

# MELT AND POUR SOAP BASES GUIDE

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## WHAT IS MELT AND POUR SOAP?

“Melt and Pour Soap” is the name given to soap bases that have already undergone the usual soap-making process – in which particular oils are combined with an alkaline solution to create a reaction known as saponification. Melt and Pour soaps are ready to use; simply **melt** the base, then **pour** into a mold, and allow it to set. In other words, Melt and Pour soap is pre-saponified soap that can be used with or without further chemical processing or customization.

The specific type of fat that was used to create the soap is the fat after which that particular Melt and Pour soap base will be named. To illustrate, a soap base that is produced with a substantial quantity of Shea Butter or Goat’s Milk will be named Shea Butter Melt and Pour Soap and Goat’s Milk Melt and Pour Soap, respectively. Likewise, any other distinctive constituent incorporated into the soap will be the ingredient after which the base is named.

## **IS MELT AND POUR TRUE SOAP?**

Like “true” soap, Melt and Pour soap has been made through the saponification process with a combination of ingredients that are also used in traditional soaps – which might be considered to be more “true” – and these include natural oils as well as lye, thus Melt and Pour soap does not need to have lye added to it, as doing so would be an unnecessary extra step that would cause the soap base to potentially burn the skin.

Additional Glycerin is added to the Melt and Pour soaps, offering more soothing and hydrating properties to the skin. It also helps produce clear soaps that can be easily colored and shaped and that are gentle on the skin, making Melt and Pour soap ideal for use on sensitive skin types. In summary, Melt and Pour soap is also considered to be “true” soap.

## **BENEFITS OF USING MELT AND POUR SOAP BASES**

Although Melt and Pour soap incorporates synthetic substances, which may range from foaming agents and alcohol-based emulsifiers to solvents, these chemical elements enable Melt and Pour soap to liquefy in order that it may be formed into the preferred design. Cold process soaps usually contain less Glycerin than Melt and Pour soaps, thus they are more likely to be drying on the skin.

The foremost benefit of using Melt and Pour soap bases is that the user does not have to deal with the caustic substance known as Lye, as it has already been incorporated into the soap base in advance. The user-friendly nature of Melt and Pour soap is another benefit of these bases, as this method makes it uncomplicated to quickly achieve professional-quality soap bars with luxurious appearances, scents, and textures, all of which can be customized with a wide variety of artistic possibilities.

Another key benefit of Melt and Pour soap bases is that, unlike cold-processed soaps, the final product does not require a curing period, that is to say there is no days- or weeks-long stretch of time during which the soap must be left untouched in order for the lye to be neutralized and for the saponification process to be completed; once Melt and Pour soaps have been removed from their molds, they are ready to use immediately. The longer the soap sits, the harder and milder it will become.

## HOW TO SELECT THE IDEAL MELT AND POUR SOAP BASE

Melt and Pour soap bases can include a wide array of diverse components, such as milks, oils, and other fatty ingredients as well as other raw materials, that allow each base to exhibit unique features, both in terms of physical appearance as well as in terms of how they behave on the skin. For this reason, it helps to have an idea of the desired effect that one hopes to achieve with a soap. Some factors to consider include the color, the clarity, the texture, the amount of lather, the moisturizing capacity and its effects on particular skin types, and the scent. To determine which Melt and Pour soap base is best suited to your specific needs, use the soap base descriptions below as a guide:

Melt Soap is a Glycerin soap that is 100% Vegetable-based, making it biodegradable and free of animal testing. The formulas result in smooth, creamy textures as well as skin-nourishing lather that is highly-moisturizing. It does not incorporate artificial colors or scents. They are either scentless or have neutral scents and colors that help them maintain compatibility with a wide range of fragrances, offering a superior “lift” to each scent – that is, they enable the scent of each customized soap to distribute itself swiftly and widely. Each soap has a pH between 9.5-10.5, and each is safe for use on all skin types, including the most sensitive; however, due to the deeply-hydrating humectant property of Glycerin, they may not be ideal for those with acne-prone skin, as the profound moisture could potentially aggravate the condition. In order to confirm Glycerin soaps’ effects on any skin type, a skin patch test is recommended. Melt Soap’s Melt and Pour soap bases result in finished products that clean the skin without eliminating the skin’s essential natural oils or distressing its natural pH balance and without leaving an undesirable residue; rather, Melt and Pour soap is said to leave a thin humectant film of Glycerin on the skin after it has been rinsed off, and this beneficial layer helps to attract moisture from the air to the skin, thus maintaining the look and feel of skin that is healthy and supple.

To begin working with Melt and Pour soap, select a soap base that contains your preferred key ingredients and appearance, then determine how your ideal additives – fragrances, colorants, and others – will function in that base...

