

# Make Rose Soap Petals

The discovery of soap was one of the most important in human history. Just think about all the things we use soap for, from keeping clothes and dishes clean to sanitation in hospitals.

Today we make some kinds of soap using lye (which is leached from ashes), oils, and water, or we can buy ready made glycerin for our crafts. For this activity you'll use a ready made glycerin base to create elegant rose petal hand soaps—a far cry from the harsh lye soaps of yesteryear!



## What You Need:

- Silk rose petals, available from craft stores (you can also buy a silk rose and remove the petals)
- ½ pound glycerin soap base, available at most craft stores
- Soap fragrance, available at most craft stores
- Styrofoam (you can use a large scrap piece or takeout box or just about anything)
- Toothpicks
- Craft sticks
- Pyrex measuring cup
- Microwave

## What You Do:

1. Cut the soap base into 1 inch cubes, about 1 cup's worth, and place them into the Pyrex measuring cup.
2. Take 10 or 20 petals and put a toothpick through the base of each one of them. You will use the toothpick as a handle so leave it in the petal. Set these aside.
3. Place the soap in the microwave and heat it for 30 second intervals. Stir with a craft stick in between. It is very important that you only heat it for 30 seconds at a time. Do this until it is melted and remove from the microwave.
4. Quickly add 2-3 drops of fragrance and stir.
5. Dip each petal into the soap and then stick the other end of the toothpick into the styrofoam so that the petal can dry. If your soap cools, you can heat it at 30 second intervals again.
6. When the petals have cooled and are dried you can remove the toothpicks. Store the petals in an airtight glass jar for long term storage. You can package several in a plastic bag with a ribbon for a gift. They also make great individual soaps for kids. Simply toss the rose petal away when you are done.

## Did You Know?

- The process of oil and lye (sodium hydroxide) turning into soap is called saponification.
- Ashes contain potassium hydroxide which makes soap much softer. They often would have pieces of fat in their soap as well. Because they would use what they had on hand, soap-making was not an exact science, making the soap very harsh and somewhat unpleasant.
- Today soap is often made with vegetable oils. One of the most sought after soaps is olive oil soap.
- Lye is a strong acid but it becomes something very mild as it reacts with the water and oil and cures to become soap.
- The discovery of soap was accidental. A mix of animal fats with ashes mixed with water and caused an observer in the early Roman empire to notice a foaming action.

