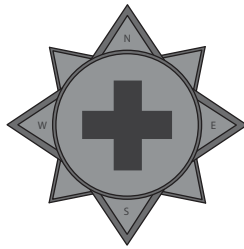


MAKE AN HERBAL OIL

In this lesson we'll be learning how to make an herbal oil. Herbs are plants that we can use for the good of our health and an herbal oil is one way to use herbs externally. It's so easy to make an herbal oil! If you can fix macaroni and cheese or boil potatoes, then you can make an herbal oil.

FLIP OVER FOR YOUR NEXT CHALLENGE



EARN THIS NUGGET

Do some research on a type of herb you'd like to use to make an herbal oil. What are the traditional uses for the herb you selected? Once you've selected your herb and carrier oil, make one for yourself or as a gift, complete with a note explaining how it will benefit the user.

There are a few different ways to make an herbal oil, but in this lesson we are going to be making it on the stove using a double boiler. This ensures that the herbs won't be cooked too harshly and therefore kill too many beneficial properties in the herbs. If you don't have a double boiler, you can place a smaller pan over a pan that is a little bit larger to improvise. When you infuse the herbs into oil slowly and gently then the result will be an effective remedy to use when you need!

- First you need to gather the supplies. Besides the double boiler, you'll need a mason jar and lid, a fine mesh strainer, a bowl, olive oil, and dried herbs. If you have fresh herbs growing in your yard that you'd like to use – that's awesome! Just pick them and let them wilt for at least 12 hours to remove most of the moisture. Too much moisture in the herbs can make your oil go rancid.



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One herb that makes a great herbal oil is calendula. Calendula helps to soothe and rejuvenate the skin, making it perfect for eczema, insect bites, cuts, bruises, and wounds. When used on wounds, you may just find it healing more quickly and giving you a less chance of scarring.

- Place water in the bottom portion of the double boiler. Place herbs in the top of the double boiler. The amount of herbs you use depends on how much oil you wish to make at a time. I like to cover the bottom of the pan with herbs or use at least 1 cup of dried herbs.
- Cover the herbs with olive oil by 1-2 inches. Cover the pan with a lid.
- Simmer herbs on the stove for 1-5 hours, depending on how strong you want the herbal oil to be. You can tell the oil is ready when it begins to change color and the aroma of the oil smells like the herbs.
- Strain herb mixture through a fine strainer into a bowl, pressing as much oil from the herbs as possible. Once the herbs cool, you can wrap them in a clean, old white cotton t-shirt to squeeze out every bit of oil.

- Pour the oil into a glass jar with a lid and label the oil with the date and the ingredients used.
- Compost the herbs.
- Use the herbal oil as is for external needs or as a base for salves, lip balms, lotions, and creams.
- Herbal oils have a shelf life of up to a year.

