for 1 to 2 minutes and then let the mixture rest for 4 to 5 minutes. Repeat mixing and resting until light trace.

**5. MIX IN NATURAL ADDITIVES** When the soap reaches very light trace, add the rose essential oil and 1 teaspoon of the rose clay, and blend for a few seconds.

**6. MIX IN COLORANTS** Transfer ½ cup of the soap to a small bowl and add the remaining 3 teaspoons of rose clay. Whisk to combine until there are no lumps. Transfer another ½ cup of soap from the main batch to a separate bowl and add the white kaolin clay. Whisk to combine until there are no lumps.

**7. MOLD THE SOAP AND SWIRL** While still at light trace, pour the large batch of soap into the mold. From at least 1 foot above the mold, carefully pour the pink and white soaps over the soap in the mold in a zigzag pattern. Cover with a lid or parchment paper. Do not insulate.

**8. CUT AND CURE** Remove the soap from the mold after 24 hours. If it seems too soft to remove, wait another 12 to 24 hours before removing. Cut the soap into 12 (4-ounce) bars. Allow the bars to cure in a well-ventilated location for 4 to 6 weeks.

**TIP:** This is a soap that needs to be poured at thin trace to get the desired rose and pink swirls within. Champagne can cause the soap to overheat if not prepared well ahead of time and if insulated too much, so do not skip the preparation step. If it starts to crack or mound down the middle of the mold, it is starting to overheat. Place in the refrigerator, but be prepared for it to overflow.



*Left (clockwise from top): Loofah Exfoliant Soap, [here](#) ; Spring Cutouts, [here](#) ; Acne Charcoal and Tea Tree Soap, [here](#)*

*chapter eleven*

## **DESIGNING RECIPES, WRAPPING SOAPS & MORE**

If you have worked your way through this book, that means you've gone through a few tutorials. You have experience making your own soaps, and maybe you also made a few shampoo bars or even a laundry soap. You even have experience adding natural colors and exfoliants like coffee and oats to your recipes. What's next? Designing your own recipes is not only fun, but it's really easy with the right ingredients. I've already provided basic information on base oils, natural additives, and essential oils, so make sure to use those chapters as references for your recipe designs.

Now it's your turn! And after you've designed and made your own soap creations, you'll want to label them for others. I'll give you some fun ideas for that as well, and I'll cover what things to consider when deciding whether to use stamps, paper, or plastic wraps for your soaps. Whether you intend to sell your own soaps or you want to make them as gifts for family and friends, you'll be designing your own soaps and packaging them for others in no time.

## RECIPE DESIGN STEP-BY-STEP

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Designing your own recipes can be exciting when you have the right tools, like a great lye calculator and a basic knowledge of oils and what they do within soap. I've tried a lot of soap calculators, and my favorite by far is on [SoapCalc.net](http://SoapCalc.net). The lye calculator you'll find there is spot-on. It will tell you many things about your creation, like the projected hardness; characteristics about your soap, like how bubbly, creamy, cleansing, or conditioning it will be; how much water you will need; how much lye you will need; and the typical amounts of essential oil you will need for the size batch you are making.

You'll need to change the amount from pounds to ounces and adjust the superfat if you want a bar that has more than 5 percent leftover oils. Some soapers go up to as much as 20 percent. After that, just fill in the amount of base oils and calculate the recipe to see all the qualities of the bar you've created, as well as how much lye and water to add.

### Select Your Base Oils

Selecting your base oils is an important part of starting the soapmaking process, but how do you know which oils to put in the lye calculator? Changing the amounts of these oils will have a huge impact on your recipe. Don't be surprised if you adjust oils multiple times while trying to get the hardness and bubbly numbers where you want them. Here are some tips to follow:

#### ***Use What You Have***

One great way to start is by using one of your favorite recipes from this book and then tweaking it. I often try substituting a hard oil with a different hard oil. Cocoa butter, beeswax, lard, tallow, coconut oil, shea butter, mango butter, and macadamia nut butter are all solids of varying hardness at room temperature. They do not bring the same properties to a bar of soap, but it's a great way to start familiarizing yourself. Do the same for liquid oils like grapeseed, apricot kernel, sweet almond, hemp seed, or primrose. Interchange one at a time and see how it alters your recipe. Take notes in your soapmaking notebook.

#### ***Decide by Oil Properties***

[Chapter 3](#) outlines the properties of many oils. Consider the following factors: For a harder bar, use hard oils like tallow, lard, cocoa butter, or coconut oil. For more cleansing power in your soap, use coconut oil, though if used as more than 40 percent

of the oils, your recipe should have a higher superfat, more like 15 to 20 percent, so that it doesn't dry out your skin. For more bubbles, add honey or castor oil. And for a creamier bar, use beer or shea butter.

