

Making



at Home



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EXTENSION SERVICE
 NORTH DAKOTA AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE AND U. S. DEPARTMENT OF
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MAKING SOAP AT HOME

Pure homemade soap is made with lye and fat or grease. Soap made at home is superior to many commercial soaps because the glycerine in homemade soap has not been extracted and no weight-making fillers have been added.

When correctly made, homemade soap is hard, white and smooth. The quality of homemade soap, as with cooking, depends on the ingredients used and the care of preparation.

A thrifty housewife can save many dollars a year by making soap of good quality.

FATS OR GREASE TO USE

You must have fat or grease to make soap. Tallow and lard make the best soap. Fats that have no cooking value, such as meat fryings, cracklings, meat trimmings and other refuse fat can be used. Certain vegetable oils are sometimes used. Mineral oil or mineral grease will not make soap.

Good soap requires fats that are free from dirt, rancidity, lean bits of meat, salt and other impurities. Instead of storing rinds and meat scraps, extract the fat. Store in a tightly covered container in a cool, dry place. Make the fat into soap as it accumulates and let the soap age rather than allow the fat to get too old and rancid.

Fats may be grouped in three classes:

1. Fat rendered from tallows, meat trimmings, rinds and other meat scraps. This fat is ready for soap.
2. Meat fryings and other refuse fats. These fats should be washed as follows:
Add an equal amount of water and bring to the boiling point. Remove from fire, stir and add cold water (1 qt. water to 1 gal. of hot liquid). The cold water settles the impurities and the clean fat comes to the top. Remove the fat when firm.
3. Cracklings:
 1. " every 4 lbs or 1 gal. of pressed cracklings

add 1 level tablespoon lye and water to twice the depth of the cracklings.

- 2 Cover and boil 1 hour.
3. Remove from fire and when it stops boiling, pour cold water over it to settle it.

TO MAKE SOAP

Follow the directions on the lye can. Various brands of lye differ in directions. Never use an aluminum container. Follow the temperature chart. Correct temperatures are extremely important in making the finest soap.

AN EASY RECIPE

To make 9 pounds of pure, hard, smooth soap suitable for toilet, laundry, or soap flakes, follow this simple recipe:

- 1 can lye
- 2-1/2 pints cold water
- 6 pounds clean fat (tallow or lard, or some combination of tallow and lard)

(Six pounds of fat are about 6-3/4 pints, or 13-1/2 standard measuring cups of liquid fat.)

Remember when lye is mixed with water it becomes very hot and needs to cool down to the proper temperature.

Melt fat to clear liquid and let cool gradually to correct temperature, or until the fat offers resistance to the spoon. Stir from time to time to prevent the crystals of fat reforming. Pour the lye solution into the fat in a thin, steady, stream with slow, even stirring. (Rapid addition of lye solution or hard stirring is likely to cause a separation). A honey-like texture is formed which in about 10 or 20 minutes becomes thick with all the lye incorporated into the fat. Pour this mixture into a wooden box that has been soaked in water and lined with clean cotton cloth dipped in water and wrung nearly dry. Place in a protecting pan. Cover with a board or cardboard, then with a rug or blanket to retain the heat while it is texturing out. Let it remain undisturbed for 24 hours, then cut and lift from mold.

To remove the soap from the mold, lift it by the ends of the overhanging cotton lining. Cut into bars by wrapping the soap once with a fine wire or string, crossing ends and pulling. Place soap so air can reach it, but avoid drafts and cold. Soap protected from drafts and cold lathers better. In 10 to 14 days it is ready for use. Aging improves soap. NOTE: Do not let soap freeze during the first two weeks.

TEMPERATURE CHART

Correct temperatures are extremely important for making the finest soap. Follow these temperatures closely. Use a dairy or floating thermometer:

Type of Fat	Temperature of Fat	Temperature of Lye Solution
Soft rancid fat	97°F. to 100°F.	75°F. to 80°F.
Sweet lard or other soft fats	80°F. to 85°F.	70°F. to 75°F.
Half lard and half tallow	100°F. to 110°F.	80°F. to 85°F.
All tallow	120°F. to 130°F.	90°F. to 95°F.

In hot weather or in a hot room if the soap mixture remains greasy, set it in a pan of cold water and continue stirring until thick, when it is ready to pour. If temperatures are too low, lumps of soap will form and separation will occur. In that case, set the mixture in a pan of warm water and stir gently until it is of the right consistency, and all the lye is reincorporated. NOTE: Avoid hardening of the mixture on the sides and bottom of the pan.

SEPARATION

If your soap separates, reclaim it in the following way: Cut or shave the soap into a kettle, add the lye that has separated out (never throw it away) and about 5 pints of water. Melt with gentle heat and occasional stirring. Then raise the heat and boil gently. It should become thick and syrupy. If it does not, add more water, one pint at a time, and continue boiling until it becomes ropy and hairy when dropped from the spoon. Pour into mold and cover. NOTE: Do not be afraid of adding too much water because it can be boiled off.

VARIATIONS IN SOAPMAKING

Many other kinds of attractive and useful soaps may be made in addition to the all-purpose soap. Floating soap, chips, colored and perfumed soaps, etc. Especially popular is the abrasive or mechanics soap. Men who do coarse, dirty work find the addition of pumice stone, emery dust or Tripoli powder especially helpful in removing grease and dirt.

● Floating Soap - When the soap mixture is thick enough, fold air into it as egg white would be folded into a cake mixture.

● Perfumed Or Colored Soaps - If perfumed soap is desired, the following oils are recommended, preferably the synthetic or imitation: Sassafras (4 tsp.); Lavender (2 tsp.); Citronella (2 tsp.); Lemon (1 tsp.); Cloves (1 tsp.); Almond (1 tsp.); Rose Geranium (1/2 tsp.).

Your druggist can supply or secure coloring ingredients for you. Never use perfumes or colors containing alcohol; they will fade and may cause separation.

A tea made with leaves or rose geranium gives a delightful perfume, and may be colored or not as you like by adding the extract of blossoms of pink roses or tulips. A green color can be had by pounding the tops of beets to extract a few drops of the juice, and add in the water.

All soap readily absorbs odors. It can be inexpensively perfumed by placing with it the leaves of a favorite flower or other perfume, if perfume has not been added previously to the mixture. By supplying the perfume and coloring from the home garden, luxurious toilet soaps can be made at very low cost, saving several more dollars in the family budget.

