

9 GETTING STARTED

This section can help get you started making and/or using natural and organic cosmetics. Congratulate yourself on reading and/or skimming the section on Natural Ingredients. At this point the details may be fuzzy but you are likely to be impressed with the range of choices available to you. This bountiful variety is a connection between you and the natural world around you.

The strength of a customized program of natural skin and hair care is the ease with which you can make cosmetics which meet your immediate needs beautifully.

It can be a little overwhelming to switch over completely to a natural program of skin and hair care—we use many different products today. You may feel more comfortable starting with a small number of products which you expand gradually. Maybe you start using natural products as you use up your existing synthetic ones. Any approach is fine. Just keep in mind that the fewer synthetic products you use, the more your skin and hair can benefit from the natural products.

Yes, getting started involves an investment of your time. After that you will be organized to easily and quickly respond to the need to replace a used-up cosmetic or make a new cosmetic with a different profile. I like the word “profile” to refer to what distinguishes two cosmetics of the same type, e.g., two toners with different effects have different profiles. A toner you use in the summer will probably have a different profile than the toner you use in the winter.

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STEPS

Step 1. Analyze the condition of your skin and hair. And cultivate an awareness of it on an ongoing basis, as it will change over time.

Step 2. Review the natural ingredients, identifying those whose effects are of benefit to you. On a lined 8.5 x 11 sheet, write each down followed by a list of appropriate cosmetics. This is probably the most time-consuming step, but, once done, your need to reread that section in search of useful ingredients will be small. I’ve included as an example a part of my list.

- | | |
|---------------------|-------------------------|
| almond oil | skin cleaner |
| St. John’s wort oil | shampoo |
| aloe gel | moisturizer |
| calendula | rinse for red hair |
| burdock | steam, mask |
| tea tree EO | spot treatment for acne |

Step 3. On a second sheet of paper, group the beneficial ingredients by type of cosmetic (eg., cleanser, steam, shampoo, etc.). The following example is from my own list.

- | | |
|---------------|---------------------|
| <u>STEAM</u> | <u>SHAMPOO</u> |
| burdock | St. John’s wort oil |
| chamomile | yarrow |
| lavender | protein |
| licorice root | coltsfoot |
| anise | horsetail |

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Step 4. Identify sources of ingredients and ready-made natural cosmetics. Order catalogs. Research your local stores; don't overlook asking the employee responsible for ordering cosmetics and herbs if they can special order particular items for you. Read labels thoroughly. I have found four "store bought" product lines that truly have natural cosmetics: BeesWork (my favorite), Aubrey Organics, Jurlique, and Geremy Rose. Flora and Omega Nutrition each produce an excellent line of mechanically-pressed vegetable oils, some of which are unrefined. You will invariably encounter on labels ingredients that are not discussed here. Should you want to learn about them you will need to consult other reference books.

Step 5. Assemble a collection of glass jars and bottles, even some plastic ones if you know the plastic will not absorb odors. You can buy these. And you can recycle food and cosmetic containers. When recycling lids with cardboard liners, remove and discard the liners (they cannot be sterilized); if a liner is needed to make a tight seal, use thin rubber sheeting cut to size (available in hardware stores in the plumbing department). Nalgene plastic containers, known to backpackers and chemists for their inertness, are available in camping equipment shops and on the internet. The color of glass affects the ability to block light: Amber glass excludes about 75% of the light, blue glass 50%, while clear glass blocks no light. Different size bottles have different uses: The 1 oz. size is useful for travel and gifts, the 2 oz. size is useful for occasional use, and the 4 oz. size is best for a product that is used regularly. Choose a bottle cap style that provides a tight seal and is re-usable: The best caps are those with a shallow V-shaped plastic insert which ensures a tight fit and which can be popped out for cleaning in between uses; this insert is called a polyseal (PE cone) liner. Even better is to replace the caps with each use.

Step 6. Buy ingredients and ready-made cosmetics. Even though your cost to make a natural cosmetic is relatively low, the cost to purchase a basic set of ingredients is not. You can make successful cosmetics using only a few of the ingredients on your list from step 3. In any cosmetic aim for using at least two or more of any kind of ingredient, e.g., 2+ vegetable oils, 2+ herbs, 2+ essential oils. Select ingredients that can be used in more than one cosmetic, are available, and that are affordable.

Step 7. Store your ingredients together in a cupboard that is cool and dark. Some ingredients will require refrigeration. Repackage loose herbs into glass jars with screw-on lids.

TIP: Store 8 oz. of so of product in dark glass, perhaps in the refrigerator, while keeping 2 oz. in a plastic squeeze bottle in the bathroom for daily use.

Step 8. Make something simple for your first cosmetic. I recommend my favorite toner, or a hair rinse of vinegar and essential oils, or a cuticle oil. NOTE: When you are unsure of a new recipe, make just a small amount as a tester. Enjoy!

