

Beginner Herbalist Mini Book

*A Practical Guide
to Using Herbs*



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Introduction

What It Means to Be an Herbalist

Herbalism is the art of working with plants for wellbeing, nourishment, and connection.

You don't need a forest hut, a garden, or a witchy lineage - only curiosity, care, and patience.

To be an herbalist is to slow down, observe, and learn the language of nature.

It's science and intuition. Tradition and experimentation.

It's making tea with intention, noticing how your body responds, and building a relationship with plants over time.

This mini book is your doorway into that world.



How Herbs Work

Energetics & Constituents

Herbal Energetics (Beginner-Friendly)

- Energetics describe how a plant feels in the body:
- -Warming vs Cooling
- -Moistening vs Drying
- -Relaxing vs Stimulating

Examples:

- -Ginger warms and moves.
- -Chamomile soothes and releases tension.
- -Marshmallow moisturises dryness.
- Energetics help you choose the right herb for the right person - not just the condition.



Constituents (Beginner-Friendly)

Plants contain different chemical families that contribute to their actions:

- Volatile oils - aromatic, calming (lavender, mint)
- Mucilage - soothing, moistening (marshmallow, plantain)
- Tannins - tightening, toning (rose, blackberry leaf)
- Bitters - digestive, stimulating (dandelion, gentian)
- Flavonoids - antioxidant, protective (chamomile, hawthorn)

You don't need to memorise these - just recognise the basics.

Safety Foundations For Beginners



Herbalism is generally gentle, but still requires care:

- -Start with one herb at a time so you know how your body responds.
- -Avoid herbs if pregnant/breastfeeding unless you've researched them or have guidance.
- -Learn your allergies.
- -When reading about herbs online, ensure sources are reputable.
- -For wellbeing claims: herbs can support balance, comfort, mood, digestion, sleep - but they don't diagnose or treat disease.

Simple Rule: If something feels off, stop.

Plants should work with your body, not against it.

Herbal Preparation

Basic

INFUSIONS (Herbal Tea)

Best for leaves, flowers, soft aromatic plants (mint, chamomile, lemon balm).

Method:

- 1–2 tsp dried herb per cup
- Pour boiling water
- Cover and steep 10–20 mins
- Strain & enjoy

Covering keeps the aromatic oils from escaping.

DECOCTIONS

For roots, barks, seeds, tougher materials (ginger root, cinnamon, hawthorn berries).

Method:

- 1 tbs dried herb per 2 cups water
- Simmer 15–30 mins
- Strain

HERBAL OILS (Infused Oils)

Used for skincare, balms, massage.

Method:

- Fill jar $\frac{1}{3}$ with dried herb
- Cover with oil (olive, jojoba, sunflower)
- Let sit 4–6 weeks, shaking occasionally or warm gently for 1–2 hours on low heat

SALVES/BALMS

Solid herbal moisturisers for lips, hands, and dry skin.

Basic Ratio:

- 1 cup infused oil
- 15–20g beeswax
- Melt, stir, pour into tins, let set.

TINCTURES

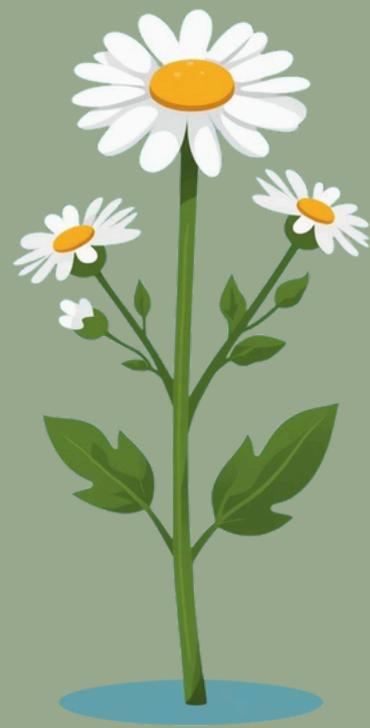
Alcohol-based extracts, long-lasting and strong.

Method:

- Fill jar halfway with dried herb
- Cover with vodka (40%)
- Label + steep 6 weeks
- Strain into dropper bottles

Chamomile

(Matricaria chamomilla)



Energetics: Cooling • Relaxing • Slightly drying

Constituents: Volatile oils, flavonoids, bitters

Personality: The soft comforter

Overview:

Chamomile is one of the gentlest herbs and a perfect introduction to plant work. It soothes the nervous system, settles the stomach, and helps the body unwind after tension or long days.

Traditional Wellbeing Uses:

Supports relaxation, digestion after meals, and a sense of calm.

How to Use:

- Infusion: 1–2 tsp flowers, steep 10–15 minutes
- Lovely mixed with lemon balm or rose

How it feels:

Warm cups that soften the edges of stress and release held tension.

Cautions:

Avoid if you have allergies to daisies (Asteraceae family).

Lemon Balm

(*Melissa officinalis*)



Energetics: Cooling • Moistening • Uplifting

Constituents: Volatile oils, tannins, flavonoids

Personality: The sunny mood-lifter

Overview:

Lemon balm smells like sunshine and has a bright, uplifting presence. It's known for supporting emotional balance and helping with nervous energy.

Traditional Wellbeing Uses:

Supports calm mood, rest, and digestion when tension is involved.

How to Use:

- Infusion: 1–2 tsp leaves, steep 10 minutes
- Excellent blended with chamomile or mint

How it feels:

A gentle exhale. Like opening a window in a stuffy room.

Cautions:

Generally very safe.

Peppermint

(*Mentha piperita*)



Energetics: Cooling • Drying • Stimulating

Constituents: Menthol, volatile oils, tannins

Personality: The clear-headed refresher

Overview:

Peppermint awakens the senses and supports a calm, comfortable digestive system. It clears the mind and brings an invigorating freshness.

Traditional Wellbeing Uses:

Supports digestion after meals, refreshing energy, and mental clarity.

How to Use:

- Infusion: 1 tsp leaves, steep 5–10 minutes
- Combine with lemon balm for a balanced blend

How it feels:

Cooling, opening, slightly energising.

Cautions:

Not ideal for people who run cold energetically.

Lavender

(*Lavandula angustifolia*)



Energetics: Cooling • Drying • Relaxing

Constituents: Volatile oils (linalool, linalyl acetate)

Personality: The tranquil harmoniser

Overview:

Lavender supports relaxation on both emotional and physical levels. Its scent alone can help create peace in the body-mind.

Traditional Wellbeing Uses:

Supports calm, sleep routines, and gentle stress relief.
Great for skin as an infused oil.

How to Use:

- Tea: A small pinch added to blends
- Oil: Infuse dried buds in jojoba/olive oil 4–6 weeks

How it feels:

Softening, harmonising, a slow breath out.

Cautions:

Strong flavour - best used sparingly internally.

Plantain (*Plantago major/lanceolata*)



Energetics: Cooling • Moistening • Drawing

Constituents: Mucilage, tannins, allantoin

Personality: The herbal first-aider

Overview:

Plantain is a classic wild ally, known for its soothing, moisturising qualities. Excellent for skin preparations and teas.

Traditional Wellbeing Uses:

Supports skin comfort, general soothing, and balance.

How to Use:

- Tea: 1–2 tsp dried leaf
- Oil: Infuse for salves and balms
- Fresh poultice: Crushed leaf applied externally

How it feels:

Cooling and soothing; like placing a calm hand over irritation.

Cautions:

Very gentle and safe.

Calendula

(*Calendula officinalis*)



Energetics: Warming • Drying • Moving

Constituents: Resins, flavonoids, saponins

Personality: The golden healer

Overview:

Calendula is bright, cheerful, and deeply supportive for skin preparations. Traditionally used in balms, oils, and teas.

Traditional Wellbeing Uses:

Supports skin comfort, lymphatic movement, and overall vitality.

How to Use:

- Oil: Infuse dried flowers (never fresh - they spoil)
- Tea: 1 tsp petals

How it feels:

Warming, uplifting, cleansing in a gentle way.

Cautions:

Avoid if you have Asteraceae allergies.

Rose

(*Rosa spp.*)



Energetics: Cooling • Moistening • Opening

Constituents: Volatile oils, flavonoids, tannins

Personality: The heart softener

Overview:

Rose is more than romantic - it's a steady emotional support herb. It tones, cools, and comforts both body and spirit.

Traditional Wellbeing Uses:

Supports emotional balance, tension release, and a sense of grounded openness.

How to Use:

- Tea: 1 tsp petals
- Glycerite or tincture: Beautiful in blends
- Add to skin oils for a gentle aromatic touch

How it feels:

Heart-softening, cooling, and harmonising.

Cautions:

Choose unsprayed petals only.

Ginger

(Zingiber officinale)



Energetics: Warming • Stimulating • Drying

Constituents: Gingerols, shogaols, essential oils

Personality: The fire-starter

Overview:

Ginger brings warmth, movement, and energy. Often used in teas for cold days or to support comfortable digestion.

Traditional Wellbeing Uses:

Supports warmth, circulation, and digestive ease.

How to Use:

- Decoction: Simmer slices 10–20 minutes
- Great combined with lemon or mint

How it feels:

Warming from the inside out, activating, moving.

Cautions:

Avoid large amounts if you run hot or are very sensitive.

Marshmallow Root

(*Althaea officinalis*)



Energetics: Cooling • Moistening • Softening

Constituents: Mucilage, flavonoids

Personality: The gentle hydrator

Overview:

Marshmallow root is incredibly soothing and moistening, ideal when there is dryness or irritation.

Traditional Wellbeing Uses:

Supports comfort, hydration, and gentle mucous membrane soothing.

How to Use:

- Cold infusion: 1 tbsp root in cool water for 4–6 hours
- Creates a silky, soothing tea

How it feels:

Like a soft, cool blanket inside the body.

Cautions:

Space away from medications by 2 hours (the mucilage may slow absorption).

Nettle

(*Urtica dioica*)



Energetics: Drying • Nutritive • Strengthening

Constituents: Minerals (iron, calcium, magnesium), chlorophyll, flavonoids

Personality: The nourishing tonic

Overview:

Nettle is a deeply nourishing herb, rich in minerals and perfect for long-term tonic teas.

Traditional Wellbeing Uses:

Supports general vitality, nourishment, and seasonal wellbeing.

How to Use:

- Infusion: 1–2 tbsp for a strong nourishing tea
- Steep 20–40 minutes for mineral extraction

How it feels:

Strengthening, grounding, earthy.

Cautions:

Drying - pair with moistening herbs if you tend to dryness.

Building Your First Home Apothecary



Start small - you only need:

- 6–10 herbs you genuinely use
- Jars with labels
- A notebook for observations
- A strainer, pot, and small funnel
- A cupboard or shelf away from sunlight
- Oil (jojoba or olive)
- Beeswax pellets
- A little box or basket for tools (mortar, spoons, droppers)

Tip: Keep everything simple and beautiful - your apothecary should feel like a sacred corner.

Harvesting, Drying & Storing Herbs



Harvesting

- Choose sunny, dry days - morning after dew.
- Always leave plenty for pollinators and regrowth.
- Take only what you'll use.

Drying

- Spread herbs thinly in a warm, airy, dark space.
- Avoid damp or mould.
- Dry until crisp.

Storing

- Use glass jars, label with name + date.
- Keep away from sunlight and heat.
- Most herbs last 1 year when dried properly.

Plant Spirit Connection

Plants have personality. Being with them teaches presence.

Ways to connect:

- Sit with a plant for 2 minutes a day
- Notice its shape, scent, temperature
- