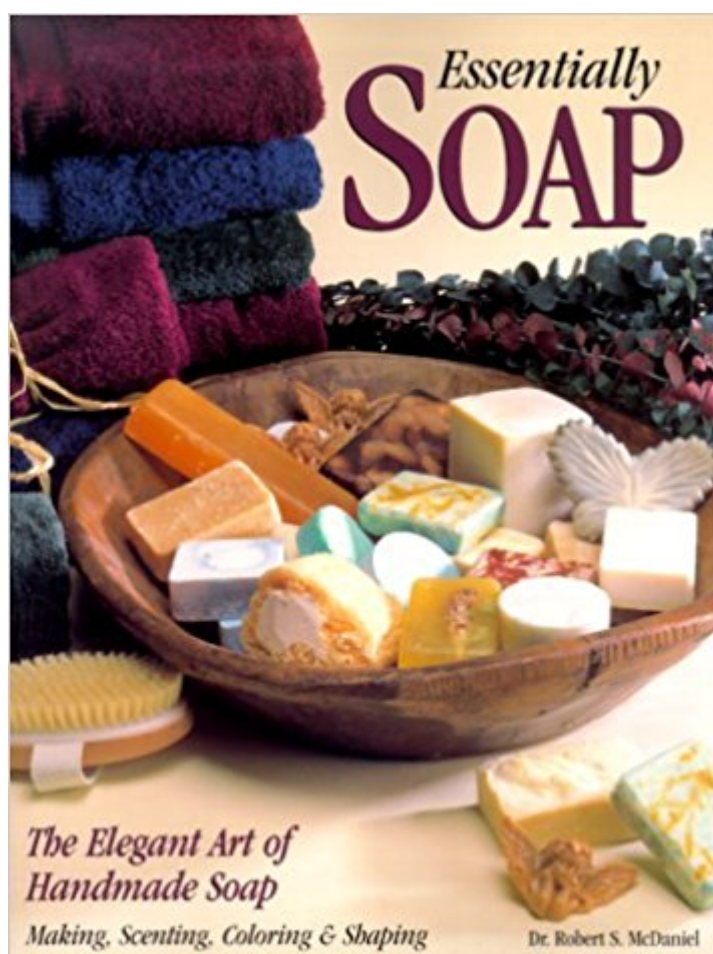


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# Essentially Soap: The Elegant Art Of Handmade Soap Making, Scenting, Coloring & Shaping



## Synopsis

No longer satisfied with mass-produced soaps? The author shows how to create special soaps with the right scent, emollients and appearance. He demonstrates how to work with fragrances, skin treatments, colours and shapes, and discusses the aromatherapy benefits associated with many essential oils.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Dr. Bob does a fine job of bringing the past to the present in methods of soap making in one book. So rare it is to find a book that mentions current methods and still isn't stuck in 1970's Ann Bramson's method. We have gone so far beyond Ms. Bramson now. The book starts with some ancient history on soap making and brings us up to present day. I like that he mentions my favorite story, "The urine collectors". Hahahaha, I don't know why I like that story so much, but I think it is fun. :) There are a couple of cartoons and some actual photos of how to leach the lye from wood ash. So many people have asked me how to do that and this is a fine section on describing the process with photos so now I can just recommend this book! And no, you don't need to collect Roman urine. ;) There are two good sections to get you started with glycerin Melt & Pour, and Rebatching. Dr. Bob gives the basics and gets you thinking with some ideas which he explains quite well. He gives a good method of remelting soap which should work for you every time, unlike other books which have attempted that topic. I don't know why, on page 36, Dr. Bob just didn't buy the matching end cap for that PVC pipe... It is a lot easier than using saran wrap or making a wax plug.... but that