TIP: Copy recipes that you use, including the list of herbs for facial steam, onto 3 x 5 cards. Keep the cards with your ingredients. They make a quick and easy reference.

BASIC LIST OF INGREDIENTS

These ingredients constitute a minimum basic set of natural ingredients with which you can make a wide range of cosmetics.

Vegetable Oils

almond
jojoba oil
shea butter

Essential Oils

geranium
juniper
lavender
frankincense

Herbs for Steam

lavender
chamomile
comfrey

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Other

bottled artesian water
apple cider vinegar
clay
powdered oatmeal
rice flour and/or fine cornmeal

I like to have some preparations on hand:

herb blend for facial steam
facial scrub blend
body scrub blend

FOR MORE INFORMATION: BIBLIOGRAPHY

All of my source books can give more information. Each one has a unique attitude and subject matter. Some focus on herbs while others focus on essential oils or diet. I especially recommend those books in the following list indicated with an asterisk (*).

The initial numbers are meant to associate the corresponding book with quoted material in this report.

- (1) Grieve, Mrs. M. *A Modern Herbal*.
- (2) Keller, Erich. *Aromatherapy Handbook*.
- (3) Lavabre, Marcel. *Aromatherapy Workbook*.
- (4) Kushi, Aveline. *Diet for Natural Beauty*.
- (5) Erasmus, Udo. *Fats and Oils*.
This book describes the value of unrefined vegetable oils and the dangers of refined oils. His focus is diet and nutrition, but his opinion is flawed by a bias against saturated fats.
- (6) Peterson, Nicola. *Herbs and Health*.
- (7) Rose, Jeanne. *Jeanne Rose's Herbal Body Book*.
- (8) Rose, Jeanne. *Jeanne Rose's Kitchen Cosmetics*.
- (9) Horrocks, Lorna. *Natural Beauty*.
- (10) Facetti, Aldo. *Natural Beauty*.
- (11) Hampton, Aubrey. *Natural Organic Hair and Skin Care*.
The author is a cosmetic chemist and produces several of his own lines of cosmetics, the principal one being Aubrey Organics, which is sold through natural and health food stores. His product line is consistent with the information presented in the book. The main point I got from this book is that it takes a program of skin care comprised of several focused products to be most effective.
- (12) Tisserand, Robert B. *The Art of Aromatherapy**
This book is considered to be "the standard reference work" since 1977.

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- (13) Worwood, Valerie Ann. *The Complete Book of Essential Oils & Aromatherapy*. *
- (14) Mabey, Richard. *The New Age Herbalist*.
- (15) Kusmirck, Jan, "The Maintenance of Skin Vitality", *International Journal of Aromatherapy*. Autumn 1989, Volume 2, Number 3.
- (16) Sellar, Wanda. *The Directory of Essential Oils*. Great Britain: The C. W. Daniel Company Limited, 1992.
- (17) Tisserand, Maggie. *Aromatherapy for Women*.
- (18) Kowalchik, Claire and William H. Hulyon, ed. *Rodale's Illustrated Encyclopedia of Herbs*. Emmaus, PA: Rodale Press, 1987.
- (19) Hayes, Alan B. *Beauty from the Garden*. Birchgrove, Australia: Sally Milner Publishing, 1991.
- (20) Lawless, Julia. *The Encyclopaedia of Essential Oils*. Rockport, MA: Element, Inc., 1992. Also in Great Britain: Element Books Limited, 1992.*

While the primary part of this book is its information on over 160 essential oils, some of which are fairly obscure, it has an excellent introduction to aromatics which connects herbalism and aromatherapy in a satisfying and useful way. Because of the truly invaluable indices, this book has become my first guide for choosing EOs to treat a particular condition.
- (21) Williams, David. *Lecture Notes on Essential Oils*. London: Eve Taylor Ltd., 1989.
- (22) Loughran, Joni. "Skin-Deep Beauty", *East West*. September 1990.
- (23) Lappé, Frances Moore. *Diet for a Small Planet*. New York: Ballantyne Books, 1982.

This book introduced the concept of relying on complementary proteins from predominately vegetable sources in lieu of animal flesh. Since its publication, this notion has become politically correct; other writers, foremost among them Sally Fallon, have discredited the idea of avoiding animal meats and fats. Appendix E contains tables that compare the protein content of a wide variety of foods, but no oils.
- (24) Hendriksen, Ole. *Seven-Day Skin-Care Program*. New York: MacMillan Publishing Company, 1984.

