

Herbal Salves and Balms

by Dana L Woodruff~ Community herbalist, [Dandelioness Herbs](#) ©2010

A salve is a blend of oil, herbs, and wax, used externally to soothe and protect the skin. Depending on the herbs you choose, you can make a heal-all salve for cuts, dry skin, burns, stings, and scrapes, or you can make ones for specific ailments such as bites, diaper rash, and fungus. There are many methods for making herbal salves. Here is one way:

Warm 1 cup of herb-infused oil in a double boiler or a pan over very low heat. Add 4 tablespoons of grated or chopped beeswax, stir, and let the wax slowly melt into the oil. Dip a spoon into the mixture and blow on it until it's solid or put in the freezer for a few minutes to cool quicker. If the salve is too hard, add more oil. If it's too soft, add more beeswax. Once you get it to the consistency you're seeking, remove from heat and pour it into dry, clean containers right away. If you wait too long, the salve will begin to harden in the pot.

Either just before or just after you pour the salve into containers, you can mix in extra ingredients such as vitamin E oil or essential oils. Each essential oil (e.o.) is different, and each person is more or less sensitive to them than the next, but in general you can add 1-2 drops of e.o. per lip balm tube and 2 or 3 drops e.o. per ounce. Let the salves harden slowly, allowing them cool completely before moving them. Be sure to have plenty of extra jars because when the oil and wax warm and blend all together a magic alchemical reaction always seems to happen, somehow making more salve appear.

Most salves keep for about a year. They last longer if kept in a cool, dark place, rather than letting it melt and remelt in a hot car, for example. You can use an array of herbs, oils, waxes, and other ingredients. Lip balms are made as above, but usually with more beeswax, for a harder consistency.

Some possibilities for salves and balms:

- **Heal-All Salve** with Calendula blossoms, Plantain leaf, and St. Johnswort flowers.
- **Anti-Fungal Salve** with Calendula blossoms and Black walnut hull oils, and Tea tree essential oil.
- **Decongestant Salve** with essential oils of Peppermint, Eucalyptus, Thyme, Rosemary, and/or Pine.
- **Mint Chocolate Lip Balm** with cocoa butter & essential oil of peppermint.
- **Lip Gloss** with oil infused with alkanet root, which gives a red color.

