

how to make natural soy candles

How to make natural soy candles is a rewarding and enjoyable craft that allows you to create beautiful, aromatic pieces for your home or as gifts. Soy candles are a popular choice for many crafters and candle enthusiasts because they are made from natural soy wax, which is a renewable resource. Unlike paraffin candles, soy candles burn cleaner, producing less soot and harmful toxins, making them a healthier option for you and the environment. In this article, we will explore the step-by-step process of making natural soy candles, along with tips and tricks for achieving the best results.

Understanding Soy Wax

Before diving into the candle-making process, it's essential to understand what soy wax is and why it is favored for candle making.

What is Soy Wax?

Soy wax is a natural wax derived from the oil of soybeans. It is a biodegradable and renewable resource, making it a more environmentally friendly option compared to traditional paraffin wax, which is derived from petroleum. Soy wax has several advantages:

- Clean Burning: Produces minimal soot when burned.
- Longer Burn Time: Soy wax candles generally burn longer than paraffin candles.
- Easy to Work With: Melts at a lower temperature, making it easier to handle and pour.
- Excellent Scent Throw: Soy wax holds fragrance well, providing a pleasant aroma when burned.

Types of Soy Wax

When selecting soy wax for your candles, you will find several types available in the market:

1. Soy Wax Flakes: These are the most common form and are easy to melt and pour.
2. Soy Wax Blocks: Less common, but can be used similarly to flakes.
3. Blended Soy Wax: Sometimes mixed with other natural waxes, such as coconut wax, to enhance performance.

Choose the type that best suits your needs and preferences when making natural soy candles.

Essential Supplies for Making Natural Soy Candles

To start your candle-making journey, you'll need some basic supplies. Below is a list of essential items and optional tools that will make the process smoother.

Basic Supplies

1. Soy Wax: Choose high-quality soy wax flakes.
2. Wicks: Cotton or wooden wicks are popular choices for soy candles.
3. Fragrance Oils: Use natural fragrance oils or essential oils for scent.
4. Dyes (Optional): If you want colored candles, opt for candle dyes specifically meant for soy wax.
5. Candle Containers: Glass jars, metal tins, or silicone molds work well.
6. Thermometer: To monitor the melting and pouring temperatures.
7. Double Boiler or Melting Pot: For melting the wax safely.
8. Stirring Utensil: A wooden spoon or a silicone spatula for mixing.
9. Scale: To measure wax and fragrance accurately.

Optional Supplies

- Candle Pouring Pitcher: Makes it easier to pour melted wax into containers.
- Wick Holder: Keeps the wick centered while the wax hardens.
- Labeling Supplies: For personalizing your candles.

Step-by-Step Guide to Making Natural Soy Candles

Now that you have your supplies ready, let's walk through the process of making natural soy candles.

Step 1: Prepare Your Work Area

Before you begin, ensure you have a clean, well-ventilated workspace. Lay down newspaper or a protective covering to catch any spills and make cleanup easier. Gather all your supplies within reach.

Step 2: Measure the Wax

Using your scale, measure out the amount of soy wax you will need. A general rule of thumb is to fill your container to the top and then approximately double it to account for shrinkage. For example, if you have a 10-ounce container, you will need about 20 ounces of wax.

Step 3: Melt the Wax

1. Fill your double boiler with water and place it on the stove over medium heat.
2. Add the measured wax flakes into the top pot of the double boiler.
3. Stir occasionally until the wax is fully melted. Use your thermometer to monitor the temperature; aim for around 170-180°F (76-82°C).

Step 4: Add Fragrance and Color

Once the wax is melted, remove it from the heat and allow it to cool slightly. If you're adding fragrance oil or dye:

- Fragrance: Add 1 ounce of fragrance oil per pound of wax for a strong scent. Adjust according to your preference.
- Dye: If you want colored candles, add dye at this stage and stir thoroughly until the color is evenly distributed.

Step 5: Prepare the Containers and Wicks

1. While the wax is cooling, prepare your candle containers:
 - Clean them thoroughly and ensure they are dry.
 - Secure the wick in the center of the container using wick stickers or a small amount of melted wax.
2. If using a wick holder, position it to keep the wick centered.

Step 6: Pour the Wax

Once the wax has cooled to around 150-160°F (65-71°C), it's time to pour:

1. Carefully pour the melted wax into the prepared containers, leaving about half an inch of space at the top.
2. Pour slowly to minimize air bubbles and ensure an even fill.

Step 7: Secure the Wick and Allow to Cool

If you're using a wick holder, ensure the wick remains centered while the wax cools. Allow the candles to cool completely at room temperature, which may take several hours.

Step 8: Trim the Wicks

Once the candles have fully hardened, trim the wick to about 1/4 inch above the wax surface. This will ensure a clean burn.

Step 9: Cure the Candles

For the best scent throw, allow your soy candles to cure for at least 48 hours before burning. This is especially important if you used fragrance oils, as it helps the scent to fully develop.

Step 10: Label and Enjoy

If you're gifting your candles or want to keep track of scents, consider labeling them. You can use decorative stickers, tags, or write directly on the container. Once labeled, your candles are ready to be enjoyed or gifted!

Tips for Successful Candle Making

- Test different wick sizes to find the best match for your container.
- Experiment with various fragrance combinations to create unique scents.
- Keep a notebook to document your recipes and adjustments for future batches.
- Be patient; perfecting your technique may take a few tries.

Conclusion

Making natural soy candles is not only a fun and creative activity, but it also allows you to produce beautiful, eco-friendly products that can enhance your home or serve as thoughtful gifts. By following the steps outlined in this guide, you can create candles that are not only visually appealing but also provide a wonderful aroma and a clean burn. Remember to have fun, experiment with different fragrances, and enjoy the process of crafting your very own soy candles!

Frequently Asked Questions

What ingredients do I need to make natural soy candles?

To make natural soy candles, you'll need soy wax, candle wicks, essential oils or fragrance oils (if desired), a double boiler or a microwave-safe container, and candle containers or molds.

How do I prepare the soy wax for candle making?

Start by measuring the amount of soy wax you need based on your container size. Melt the soy wax in a double boiler or microwave, heating it to around 170-180°F (77-82°C) until fully melted.

How do I add fragrance to my soy candles?

Once the soy wax is melted, remove it from heat and allow it to cool slightly before adding fragrance oil. A general guideline is to use 1 ounce of fragrance oil per pound of wax. Stir well to ensure even distribution.

What type of wick should I use for soy candles?

Choose a wick that is specifically designed for soy wax. Cotton or wood wicks work well. The wick size should correspond to the diameter of your container to ensure an even burn.

How do I pour the melted wax into the containers?

Secure the wick in the center of the container using a wick holder or adhesive. Slowly pour the melted soy wax into the container, leaving a small amount of wax in the pot to top off the candle if needed after it cools.

How long should I let my soy candles cure before burning them?

Allow your soy candles to cure for at least 48 hours before burning, although letting them cure for 1-2 weeks can enhance the scent throw and overall performance.

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