

## MAKING YOUR FIRST LOTION

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It's Tuesday! Did your supplies arrive? Are you ready to make a lotion? Do you have your supplies ready? All right! Let's go!

### BASIC FIRST LOTION RECIPE

#### HEATED WATER PHASE

69% water

#### HEATED OIL PHASE

15% oil (sunflower, soy bean, rice bran, or olive oil)

5% shea or mango butter

3% cetyl alcohol

6% emulsifier (BTMS or Polawax)

#### COOL DOWN PHASE

1% fragrance or essential oil

0.5% to 1% preservative

(This doesn't total 100% because of the difference in preservatives!)

*Note: I've changed the emulsifier to be 6% - it should be 5.75% if I'm using Polawax, but I considered that you might be using all kinds of weird and wonderful emulsifiers, and 6% will cover those of you using Polawax, BTMS-50, and e-wax very well. I've reduced the water to 69% to compensate.*

*Secondary note: Check your preservative's suggested usage rate to ensure you're putting it in the right phase. Most will go into the cool down phase, but some won't! ([Click here for the list.](#))*



### PREPARING YOUR BRAIN

You can do this! It's not rocket science - it's cosmetic science, which is much more awesome and useful in your daily life! You will not pre-suck! (We define this in craft group as saying you suck before you've even started so when you fail, you can say "I told you so", and not lose face. Or saying "I'm not good at this new thing", and you won't be, because it's something new and we're not going to be perfect the first time out!)

Just think...in about an hour, you can say you've made a lotion and have something to show for your hard work and research. (Take a picture of it and send it to me at [sibarcly@telus.net](mailto:sibarcly@telus.net) so I can see what you've made! I'm quite excited by all of this!)



### PREPARING YOUR SPACE

Ensure that your space is clean and tidy. Make sure all your containers, utensils, and everything else have been cleaned well. ([Click here for related link.](#)) Get a bottle (or two) ready for your lotion. (You don't need to clean your bottle. If you bought it from your supplier, then it's assumed to be clean!)

If you're making the recipe I mentioned in the first [Newbie Tuesday post](#), then you'll make about 3 ounces or 90 ml of lotion, which will require a 2 ounce bottle with a little left over or a 4 ounce bottle with some head space at the top.



First, turn on your double boiler apparatus (or turn on the burner on the stove) and get the water in the double boiler warming. I'm not sure of the exact amount of water you should add to your specific double boiler: Add enough that the tops of containers aren't covered by the water and it won't spill into the containers if the water accidentally starts boiling. I generally find that getting the water half way to 3/4 of the way up the side of my Pyrex jug should take me through to the end of the heating and holding phase. You can boil up the water in a kettle or pot before using it in the double boiler, if you like.



Next, get your supplies and equipment ready. You'll be using a scale for all the measuring, so make sure it has a prominent place on the counter top. You need two heat proof containers (Pyrex jugs, for instance) - one for the heated water phase, one for the heated oil phase. And you'll need a spoon for each container because you won't be able to resist having a stir as they heat!



Have your notebook beside you with the recipe printed in quite large font and a pen or pencil at the ready. Writing notes is vital to make sure you know what you did this time and what to do (or not to do) next time!



### THE HEAT AND HOLD PHASE

Put your Pyrex jug on the scale. Now weigh out your heated water phase - just the water in this recipe - into your heatproof container.

Weigh your container - hit tare on the scale (zero out the number) so you can get the "before" weight of your heated water phase. (We need this number to know how much water evaporates during the heated water phase so we can compensate for it before we combine the two phases). Now put this container into your double boiler.



Put the second Pyrex jug on the scale. Weigh out everything from the heated oil phase - your oil, butter, emulsifier, cetyl alcohol - into the jug, then put the jug into the double boiler.

I forgot to take a picture of this container on the scale, but this is what your heated oil phase will look like - some oils with the pellets of emulsifier and flakes of cetyl alcohol sinking to the bottom or maybe floating around the top. Depending upon the butter you use, it may or may not be showing as large chunks in the container.



Monitor your containers. Use your thermometer regularly. (If you're using glass containers, try not to let the thermometer hit the floor of the container or you'll be taking its temperature, not your product!)

When the temperature of both phases reaches 70°C or 158°F, start your timer for 20 minutes. The containers should heat and hold for 20 minutes at 70°C or 158°F. (The temperature might fluctuate and get up as high as 85°C. That's okay, as long as the temperatures of both containers are over 70°C and relatively the same when you combine them.)