works too. I have to laugh when I see the scale pictured throughout the book. How did that scale get so clean! haaha. Mine is all marred up from lye spills and goo and raw soaps. A nice, new scale just looks odd to me, haahaa. This book is really very good for the person who has never made soap. Dr. Bob puts the chemistry in to English and has a well thought out plan for presenting the information. He starts at the beginning, covers the nonlye methods first, like a beginner is likely to approach soap making. Later he does get in to the meat of the matter and gives good, clear instructions on how to make soap with lye, and does it safely. There is also lots of other information here that isn't usually found in soap making books, such as an essential oil section. He covers the chemical make up of numerous essential oils which will give you an idea on how they will react in soap making. Also included are what their basic uses are in aromatherapy and medicinal. Very nice touch to the book! In the cold process soap making recipe section he actually gives the Grams amounts AND the US equivalents! Hurray! You can use which method you understand. Not all of us are chemist geeks or Canadian. Some of us still use good old American Ounces and Pounds for everything. The oils section is very good, giving the percent of unsaponifiables in each oil, with other valuable information such as the basic composition of the particular oil or fat. This takes that guess work out of writing recipes. Using this book you're able to write very good recipes for soap making because you actually know why which oil works in what ways. Very valuable information that I haven't seen in any book before. :) It is a more scientific approach to recipe writing that I'm sure is going to be discussed in length on the soap making email chat lists. This book is really geared towards the brand new soap maker, however, there is an awful lot of information that is of interest to the seasoned soap maker. Those who have been making soap for years will find so much they can work with to refine their skill. Like Ann Bamson's book before it, this one will always be close at hand. You will be referring to it for years to come. Is it worth the price? OOOhhh Yes!

I am a soap maker with a definite affection for the chemistry behind the art of making the perfect bar of soap. I have many books on soap making, but this book is the one I grab when I want to formulate a new recipe. Say what you want about this book, the author's assertion that he has the winning "INS" number formula has been proven over and over again by my batches. I've never had a bad batch using these calculations. Now, I can't vouch for \*his\* recipes, his lye calculations, the beauty of his soaps, etc. It's just responsible to run any recipe through a lye calculator as well as calculating the correct water amount. Read this book if you enjoy chemistry and understanding the "whys" of a craft in order to create your OWN recipes that will work. As a soap maker, I don't want to simply copy anyone's recipe; I want to make it my own and take pride in it.

Dr. McDaniel's book is a great reference for those who are seasoned soapers as well as beginners looking for an introduction. One of the reasons this book is superior to others is the fact that the photos are instructional as opposed to decorative. For example, on page 57, he has wonderful photos demonstrating what trace looks like and how it behaves. I LOVED that because trace was the most elusive thing for me. People described it till they were blue in the face and I still didn't get it. It wasn't till I saw the photo that the "Aha!" moment came. The recipes that he features are a mixed bag. There are the simple ones for beginners, cheap ones for us misers, luxurious ones for the fancy folks, facial soaps, shampoos, milk soaps, and even pet shampoos! Also included is a SAP table complete with KOH values and INS values, directions on how to use it, how to calculate water for your own recipes. It also includes directions on how to rebatch soap and of course, the obligatory melt-and-pours. What I found fascinating was the directions on how to make your own potash and how to make your own essential oils. This guy really goes over how to make everything. For those of us interested in learning about the soapmaking process from scratch, this book is indispensable! On top of all the good information, you really feel like the author has a deep understanding of the subject. The only thing I would change, if I could, is I would ask Dr. McDaniel to also include information on hot process soap making. He covered everything else, I wondered why he didn't at least provide a cursory explanation of the process. All in all, if you can only get ONE book on soapmaking, this is it. (Though how could you possibly just get one? Who has that much will power?)

A good primer for soap making. It was my first book (and the only one I use now) and is my go-to reference on the subject. About 6 years and 35 batches of cold-processed soap (up to 26 pounds at a time -- the last of which was yesterday) later, I still use it for the information it contains. It contains enough information that I have experimented with my own recipes since batch one, but there are plenty in the book for those more inclined to just follow directions.

This book is the best go-to for beginners. Dr. McDaniel not only explains the how, he gives you the why. The recipes are filled with ingredients that you can buy at a local grocery store (except the lye). He walks you through the process and explains what you may have done wrong. I reference this all the time.

Only gives the basic information. Doesn't go into depth much on any of the topics. Leaves me having

to go look at my other books for more information.

I wouldn't make this my primary, or sole book in soap making collection, but this is a decent book. It has a good deal of pictures, more than the one or two soap making recipes that most books have. I like the fact that the book will teach you how to make your own recipes as well. I like the scientific based approach the book takes with the various oils you can use in soap making. This shouldn't be a beginner soap making book as it does leave out some basic info, but it is well worth the read.

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