### **WHITE MELT AND POUR SOAP BASE**

The color of this Melt and Pour soap base ranges in appearance from cream to white (the natural pigment Titanium Dioxide has been added to give it a white opacity). This base is most commonly chosen for producing soaps that are opaque in clarity and that are entirely bright white, softly-colored in pastel hues, or in need of a bright white foundation to exhibit ornate artistic compositions, as this base absorbs and displays pigments well. This base begins to melt at 60 °C (140 °F) and is fully melted at 80 °C (180 °F). It is reputed to produce exceptional lather.

### **CLEAR MELT AND POUR SOAP BASE**

This colorless, transparent base has high clarity that makes it ideal for embedding natural additives as well as small objects. Furthermore, its uncolored state allows for exceptional color intensity. This base begins to melt at 60 °C (140 °F) and is fully melted at 80 °C (180 °F).

### **GOAT'S MILK MELT AND POUR SOAP BASE**

This white soap base has been infused with Goat's Milk – a natural, soothing moisturizer that is rich in vitamins, proteins, and minerals, all of which work in conjunction to nourish and hydrate skin and to generally support skin health. This base begins to melt at 60 °C (140 °F) and is fully melted at 80 °C (180 °F).

### **OLIVE MELT AND POUR SOAP BASE**

This translucent soap base is infused with pure Virgin Olive Oil, which not only contributes to its slightly greenish hue but also gives the soap a luxurious, moisturizing lather. This base begins to melt at 60 °C (140 °F) and is fully melted at 80 °C (180 °F).

### **SHEA BUTTER MELT AND POUR SOAP BASE**

This opaque soap base contains 5% Shea Butter, which lends it a smooth, creamy, and luxurious texture, although it might not produce as much lather as other soap bases. This, however, does not negate the soap's potency, as it will continue to cleanse and to exhibit its naturally-rich emollience. This base is free of all surfactants and Propylene glycol. This base begins to melt at 60 °C (140 °F) and is fully melted at 80 °C (180 °F).

### **HONEY MELT AND POUR SOAP BASE**

When soap bases are combined with real Honey hence, this Melt and Pour soap base is distinctly designed to resist this color change and to maintain excellent color stability even when it is exposed to high temperatures for lengthy stretches of time. The outstanding transparent clarity of this soap base results in final products with brilliant color pigmentation.

## HOW TO USE MELT AND POUR SOAP

Begin by placing the chosen soap base on a clean cutting board and slicing the soap base into small chunks with the aid of a large, clean knife.

Next, place the chunks in a clean container that is heat-safe for use in a microwave or a double boiler. Heat the soap in short intervals of either 30 seconds or 1 minute at a time to prevent the base from overheating or boiling, stirring gently between intervals. Repeat this heating and stirring process until all the soap has liquified. For a two-pound brick of soap, the total melting time will take approximately 5 minutes. The final melted base will likely be more than 80 °C (180 °F) and thus must be handled with extra care.

Additives, such as scents, colors, and botanicals, can now be incorporated into the melted soap base (*see chart below for **suggested usage amounts***). Again, it is important to stir them in gently to prevent excess bubbles, although these can be removed with a light spray of rubbing alcohol once the soap has been poured into the mold.

Once the desired additives have been thoroughly combined into the soap base, the mixture can be poured into silicone molds of personal preference. It is important to avoid using glass or metal molds, as these materials can make it difficult to remove the final products. After the mold has been filled, it can be left to begin cooling at room temperature.

Ideally, 1-3 hours will be enough for the soap in the molds to harden enough to be removed. If not, the molds can be placed in the refrigerator for 10-15 minutes to facilitate the hardening process, though this should be avoided if possible. Once unmolded, the soap bars will be ready to use. Any defects can be either smoothed down with a cloth or carefully and neatly sliced off with a knife. A large soap loaf can be further cut into smaller pieces by first turning the loaf onto its side – avoid cutting it from the top down – and using a large knife or soap cutter to slice the loaf vertically on its side.

Wrap the final Melt and Pour soap bars immediately in non-porous packaging, such as cling wrap/film or heat shrink wrap. If a Glycerin soap bar is not wrapped, the soap will be susceptible to sweating and shrinkage.

Finally, before and after use in the shower, store Melt and Pour soaps in a cool, dry place.

## HOW MUCH MELT AND POUR SOAP DO YOU NEED?

A two-pound block of Melt and Pour soap base can yield between 10-20 soap bars, depending on the desired size of the finished soap bars.

## HOW LONG DOES MELT AND POUR SOAP LAST?

Melt and Pour soaps will last approximately 4-6 weeks, depending on how often they are used and whether they are treated with the recommended suggestions for proper care; they should not remain exposed to air, as this will cause the water in the soap bar to continue evaporating, resulting in a shrunken or dissolving soap bar. For this reason, it is advisable to remove the soap from the shower after each use.