In the meantime, while you're waiting for the heat and hold phase to come to an end, you can fill up a kettle or another container for heating water and heat some

water. You'll add some of this to the heated water phase just before you combine the two to ensure you have a water phase of 70%.



If you haven't written any notes yet, write them now! What oil did you use? Which butter? Did you go a little over the suggested amount for anything? How long did it take for the phases to get to 70°C? And so on. Also while you're waiting, put away the things you don't need and get out those things you do need like a funnel or plastic bag to get the lotion into the bottle, the bottle, perhaps a label, and definitely your cool down phase ingredients. Check on the water in your double boiler and make sure you have enough so you won't run dry before the 20 minutes is up. Maybe do a little air guitar, or check your e-mail on your smart phone. Twenty minutes isn't that long, but it might feel that way when you're excited to see your lotion finish!

When you've heated and held both phases at 70°C/158°F for 20 minutes, remove just the water container from the heat and measure it. How much water did you lose? Add up to the amount you should have had originally. Let's say you measured 500 grams for your container and water phase - if your container now reads 475, add 25 grams from the water you boiled up separately. (It is okay if the water in the kettle is a little hotter than the water phase, as long as it doesn't make the water phase 85°C or 100°C while your oil phase is around 70°C. This is unlikely to happen with so little water and your water phase being over 70°C, so don't worry!)

Add the oil phase to the water phase and watch the emulsification happen. Isn't it awesome? The way the everything the oil touches turns into milky white without you having to do anything! This is chemical emulsification and it's awesome! (I remember the first time I saw emulsification - I was so excited! I love it when the kids in my craft group see it for the first time - it really is quite awesome!)



This is the part of lotion making where we mix. I like to use my hand mixer on setting 1 or 2 using the beater attachment and mix for a few minutes - maybe 4 minutes or so? Then I set it aside and let it cool down. Put a thermometer in the container and wait a bit. The temperature of the room is important here. If you have an unheated workshop like mine, it can take a really

short period of time to cool down - maybe 10 to 15 minutes. If you have a warm room, it might take longer. Some people use an ice bath to cool it down. I guess you could do that if you really wanted it to cool down quickly - I've never tried it because it never seems to take very long to cool in my house!

And yes, it's okay to have a stir with a clean spoon while you're waiting for it to cool down. See how the viscosity changes as the product gets closer to 45°C. It can take up to three days for a lotion to come to its final viscosity, so don't worry that you are currently seeing something with the consistency of slightly thickened milk!



### **THE COOL DOWN PHASE**

When the product reaches 45°C or 113°F, add your cool down ingredients. In this lotion, that would be your fragrance/essential oil and preservative (I use liquid Germall Plus, which goes into the cool down phase. Your preservative may vary. Check before you start making the lotion!) Mix again. Maybe 2 or 3 minutes? Now leave it alone. You're done. We're just waiting for it to get cool enough to bottle.

If you're going to put this in a jar, you can do that right away and let the product cool in the jar. Do not put the lid on the product - we don't want condensation! Cover the jar(s) with a paper towel until cooled.



### **THE PACKAGING PHASE**

If you're putting this into any other kind of bottle, put a clean cloth or paper towel over the top of the container, and let it cool down to where the jug isn't warm to the touch any more (room temperature - around 20°C or 68°F). You can try using a funnel to get your product into the bottle, but I prefer to use a piping bag (that you'd use for icing - find them in the cake decorating section of your favourite craft store or Daiso!). Some people suggest using a plastic bag with the corner cut off - for some reason, I can't make this work for me and end up with lotion everywhere.



Put some pressure on the bag, then let it off, then add a bit more, until your container is getting quite full. Bang the container on the table to get rid of the air, then add some more. Keep doing this until you reach a point where you want to try putting the pump into the bottle. Make sure it doesn't overflow because it'll get into the pump mechanisms!

And now you're done! Rejoice! Do a happy dance to celebrate the making of the lotion! You've done it!

**The next part of lotion making?** Making cute labels.

Marching around the house with the bottle in your hand saying, "I made lotion! I made lotion!" E-mailing your friends and family (and tutor - [sjbarclay@telus.net](mailto:sjbarclay@telus.net)) and telling them tales with attached pictures! And generally rejoicing in the fact that you set out to accomplish something and did it! You're walking on sunshine, and don't it feel good? Indeed!

Congratulations! You did it! Now use it all up very quickly so you have a cheap excuse to make another one!