## Use Your Favorite Bulk Oils

Most recipes have a hard fat like tallow or lard along with olive oil and coconut oil. I've given you a chart (see [here](#)) with a few base oil combinations to try. The easiest way to create your own recipe is to start with olive oil, coconut oil, and tallow (or some similar combination) and then add other oils that you'd like to incorporate. Once you understand more about what these oils and fats bring to soap, you can change your base or bulk oils to different combinations, but always know that these three will make wonderful soap.

## GO-TO BASE OIL COMBINATIONS

*Always run through a lye calculator!*

OILS	CHARACTERISTICS
33% coconut oil, 33% tallow, 33% olive oil, 10% superfat	Hard bar that is cleansing and bubbly
30% tallow, 25% coconut oil, 25% olive oil, 20% favorite liquid oil	Conditioning, creamy, hard bar
35% lard, 30% coconut oil, 30% olive oil, 5% castor oil	Top-notch bar that has everything: hard, bubbly, creamy, cleansing, conditioning
30% babassu oil, tallow, or lard, 15% any butter, 15% coconut oil, 20% any liquid oil, 15% luxury liquid oil (argan, primrose, hemp), 5% castor oil	Very conditioning, creamy bar with good hardness. The oils and butters you choose will determine other qualities.

## Choose Your Additives

Once you've created a recipe that is formulated for what you need, it's time to choose natural additives.

- Do you want it to be exfoliating? Try ground oats, coffee, or salt.

- Do you want color? Are you going to make the whole batch one color or do you want to swirl color into the top or create layers? Decide what color(s) you want and look at the chart in [chapter 4 \(here\)](#) to determine whether you need to infuse oils ahead of time or can add the colorant(s) at trace or to the lye water.
- Do you want to add dried herbs? Make sure they are dried thoroughly. Prepare teas by soaking ahead of time. Use the water that you have chilled beforehand in your lye water. This will ensure that the herbs don't bleed into the soap later. Understand that most flower petals (rose, lavender, and so on) will turn brown during saponification, so consider using them on top of the batch instead.
- Do you want to add milk or honey? Start by substituting milk for only  $\frac{1}{3}$  of the water in your recipe, then slowly increasing as you get more used to the process. Remember to freeze it to slush before adding the lye crystals so that your batch is light in color. If using honey, use 1 tablespoon per pound at the most. Remember that honey and milk can cause soap to overheat if insulated too well.
- Do you want to shave or cut up older soaps to insert into this batch? Consider what you have on hand and the color combinations that you want to create. If you have only white soaps to shave or cut, then consider adding color to your recipe to highlight those white pieces.

Keep notes in your soapmaking notebook to keep track of your decisions so you can replicate what you like and change what you don't like next time.

## Choose Your Scent

Even though this is listed last, I'm sure the scent of your new soap is one of the first things you will consider when deciding to create your own recipe. I tried to keep the blends for soap recipes in this book pretty simple since not everyone has 52 different essential oils on their kitchen counter like I do! If you do use more than four essential oils in a recipe, the scents can become more of a tangled mess. Pure scents tend to be either energetic or calming, so consider what mood you are trying to create.

Remember to pair middle- or base-note essential oils with top-note oils to help them last longer in your recipe. For ideas, sometimes I search on Pinterest for "summer essential oil blends" to see what great ideas other users have put together. Smell each essential oil and determine which one is the most powerful. Then, hold them up to your nose before blending and see if the combination makes sense to your senses.

# RECIPE PLANNING WORKSHEET

**TITLE**

**DATE**

Purpose (body, shampoo, face bar, shaving bar):

Scent (floral, fresh, woody, oriental):

Superfat %:

Oils I Would Like to Use:

Possible Colors:

Color Organization (top swirl, deep swirl, layer, full-batch color):

Other Additives (exfoliants, honey, milk):

**RECIPE**

**NOTES**

## PACKAGING SOAP

Designing soap labels and wraps can be a worthwhile craft itself. There are so many beautiful and creative ways to highlight what you've worked so hard to make. When it comes to packaging and wrapping soap, there are two distinct camps: those who believe the whole soap should be covered and sealed and those who just want to add their own label or a little decoration to the soap for identification purposes. There are advantages and disadvantages to each. If you completely seal your soap after curing, it will maintain its scent for longer than if it is exposed. The downfall of full wrapping is that you cannot see the soap, and if you use shrink-wrap, you cannot smell the soap. This is fine for gifts, but not so great for selling. (The exception is high-glycerin melt and pour soap. I do suggest shrink-wrapping to seal melt and pour soap because the high glycerin content can sweat and dry out the bar. Sealing solves this problem. If you're against the use of plastic, use natural wax paper or butcher paper instead.)