The author is a skin-care specialist in Hollywood and advocates techniques and homemade cosmetics learned in his native Denmark. He also provides diet advice.
- (25) Lust, John. *The Herb Book*. New York: Bantam Books, 1974.*

The author is the nephew of Dr. Benedict Lust, the father of naturopathy. He also is a naturopath and a student of botanical medicine. The book begins with a history of herbal healing, continues with botanical descriptions and medical uses of 514 individual plants, and concludes with a discussion of the various uses of plants. An excellent reference.
- (26) Haas, Elson M. *Staying Healthy with Nutrition*. Berkeley, CA: Celestial Arts, 1992.

The author is an MD with a practice specializing in preventative medicine and drawing on alternative and integrated healing modalities. At over 1000 pages, this book is easily "the complete guide to diet & nutritional medicine" that its subtitle claims. Much of my information about vitamins came from this book.
- (27) Stuart, Malcom, ed. *The Encyclopedia of Herbs and Herbalism*. New York: Grosset & Dunlap, 1979.

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- (28) Weiss, Gaea and Shandor. *Growing & Using Healing Herbs*. Emmaus, Pennsylvania: The Rodale Press, 1985.
- (29) Gray, Henry. *Anatomy of the Human Body*.
First published in 1858, Gray's *Anatomy* is a perennial classic. This book describes the physical structure of the body, but doesn't address how the body works.
- (30) Schoen, Linda and Paul Lazar, MD. *The Look You Like*. New York: Marcel Drekker, Inc., 1989.
Published under the auspices of Dermatology Services, Inc., a division of the American Academy of Dermatology, this is their position on skin care. I found useful information on the structure and workings of the skin and hair. I ignored their regard for commercial cosmetics.
- (31) Fallon, Sally with Mary G. Enig. *Nourishing Traditions, second edition*. Washington, DC: New Trends Publishing, Inc., 1999.*
Sally Fallon's starting point was the research done by Dr. Weston A. Price and Dr. Frances Pottenger, Jr. in the early 1900s. Mary Enig contributed information on how modern fats have prevailed in the marketplace, to the detriment of human health. This is a cookbook based on the foods that have nourished humans for thousands of years. I met Sally in January 1999 at a seminar that she gave. She literally glowed from the good health that these foods deliver. I highly recommend this book.
- (32) *Marguerite Maury's Guide to Aromatherapy*. Essex, England: C. W. Daniel Company Limited, 1990.
This book was first published by Marguerite Maury in 1961. It is a classic in the aromatherapy community. The book is an accounting of the results she obtained by applying essential oils therapeutically. Her focus was rejuvenation and she was very successful. She originated the concept of the *individual prescription*, a mixture of essential oils "designed to reflect the weaknesses and violence of an individual; it has to compensate for the deficiencies and reduce the excesses."
- (33) Tierra, Michael. *The Way of Herbs*. New York: Pocket Books, 1990.
This book is an excellent herbal which blends the herbal traditions of America, India, and China.
- (34) Keville, Kathi. *Herbs for Health and Healing*. Emmaus, Pennsylvania: Rodale Press, Inc., 1996.*
Another excellent herbal.
- (35) McGarey, William A. *The Oil That Heals*. Virginia Beach, Virginia: A.R.E. Press, 1999.
A comprehensive discussion of the benefits of castor oil.
- (36) Knishinsky, Ray. *The Clay Cure*. Rochester, Vermont: Healing Arts Press, 1998.
A thorough discussion of eating clay—its benefits, which clays to eat, how and when to use it. A nice discussion of the premier edible clay—montmorillonite.
- (37) Sullivan, Krispin. "The Miracle of Vitamin D", *Wise Traditions*. Washington, DC: The Weston A. Price Foundation, Fall 2000. Published in the journal and on their website www.westonaprice.org.
A discussion of vitamin D and its sources, including sunlight.
- (38) Fife, Bruce. *The Healing Miracles of Coconut Oil*. Colorado Springs, CO: HealthWise, 2001.
A fascinating discussion of coconut oil and its uses in nutrition, medicine, weight control, and skin care.
- (39) Dextreit, Raymond. *Our Earth, Our Cure*. Brooklyn, NY: Swan House, 1979.
Mr. Dextreit was a French naturopath whose 43 books were combined into this one, which was subsequently translated into English. To quote the forward, "Mr. Dextreit has mastered the use of *clay* for curative purposes." I appreciate the book primarily for its detailed discussion of clay and its medicinal uses.

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- (40) Catty, Suzanne. *Hydrosols, The Next Aromatherapy*. Rochester, VT: Healing Arts Press, 2001.*
This unique book has monographs on 68 (!) hydrosols. It also has many details on the uses of hydrosols—medicinal, cosmetic, and culinary.
- (41) Hobday, Richard. *The Healing Sun*. Findhorn, Scotland: Findhorn Press, 1999.
Subtitled “Sunlight and Health in the 21st Century” this book explains the modern notion of sun exposure as dangerous to be incorrect.