## WHAT CAN YOU ADD TO MELT AND POUR SOAP?

- Soap-Safe Fragrances (see chart below)
- Soap-Safe Colorants (see chart below)
- Botanicals (see chart below)
- Embedded Objects (e.g. miniature toys)
- Another Variety of Melt and Pour Soap (e.g. fragments of colored soap that is made from another soap base or that has a contrasting color)

| ADDITIVE TYPE  | EFFECT ON SOAPS  | SUGGESTED USAGE AMOUNT  | HELPFUL ADVICE  |
|--|--|---|---|
| <b>Fragrances</b><br><i>Essential Oils,</i><br><i>Fragrance Oils</i> | Scent additives might impact the soap's color, setting time, solidity, and transparency and may cause the soap to thicken quickly (an occurrence called "seizing" or "acceleration") | 0.3 oz. – 0.4 oz. of fragrance per pound of soap. The amount can be increased, depending on the strength of the chosen scent. | Ensure that the chosen scent is skin-safe and suited to your skin type/sensitivities<br>Ensure that the scent is thoroughly blended into the soap base to prevent separation from the base as well as globules of pure fragrance<br>Create a sample of the final product to be sure that the scent is well-suited to the chosen soap base (i.e. does not negatively impact its viscosity and clarity)<br>Oils with floral, fruity, or spicy scents are reputed to cause seizing |

| ADDITIVE TYPE  | EFFECT ON SOAPS  | SUGGESTED USAGE AMOUNT   | HELPFUL ADVICE  |
|--|--|--|---|
|  |  |  | Ensure that the chosen essential oil does not have contraindications for particular health conditions   |
| <b>Carrier Oils</b>  | Carrier Oils enhance the moisturizing, conditioning, nourishing, and soothing effects of the final soap product  | 1 Tbsp. per pound of soap  | Ensure that oil is entirely liquid before blending into melted soap   |
| <b>Colorants</b><br><br><i>Liquid Dyes, Micas, Oxides, Clays, Nature Tint Colors</i> | Any liquid dye that is water-based, non-bleeding, and skin-safe can be used to add color to Melt and Pour soap<br><br>Powder colorants, such as micas, oxides, clays, and “Nature Tint” colors, may also be used | 1 tsp per pound of soap  | Ensure that powder and liquid color additives are thoroughly blended into the chosen soap base, otherwise there is a chance that the color will not integrate completely, resulting in streaks of white (or whatever color the original soap base is) or specks of color rather than a uniform hue<br><br>Before adding a powder dye into a soap base, dilute it in a small amount of rubbing alcohol, as this will help to prevent the powder from forming lumps in the mixture (the alcohol will be burned off by the heat of the liquified soap while the color will remain) |
| <b>Butters</b>   | Butters enhance the moisturizing, conditioning, nourishing, and soothing effects of the final soap product   | More than 1 teaspoon per pound of soap base could result in the final product being too soft or too oily and could possibly lessen the lather or prevent the product from properly hardening | Ensure that butter is entirely liquid before blending into melted soap  |

| ADDITIVE TYPE  | EFFECT ON SOAPS   | SUGGESTED USAGE AMOUNT           | HELPFUL ADVICE  |
|--|---|----------------------------------|---|
| <p><b>Exfoliants</b></p> <p><i>Clays, Sugar, Epsom Salts, Loofah, Oatmeal, Clay Powders, Cosmetic Beads, Coffee Grounds, Ground Pumice Stone</i></p> | <p>Remove dead skin<br/>Soothe, soften, and smoothe the skin<br/>Enhance cleaning properties</p>  | <p>1 tsp per pound of soap</p>   | <p>For exfoliants that have finer textures, it is recommended that they be mixed with a small amount of rubbing alcohol (e.g. 1 tsp of exfoliant in 1 Tbsp of alcohol) to help them integrate into the liquified soap</p>   |
| <p><b>Activated Charcoal</b></p>   | <p>The amount of Activated Charcoal that is added to a soap base determines a color range from blue to grey to black<br/>A coarse Activated Charcoal will contribute to the exfoliation properties of the final soap<br/>Activated Charcoal soaps are reputed to be beneficial for acne-prone skin</p>  | <p>1-2 tsp per pound of soap</p> | <p>Before adding Activated Charcoal into a soap base, dilute it in a small amount of rubbing alcohol, as this will help to prevent the powder from forming lumps in the mixture (the alcohol will be burned off by the heat of the liquified soap while the color will remain)</p>  |
| <p><b>Botanicals</b></p> <p><i>Seeds, Whole Flower Buds, Petals, Leaves, Powdered Extracts, Herbs</i></p>  | <p>Botanicals add aesthetic appeal to a finished soap product<br/>Although they might be incorporated into a soap formula with the intention of adding fragrance, the quantity of dried botanicals (fresh ones should not be used), will be too trivial to contribute any notable scent, thus a fragrance oil should also be used in addition to botanicals, if desired</p> |                                  | <p>It is recommended that any preferred flower additives be dried, treated, and specifically for soap-making<br/>Flowers should be dried – ideally air dried – before they are added to any melted soap bases<br/>To ensure that botanicals (especially those that are heavy and inclined to sink to the bottom of the mold) are evenly distributed in a soap base, a <b>layering technique</b> may be used.<br/>This involves pouring a small amount of the melted</p> |



| ADDITIVE TYPE   | EFFECT ON SOAPS   | SUGGESTED USAGE AMOUNT           | HELPFUL ADVICE   |
|---|---|----------------------------------|--|
|   | <p>Due to their nature, botanicals can potentially cause discoloration of the soap</p>  |                                  | <p>soap base to the mold, then sprinkling a small amount of the botanicals on top, then waiting approximately 20 minutes before pouring a second layer of melted soap atop the botanicals layer. This can be repeated until the mold is filled. Another method that promotes the even distribution of botanicals involves, using a small stick-like tool, such as a toothpick, to place the flowers in the preferred spot inside the melted soap. As the soap hardens, there is still a chance that botanicals will rise to the top of the soap (which will be the bottom of the unmolded soap) To prevent botanicals from discoloring soap, it is recommended to add them to the liquid soap when its temperature is lower than the melting point</p> |
| <b>Baking Soda</b>  | <p>Baking Soda is not recommended for use in soaps, as it negatively affects lather</p>   | N/A                              |  |
| <p><b>Humectants</b><br/><br/><i>Raw Honey, Aloe Vera Gel</i></p> | <p>Humectants contribute extra moisture to the skin for enhanced hydration and softness Soften the final product The greater the concentration of honey, the denser the lather, the softer the soap, and the darker</p> | <p>½ teaspoon to 6 teaspoons</p> |  |

| ADDITIVE TYPE                                 | EFFECT ON SOAPS   | SUGGESTED USAGE AMOUNT | HELPFUL ADVICE |
|---|---|------------------------|----------------|
|   | <p>the final soap will appear to be Honey could potentially separate from the soap base A high amount of honey in the final soap bar is said to increase sweating in Glycerin soaps</p> |                        |                |
| <b>Food Coloring</b>                          | <p>Food coloring can be used but it is better to use cosmetic-grade pigments in soap</p>  | 0.009% or as needed    |                |
| <b>Vanilla Extract and Oils with Vanillin</b> | <p>Vanilla Extract should not be used in soap as it causes discoloration of the final soap bar and will not retain its deep, warm, sweet, and comforting aroma</p>                      | 2% of formula          |                |

## HOW LONG DOES MELT AND POUR SOAP TAKE TO SET?

On average, Melt and Pour soap takes approximately 1-3 hours to completely harden; however, the actual time will depend on factors such as the room temperature as well as chosen additives. It is important to remember not to remove the cooling soap from the mold before it has been given enough time to harden. The soap's softness may also make it easier for fingerprints or other depressions to be left on the soap.

## WHY DOES MELT AND POUR SOAP SWEAT?

Melt and Pour soap, or “Glycerin Soap,” is known to naturally “sweat.” Glycerin is a humectant, which draws moisture from the air, and this moisture can appear as small water droplets covering the surface of the soap. This should not be a cause for concern. Maintaining a steady temperature in the soap-making area and keeping a humidifier on during the cooling process could help eliminate this occurrence. Melt and Pour soaps also sweat when they are 1) frozen and then thawed 2) refrigerated immediately after being poured into molds rather than when they have already begun to harden.

## **CAN YOU MIX MELT AND POUR SOAP BASES?**

Yes, different Melt and Pour soap bases may be mixed together.

## **LAYERING MELT AND POUR SOAP**

Melt and Pour soap bases can be layered. Begin by pouring a small amount of the first liquified soap base into the preferred mold and waiting 10 minutes for this layer to cool. Once it has cooled, spray a thin layer of rubbing alcohol over it to eliminate air bubbles, to ensure overall smoothness, and to enable the layers to stick together. It is crucial to be conscious of the temperature of each following layer, which can inadvertently melt the previous one if it is too hot. This process can be repeated until the mold is filled.

## **Trouble Shooting**

### **1- Sweating Soap**

- Do not Over heat. Best to use a double boiler instead of microwave
- Keep soap at room temperature at low humidity
- Use Heat Shrink Wrap to protect the soap during shipping/Storage

### **2- Mushy Soap**

- Do not place the soap bar under the shower
- Place the soap bar in a mesh type soap holder to ensure drainage
- Do not place the soap bar with another bar

### **3- Wrapping paper sticking to Soap bar**

- - Use wax coated paper wrapper and make sure that the wax side is in touch with the soap