

Homemade Soap

Equipment:

Stainless steel stock pot

half gallon glass jar

rubber spatula or long handled wooden spoon

scale that will weigh up to 38 ounces

thermometer, meat or candy is fine

mold with cover, I recommend a heavy plastic mold the size of a large shoe box if you intend to make soap only occasionally. I use industrial plastic sheet of freezer paper two large towels or a blanket

***safety glasses

***rubber gloves

Ingredients:

12 oz lye (Red Devil, found beside Drano, do not use Drano)

32 oz water (My well water is hard so I buy it)

24 oz coconut oil (health food store)

24 oz olive oil (do not use virgin, the less pure the better)

38 oz vegetable oil (Crisco solid, not liquid oil)

4 oz fragrance/essential oil if desired botanicals if desired ie: 8 oz pulverized oatmeal or 4 oz cornmeal or 2 oz dried herbs/flowers

Dissolve lye in water. This is best done under an exhaust fan or outdoor. Stand back and avoid fumes. Set aside to cool. In the stainless steel stock pot melt the Crisco and coconut oil. Add the olive oil and allow to cool.

Grease your soap mold now. Some soap makers prefer silicone spray but my purpose in making my own soap is to avoid using things like that. I use Crisco. Fit the freezer paper into the bottom and two sides of the mold to make removing the soap easier. Grease the paper.

When both the oils and lye mixtures have cooled to 90* you are ready to blend. You can speed cooling by using a sink of cool water and setting the mixtures in to cool. If one cools too much you can warm it in a sink of warm water.

You need to have 10-40 minutes of uninterrupted time now. Slowly pour the water/lye mixture into the oils. You'll quickly see a reaction. Stir in a consistent manner. Don't beat as you would eggs but stir quickly enough to keep the mixture in constant motion. If you're creating bubbles in the mixture you are going too fast. Continue to stir until the soap "traces." You'll feel a slight difference in consistency as

the soap begins to saponify. When tracing has occurred you'll be able to drizzle a small amount of soap back onto the top of the soap in the pan and it will leave a trace before sinking back into the rest of the mixture. After a batch or two you'll recognize when tracing has occurred by the feel of the soap while stirring.

If you want to add botanicals/grains to your soap now is the time to do it. Remove one cup of soap (doesn't need to be exactly a cup, whatever it takes to mix with the botanical/grains) and stir in with whatever you're adding in a separate bowl. Oatmeal makes a nice complexion soap, corn meal adds texture to scrub dirty hands. As soon as it's mixed pour it back into the pan and stir. If you're going to add essential or fragrance oil pour it in slowly now. Continue to stir until well mixed then pour into prepared mold. Cover mold, wrap it in towels or blanket to keep warm and leave it undisturbed for 18 hours. No peaking! The soap will rise to approximately 160* and then cool down. Don't uncover until it's cooled.

Allow soap to sit in the uncovered mold for 12 hours. Loosen sides and turn over onto a clean sideboard. You should cut your bars from the large mold within three days. You can cut it at any time but three days seems to be a good window. The soap doesn't become difficult to cut and smaller bars cure faster. Allow to cure 3-6 weeks before using.