

## Rebatching Soap Methods

. . . from <http://soapsandsundries.com/howtorebatch.html>

*Since these blocks of soap are fresh, be sure and wear gloves while handling, until it's "cooked"! Have fun, and may you make lots of beautiful soaps! :o) Trisha*

**REBATCHING SOAP** Rebatching is a method by which you can take existing soap or soap scraps, melt them down, pour the melted soap into molds and make new soap. Rebatching is a good time to add essential oils, fragrances and other additives such as herb, oatmeal, etc.. that would have been altered if added during the initial soapmaking stage. The process is simple, however, there are some steps that can be taken to make the process easier and error free. We highly recommend the oven method because of an oven's unique ability to heat evenly and slowly.

Tips: When rebatching the fresher the soap the better. Soap that is a week old requires less added liquid than three week old soap. Also, keep the heat as low as possible to avoid burning the soap.

The steps are as follows:

**Step One** - Cut your soap pieces into small chunks or grate your soap with a kitchen grater.

**Step Two** - Place the soap chunks or shavings in a stainless steel, enamel coated or glass pot.

**Step Three** - For most vegetable oil based soap chunks or shavings pour 1/4 - 1/2 cup of milk to every pound of soap into the bottom of the pan. For soap that is less than a week old cut these measurements in half. Our soap base is usually very fresh, so you can try using the lower measurement to start with.

**Step Four** - Cover the pot and let the soap sit and soak up the milk or water for an hour or two. Stir every half hour.

**Step Five** - Heat your oven to its lowest setting. (no more than 170 degrees) Place the pot into the oven and let it heat for an hour or so. Check and stir the mix every 15 minutes.

**Step Six** - When the soap smooths out you can stir in any essential oils, fragrances (approx. 1/2oz. Per pound of soap),, oatmeal, herbs, cocoa butter, etc that you want.

**Step Seven** - Blend the soap. You can either take the soap out of the oven and blend it with a hand mixer in the pot or you can pour it into a blender and mix it. A hand blender may be the quickest and best method. You want to get it blended before it starts to set up.

**Step Eight** - Once blended you simply pour it into the molds, let it set up a couple of days, pop it from the molds, and let dry.

### **METHOD 2 - MICROWAVE**

Hand Milled soapmaking is the fancy way of saying that you take scraps of premade soap and melt it down in a liquid. The less fancy way to describe it is "rebatching".

Who rebatches soap?

- A made-from-scratch soapmaker who has some scraps left over. Rather than throw the scraps out, she may choose to rebatch them into a new bar of soap.
- A soapmaker who wants to make a completely and truly natural bar of soap but doesn't want to work with lye.

People use various different techniques to rebatch their soap -- a crockpot and an oven are commonly used. I prefer to use a microwave, as it is quicker.

What you need: Some soap shreds (you can make your own soap and shred it up, or you can purchase shreds of soap from an online retailer), a very large bowl, a microwave, a spoon, some kind of molds.

Basic instructions:

*Put the soap into the bowl. The bowl must be at least four times larger than the amount of soap you place in it, because as the soap melts, it will bubble up. Add any extra additives such as liquid silk, shea butter and the like, as well as colorants. Microwave on high for 2 - 4 minutes, until the soap starts to bubble to the top of the container. Remove and stir down. Repeat this process three or four times until the soap is a marshmallowsy liquid. Add fragrances, stir well, and spoon into molds. The soap is ready to use as soon as it has hardened.*

### **Method 3 - Crockpot:**

Put grated up soap in crockpot, add 1/4-1/2 of liquid (milk, water, etc.), put in a crockpot at about 250 degrees Fahrenheit and allow to "stew" for 3-4 hours. Stir briefly every hour or so. Pour into molds. Allow to harden (otherwise it dissolves too quickly in water).

### **Now, with all that said and done, I'll tell you how I do it!:**

1. Heat your oven to about 150 degrees (never over 170 degrees - it will burn!).
2. Grate, slice, or chunk your soap up.
3. Place in a large enamel or stainless steel pan, like your turkey roasting pan, with a good lid.
4. Add milk or water (milk is better, doesn't HAVE to be goat milk, could be cows milk). This is a little more tricky to describe, since I'm a "Dumper", lol, and it's really what you prefer, but start with about a cup or so for 5lb.
5. Mix a little, cover with lid, and place in oven.
6. Heat slowly, slowly, check every 15 minutes or so, and stir, do something else while you wait, just don't forget about it!
7. When all slivers or chunks are completely melted, add your fragrance or essential oils (about .5oz. per lb.), special oils, dried botanicals, colors, whatever blows your hair back!
8. Pour or "plop" into molds (any plastic container with "give", to create an air pocket when removing from molds).
9. Tap mold CAREFULLY on counter to remove any air bubbles, but BE CAREFUL - I've had the hot soap splash onto my skin that way, so use caution!
10. When cool, pop out of molds, then set on your shelf for awhile, from 1 to several days, depending on how much liquid was added earlier.
11. It's ready to use!!!!

#### **Important Tips:**

1. Make sure your heating soap is always covered, so it doesn't dry out!
2. Never set your oven too high, over 170 - you'll end up with burned spots throughout your soap!
3. This way, for me, anyway, is much more relaxing and foolproof. I added all of the options and methods, though, so you can see what works best for you!