



Nature's Garden
Wholesale Candle & Soap Supplies



Soap Making

Finding the Perfect Soap Recipe



Soaping with knowledge, experience, and confidence.

With such a variety of soaping bases, fats, and oils available in the market, one can easily see where the excitement can collide with frustration, especially if you are new to soaping.

We strive for a perfect recipe, but where to begin, the possibilities are endless. Now, we seek out creating the perfect soaping recipe.



Soap is made by the chemical reaction that occurs when mixing fatty acids, lye, and water. The lye component actually works as an emulsifier, bonding the fatty oils and water together. Without the lye, this bond would never form. These 3 elements, fatty acids, lye, and water are all essential components to the saponification process.

Each soaping oil/butter has a fatty acid composition, and since every oil/butter is different, so is their fatty acid composition. It is through the variance of each fatty acid composition that important soaping characteristics and qualities are found.

Let's briefly look at some of the most common fatty acids, as well as, the qualities that are provided by them in a cured bar of soap.

- **Lauric Acid:** Provides hardness, cleansing, and bubbly lather.
- **Linoleic Acid:** Provides conditioning
- **Myristic Acid:** Provides hardness, cleansing, and bubbly lather.
- **Oleic Acid:** Provides conditioning
- **Palmitic Acid:** Provides hardness and a creamy lather
- **Ricinoleic Acid:** Provides conditioning, bubbly lather, and a creamy lather.
- **Stearic Acid:** Provides hardness and a creamy lather.





As you can see, each and every element that is put into your soaping recipe has distinct benefits or uses, and some ingredients can also inhibit certain soap bar qualities. Please also notice, that none of the fatty acids allow for all five of the soaping qualities that you are looking for in a bar of soap. This is why; in order to find a good symmetry among these qualities, a soaping recipe usually contains several different oils (fatty acids).

In order to create a quality bar of soap, it is necessary to find a balance between hardness, cleansing, conditioning, bubbly lather, and creamy lather. This usually involves using a combination of oils/butters in your soap recipe. A typical bar soap recipe calls for 38% water content, and a 5% superfat (the percentage of oils that do not saponify).

Here are the values for a typical bar of soap; they are presented in a range:

Hardness	29 to 54
Cleansing	12 to 22
Conditioning	44 to 69
Bubbly lather	14 to 46
Creamy lather	16 to 48

There is however, one example of a soap recipe that can be done with just one oil. For people who are allergic to nuts, olive oil soap can be made with just that...olive oil. No allergen worries. Once this bar has cured though, you have a nice conditioning soap bar that will not leave your hands dry, but, that same soap bar also will not produce a nice lather, and will be very limited in cleansing ability. This is why being aware of all of the capabilities of your oils, fats, butters, and additives will give you a distinct advantage over other soap bars in the market.





Remember, since all oils have their own fatty acid makeup, they also have specific saponification or SAP values. This is why it is extremely important that once the ingredients of your soaping recipe are calculated, you **MUST** use those oils. They cannot be exchanged out for other soaping oils without recalculating your recipe.

Feeling overwhelmed yet? Don't! We know that this is a lot of information to grasp. This is why if you are new to soaping, it is our suggestion that you try a recipe that has already been tried and tested. Doing this will allow you to initiate yourself with the soaping instruction and procedure. Performing the steps from beginning to end will also give you a firsthand experience of the soaping method and key properties of the saponification process like trace or gel phase.



Congratulations! Now is the time where we are actually going to make our first batch together. If you have not read our class on [soap making safety](#), please do so now. Working with lye can be very dangerous! We have already went slightly ahead, and provided you below a recipe for your 1st time soaping.

Here is what you will need for a 2 pound batch:

6 ounces of [Coconut Oil](#), 76 degree

8.4 ounces of [Olive Oil Pomace](#)

8.4 ounces [Palm Oil](#)

1.2 ounces of [Castor Oil](#)

1.5 ounces of a body safe fragrance oil ie [Rain Barrel](#)

9.12 ounces of Distilled Water

3.393 ounces of lye (NaOH)

This recipe range for soap bar quality is:

Hardness	43
Cleansing	17
Conditioning	54
Bubbly lather	22
Creamy lather	31

As you will notice all of the qualities fall within the suggested range nicely. This soap recipe will give you a balanced overall bar of soap.

When selecting your body safe fragrance oil, please take the time to review the CP soap results. We have a link with all of our fragrance oils listed alphabetically with the CP results:

http://ngc-cdn.upshotcommerce.com/mas_assets/theme/ngc/pdf/fragrtest.pdf





Good Luck and remember, once you feel confident with your testing recipe, it is time to break the mold and explore the realm of crafting your own soap recipe. Soap that is completely made by scratch, every ingredient controlled by you!

A very informative class has been created to help you find exactly which ingredients you may want to consider using in your recipe.

Here is the link:

<http://www.naturesgardencandles.com/candlemaking-soap-supplies/item/soapoils/-soaping-oil-properties.html>



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