

A decorative border at the top of the page featuring a repeating pattern of small, stylized flowers and leaves in a light pink color.

Salves

What is a Salve?

A salve is a semi-solid topical preparation used for soothing, healing, or protecting the skin. It is typically made by combining herbal infusions with a thickening agent, such as beeswax or a plant-based wax. Salves are applied directly to the skin to address various issues such as dry skin, minor wounds, or muscle soreness.

Benefits of Salves

1. **Skin Healing:** Salves can support the healing of minor cuts, bruises, and dry patches by providing a protective barrier and delivering beneficial herbal properties.
2. **Moisturizing:** The oils and waxes used in salves help to lock in moisture, making them effective for treating dry and chapped skin.
3. **Targeted Relief:** Salves can be formulated with specific herbs to target conditions such as muscle pain, inflammation, or skin irritation.
4. **Convenient Application:** The semi-solid nature of salves makes them easy to apply and ideal for on-the-go use.

Shelf Life and Storage Guidelines

- **Shelf Life:** Salves typically last from 6 months to 1 year, depending on the ingredients used and storage conditions. Properly stored, they can last even longer.
- **Storage:** Store salves in a cool, dark place to maintain their efficacy and prevent degradation. Glass or metal containers with tight-fitting lids are ideal.
- **Refrigeration:** Not usually necessary unless you are in a very hot climate. Refrigeration can help extend the shelf life and maintain the salve's consistency.

Preparing Salves: Step-by-Step

1. **Choose Your Herbs:** Select herbs based on the therapeutic properties you need.
Common choices include:
 - **Calendula:** Known for its anti-inflammatory and skin-healing properties.
 - **Comfrey:** Supports tissue repair and helps with minor wounds.
 - **Arnica:** Useful for bruises and muscle soreness.
 - **Lavender:** Offers calming and soothing benefits for the skin.
2. **Prepare the Herbs:** If using fresh herbs, let them wilt to reduce moisture and prevent mold growth. For dried herbs, ensure they are completely dry.
3. **Infuse the Oil:**
 - **Choose a Carrier Oil:** Common options include olive oil, coconut oil, or jojoba oil.
 - **Combine Herbs and Oil:** Use a ratio of 1 cup of herbs to 2 cups of oil. Place herbs in a clean, dry glass jar and pour the oil over them.
 - **Infuse:**
 - **Cold Infusion:** Store the jar in a cool, dark place for 2-4 weeks, shaking it daily.
 - **Heat Infusion:** Place the jar in a double boiler or slow cooker on low heat for 1-2 hours, keeping the temperature below 120°F (49°C).

1. **Strain the Oil:** After infusion, strain out the herbs using a fine mesh strainer, cheesecloth, or coffee filter to remove all plant material.
2. **Prepare the Salve Base:**
 - **Beeswax:** Use beeswax as a thickener to give the salve its semi-solid consistency. The typical ratio is 1 part beeswax to 4 parts infused oil.
 - **Melt the Beeswax:** In a double boiler, melt the beeswax until it becomes liquid.
3. **Combine and Pour:**
 - **Mix Oil and Beeswax:** Slowly add the melted beeswax to the infused oil, stirring continuously. Adjust the amount of beeswax based on the desired consistency. More beeswax will create a firmer salve, while less will result in a softer consistency.
 - **Optional Additives:** You can add essential oils or additional herbs at this stage if desired. Be sure to mix thoroughly.
4. **Pour and Set:** Pour the mixture into sterilized glass or metal containers while still liquid. Allow the salve to cool and solidify at room temperature.
5. **Label and Store:** Label your salve with the date and ingredients used. Store in a cool, dark place for best results.

- Best applied when skin is well hydrated & Pores open.

- Tools / Ingredients - Herb Infused Oil
 - Beeswax, chopped, grated or pellets - 1oz of wax for every 6-8 fluid ounces of oil
 - Essential Oil (Optional)
 - Small Pot
 - Shot Glass
 - Storage Vessels
 - Labels
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- You can purchase empty tubes and pour hot salve directly into them to make your own lip balm!