I was recently at a natural-living fair where there were hundreds of vendors and a number of soapmakers. Out of curiosity, I watched whether people stopped at the soap vendors and what they did when they stopped. People were incredibly drawn to exposed soaps. They loved soaps that they could see, pick up, and smell. I felt so bad for a man who was a few stalls over from a very successful exposed-soap vendor. He had all his soaps fully wrapped in identical opaque wrappers and not one person stopped to see his creations the entire time I watched, even though he offered better prices and fantastic ingredients and scents.

For selling, I think fully wrapped soaps are fine if you have unwrapped soaps sitting beside each of the wrapped soaps so that buyers can see, touch, and smell before buying. Even if you use shrink-wrap, you need to provide a naked sample to touch and smell. Fully wrapped soaps, however, are perfect for gift giving and help preserve the scent of your soap. If gift giving is your goal, then this is a great option for you.

## Wrapping Soap

### ITEMS NEEDED:

- Butcher paper
  - Scissors
  - Ribbon
  - Sticker label (optional)
1. Cut a square of butcher paper that is approximately 8 inches on each side (depending on the size and shape of your soap).
  2. Wrap your bar as you would a present, trying to keep all ends trimmed and ending on the back of the bar. I like to angle my soaps diagonal to the sides before beginning.
  3. Wrap with your favorite ribbon. Tie a bow or use a sticker label to attach the ribbon.

## Bellybands

Another simple and beautiful way of labeling your soap is by creating a bellyband. This is a strip of paper that goes around your soap vertically or horizontally, leaving it open to be touched, seen, and smelled. It can be as simple as a piece of printed paper or a ribbon attached with a label card that is wrapped vertically or horizontally around your beautiful creation.

Designing your own label is a lot of fun. There are a number of things to consider, so I've given you some questions and thoughts to get you started.

1. What information do you want to include? Consider some of the following:
  - A. Your name or company name
  - B. Soap name
  - C. Scent
  - D. Weight
  - E. Ingredients
  - F. Logo
2. If you would like to include a graphic and wish to sell your soaps, you should either make your own logo from scratch with a free program like [PicMonkey.com](https://www.picmonkey.com) or buy a graphic from an online store like [CanStockPhoto.com](https://www.canstockphoto.com) so that you are not breaking any copyright laws.
3. As long as your soap is purely soap and you don't make any health claims, the current US FDA regulations do not require labels. I still make sure to include the soap's name and what's in it because customers like to know.

## Gift Box or Bag

Soapboxes can be fun to design because there are so many options. You can buy white or colored cardboard boxes that are plain or have indentation designs or cutouts like hearts, ovals, or trees. Some have floral prints on the top or closures that look like an origami design. The options are plentiful! You can then wrap them with a ribbon, twine, or colored string.

Another option is using an organza bag. These are small, transparent bags that can be colored or have swirls or designs of gold, silver, or other pretty colors. The drawstring closure makes these a fast and beautiful way to package your soaps for events like baby showers and weddings.

### ***Gift Box Idea***

#### ITEMS NEEDED:

- Soapbox
  - Jute string
  - Lavender sprig
  - Label (optional)
  - Scissors
1. Start by finding a soapbox. You can find a great variety on Etsy and Amazon.com, as well as a few on Bramble Berry. You'll want to choose a solid box with or without

a small cutout on the top.

2. Tie a jute string around the box, making sure to secure the lavender sprig as you tie the string.
3. If you'd like to add a stylized name or a personalized gift label, slip it under the string.



*Sensitive Skin Body Bar with Coconut Milk, [here](#)*

## Measurement Conversions

### VOLUME EQUIVALENTS (LIQUID)

US Standard	US Standard (ounces)	Metric (approximate)
2 tablespoons	1 fl. oz.	30 mL
$\frac{1}{4}$ cup	2 fl. oz.	60 mL
$\frac{1}{2}$ cup	4 fl. oz.	120 mL
1 cup	8 fl. oz.	240 mL
$1\frac{1}{2}$ cups	12 fl. oz.	355 mL
2 cups or 1 pint	16 fl. oz.	475 mL
4 cups or 1 quart	32 fl. oz.	1 L
1 gallon	128 fl. oz.	4 L

## VOLUME EQUIVALENTS (DRY)

US Standard	Metric (approximate)
$\frac{1}{8}$ teaspoon	0.5 mL
$\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon	1 mL
$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon	2 mL
$\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon	4 mL
1 teaspoon	5 mL
1 tablespoon	15 mL
$\frac{1}{4}$ cup	59 mL
$\frac{1}{3}$ cup	79 mL
$\frac{1}{2}$ cup	118 mL
$\frac{2}{3}$ cup	156 mL
$\frac{3}{4}$ cup	177 mL
1 cup	235 mL
2 cups or 1 pint	475 mL
3 cups	700 mL
4 cups or 1 quart	1 L

## OVEN TEMPERATURES

Fahrenheit (F)	Celsius (C) (approximate)
250°	120°
300°	150°
325°	165°
350°	180°
375°	190°
400°	200°
425°	220°
450°	230°

## WEIGHT EQUIVALENTS

US Standard	Metric (approximate)
½ ounce	15 g
1 ounce	30 g
2 ounces	60 g
4 ounces	115 g
8 ounces	225 g
12 ounces	340 g
16 ounces or 1 pound	455 g

## ***Resources and Supplies***

Some of these resources offer great instructions and all-natural ingredients, only to turn around and also offer synthetic ingredients, so use this list as a resource and choose what you use wisely.

