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S o a p M a k i n g

Great ideas for producing your own soap.



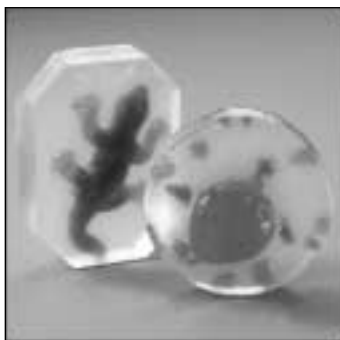
1. Have a microwave dish ready at hand as the soap mixture will need to be heated for 1-2 minutes in a 400-600 Watt oven. The method is to heat it in 20 second long intervals until all the soap melts and is turned to liquid. Stir the solution with a stick between each part of the heating process. You must watch it carefully as the solution can easily boil over, especially when it is made in small amounts.



2. Fill a heatproof glass (Tea glass) with 100ml of soap and then add 15-20 drops on oil (1-2ml of oil per 100ml of soap) for fragrance. Stir the mixture well and add the required amount of colour a drop at a time. All the colours supplied are inter-mixable. The colour can also be dropped directly into the mould and mixed with a small stick. This will produce a marbled colour effect.

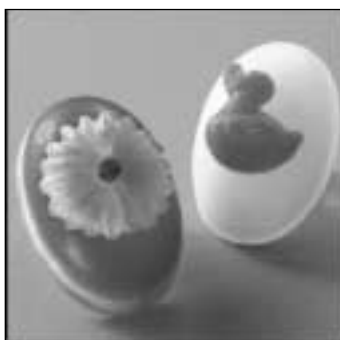


3. Before pouring the solution into the mould it must be cooled to 60 degrees otherwise the mould might deform under the heat. Fill the mould to the level you wish, any air bubbles which appear should be pulled out with a cocktail stick. Any remaining pieces of soap can be remelted and used again. Once the soap has set, use a pointed knife and carefully go around the edge to release the soap from the mould, then press from underneath.



4. Making soap within soap:

Make your coloured soap design/form and allow it to cool. Then fill a mould with a transparent or light coloured soap, slide the design you wish to integrate into the mould, again let it all cool down. The colder the decoration that you want to insert is, the clearer its contours will be. The best idea is to place it in a fridge or freezer before use.



5. Opaque soaps:

To make a transparent soap opaque, stir it with a hand whisk whilst it is cooling.

The air bubbles that form take away the transparency of the soap making it opaque.



6. Soap with mosaic designs:

Make a basic coloured soap first. Once this has cooled down, cut it up into a design and then press back into the mould. Now pour a second layer of colour in the spaces and allow it to cool again. Repeat this process layer after layer until you achieve your final effect.



7a Soap on a rope designs:

Pour the soap into both halves of the mould, do not completely fill one of the halves, keep the level 3mm under the top edge. Lay a ribbon or cord in the mixture and then leave to cool, release both halves from the mould once they have set. Lay the incomplete half back in its mould pour on a further layer of soap mixture and then press the remaining half of the soap in position.



7b Once the soap has cooled down, remove it carefully from the mould and use a knife to smooth over the joint between the two halves. With a cocktail stick you can pick out any details or add designs and even smooth away any imperfections.

Smaller shapes can be made by following step 10



8. Duo coloured soap design:

Fill the mould with coloured soap and allow it to cool. Remove the soap from the mould and cut it into pieces. Place these back into the mould and press them together. Pour another layer of colour over the top and allow to cool again.



9. Soap layers:

If you want to make soap with different layers opaque & transparent. Pour the first layer into the mould and allow to cool. Then add alternate layers of opaque and transparent soap mixture. Repeat this process until the design is complete. If you have a very loose opaque layer it is better to pour a transparent over layer over the top of it to make it stable.



10. Sticking on decorative effects:

Small items can be inserted in the soap on a pin so that they are placed in the bottom of the mould into the still liquid soap. When trying this with larger shapes, place them on a small spoon, pour some liquid soap over the top and then press it into the soap in the mould. Excess soap can be removed with a cocktail stick once the soap is cooled and any small holes made by pins can be sealed over.



11. Cleaning up the soap:

Untidy edges can be cleaned up with a knife. Small pieces of soap can be cut with a knife, carved and applied with a palette knife. Finger prints on transparent soap can simply be removed with a little water.

Tips and tricks:

- * To measure the temperature of the soap mixture is correct use a cooking thermometer.
- * If you want to carve a design on soap, use a sharp cocktail stick to draw out the shape.
- * Blue colouring in soap fades easily and can be quite faint after a few weeks. This process is speeded up when the soap is left in sunlight. Blue will also foam easily when overheated, this can however, be used to a decorative effect.
- * Leave the soap to dry thoroughly in the air before use, this stops it from being used up so quickly. Dull areas on the surface can be made transparent by rubbing them with a little water.
- * Soaps should be left in a soap dish or wrapped in cling film. This keeps the soap clear and prevents it 'sweating'. Any small drops that form on the surface can be removed by washing.
- * Cooling the soap can be speeded up by placing the mould in the fridge or freezer.
- * If the soap will not release from the mould easily, a few minutes in the freezer drawer should do the trick. Do not overdo this otherwise the mould can become brittle.
- * So that the mould stays vertical when pouring, it can be suspended over an empty shoebox.

