

Soap Making Workshop

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SOAPMAKING BASICS

- Soap making can be as simple or as complicated as you'd like.
- Making your own soap allows you to choose the ingredients and fragrances that go into it.
- Most soap making recipes are in ounces or grams.
- Lye is a typical ingredient in some homemade soaps. It's important to be aware that Lye in its pure form needs to be handled carefully. It can eat holes in fabric and cause burns on your skin!
- Simple soap making supplies can be easily found at local craft stores like Michaels, Joanns and Hobby Lobby
- Equipment can also be elaborate or simple (we will discuss equipment and materials in depth a little later)
- Additives for soap are plentiful. You can use essential oils, herbs, colors and even items around your kitchen! Be creative and play with different combinations till you find what's right for you :)



SOAP MAKING MATERIALS

Soap Base



Simple microwaveable soap bases can be purchased from your local craft supply store in brick form. Typically it runs about \$10 (half that if you find a coupon!) and comes in different formulations like coconut milk, glycerin and goats milk.

If you're feeling more adventurous and want to create your own base, you will need the following:

- *Lye (also known as 100% sodium hydroxide) in crystal form.

- *Oil - Typically coconut, olive or avocado oil. Also, oils like grapeseed, walnut, sunflower and safflower.

- *Water

Additives

There are many wonderful additives for soap that you can find in your own kitchen! Here are a few:

- *Herbs - Herbs have excellent properties that are good for your skin. Lavender and Chamomile are both soothing, Rosemary is a natural astringent, Basil has antibacterial properties, and Lemongrass is cooling and stimulating to the skin.

- *Exfoliants - Natural skin exfoliants include oats, coffee, salt and lemon or orange zest.

- *Honey and Milk - Honey has a host of wonderful healing, moisturizing and antibacterial properties. Powdered milk is soothing and moisturizing (but should only be added in small quantities and with vitamin E to prevent mold).

- *Scented oils - You can use aromatherapy oils like peppermint and orange, or you can purchase scented oils made for soap.

- *Color - you can color your soap with food coloring or purchase color drops made especially for soap



Equipment



When making soap, be sure to use items that NOT going to be used for cooking in later. Especially if you plan on working with lye. Also, lye will react with copper and aluminum, so be sure to choose glass, stainless steel or enamel. Plastic can be used with premade soap base, but could melt if used with lye.

***Mixing bowls** - See above. Also, if using premade soap base, make sure they're microwave safe!

***Spoons** - Use plastic or silicone

***Molds** - Molds come in many shapes and sizes. Check out your local craft store or Amazon for some really intricate ones! (You can even use silicone candy molds or baking pans!)

***Newspaper or an old towel** - to clean up and prevent messes.



Recipes



As you become more practiced with your soap making, you can create your own recipes, but when you're getting started, it's a good idea to know how much to add to your soap mixtures so you don't change the consistency of your soap. There are a number of excellent resources available:

- *Books - We have a few here at the library! Check them out and see if any of the recipes appeal to you.
- *Pinterest - Pinterest abounds with multiple DIY soap making projects. We have pinned a few to our Pinterest page for you to take a look at.
- *Blogs - There are a number of blogs on the web dedicated to making homemade soaps and lotions. A quick search will turn up a few that might have some great recipe ideas.



Packaging

If you plan to give your soap as a gift, you'll want to wrap it in something decorative! Here are a few ideas for packaging your soap:

***Paper** - This is an easy way to make your soap look fancy. Wrap it in a pretty patterned paper, or even just plain brown paper. Then you can tie it with twine, ribbon, add a sticker, or color on the paper to create a nice pattern.

***Fabric** - You can use fabric scraps or purchase fat quarters from the fabric store to wrap your soap. Just tie all four corners in the center to make a pretty little package!

***Cupcake Liners** - Those paper liners you use for cupcakes make a pretty option for displaying your soap (particularly round soaps!) Just pop your soap in a liner and tie a little cellophane around it.





LET'S MAKE SOME SOAP!