### **Supplies**

#### ***Pure essential oils***

- doTerra
- Dr. Axe
- Mountain Rose Herbs
- Starwest Botanicals
- Young Living

#### ***Bulk oils, waxes, butters, clays, herbs***

- Amazon.com
- Bulk Apothecary
- Etsy
- Mountain Rose Herbs
- Soaper's Choice
- Starwest Botanicals
- Thrive Market

#### ***Molds, stamps, and other tools***

- Amazon.com
- Bramble Berry
- Bulk Apothecary
- Etsy
- Wholesale Supplies Plus

### **Resources**

#### ***Websites***

- [SimpleLifeMom.com](http://SimpleLifeMom.com)

- [ModernSoapmaking.com](http://ModernSoapmaking.com)
- [MillerSoap.com](http://MillerSoap.com)
- [Soap-Making-Resource.com](http://Soap-Making-Resource.com)
- [TheNerdyFarmWife.com](http://TheNerdyFarmWife.com)
- [TheSoapKitchen.co.uk](http://TheSoapKitchen.co.uk)
- [LearningAndYearning.com](http://LearningAndYearning.com)
- [SoapQueen.com](http://SoapQueen.com)
- [TheHerbalAcademy.com](http://TheHerbalAcademy.com)
- [SoapDelicatessen.com](http://SoapDelicatessen.com)
- [OffbeatAndInspired.com](http://OffbeatAndInspired.com)
- [LovinSoap.com](http://LovinSoap.com)
- [SoapCalc.net](http://SoapCalc.net)
- [naha.org](http://naha.org)
- [theherbalacademy.com](http://theherbalacademy.com)

### ***Other soapmaking books***

- Jan Berry, *Simple Natural Soapmaking*
- Susan Miller Cavitch, *The Soapmaker's Companion*
- Anne-Marie Faiola, *Pure Soapmaking*
- Daryl K. Gessner, *107 Natural Colorants for Cold Process Soap*
- Alicia Grosso, *The Everything Soapmaking Book*
- Gregory Lee White, *Making Soap From Scratch*

### ***Resourceful books for natural living***

- Kelly Cable, *Natural Beauty from Head to Toe* ([simplelifemom.com/natural-beauty-from-head-to-toe-ebook](http://simplelifemom.com/natural-beauty-from-head-to-toe-ebook) )
- Christine J. Dalziel, *The Beginners' Book of Essential Oils*
- Rosalee de la Forêt, *Alchemy of Herbs*
- Rosemary Gladstar, *Herbs for Natural Beauty*
- Maria Noel Groves, *Body into Balance*
- Guido Masé and Jovial King, *DIY Bitters*
- Valerie Ann Worwood, *The Complete Book of Essential Oils and Aromatherapy*

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- Naked Chemist. [www.thenakedchemist.com](http://www.thenakedchemist.com)
- National Association for Holistic Aromatherapy. "Exploring Aromatherapy: Safety Information." [www.naha.org/explore-aromatherapy/safety](http://www.naha.org/explore-aromatherapy/safety) .
- Natural Dog Health Remedies. "Safe Essential Oils for Dogs." [www.natural-dog-health-remedies.com/essential-oils-for-dogs.html](http://www.natural-dog-health-remedies.com/essential-oils-for-dogs.html) .
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- SoapCalc. [www.soapcalc.net](http://www.soapcalc.net) .
- Trouiller, B., R. Reliene, A. Westbrook, P. Solaimani, and R. H. Schiesti. "Titanium Dioxide Nanoparticles Induce DNA Damage and Genetic Instability in Vivo in Mice." *Cancer Research* 69, no. 22 (November 2009): 8784–89. doi:10.1158/0008-5472.CAN-09-2496.

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## *About the Author*

**Kelly Cable** is the soapmaker and herbalist behind the popular blog *Simple Life Mom* . For 10 years, she has been making soap from scratch using all-natural ingredients, and in 2013, she started selling her soaps through her successful Etsy shop. She regularly leads soapmaking classes in three states. She lives outside of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, with her husband and three children. Learn more at [SimpleLifeMom.com](http://SimpleLifeMom.com) .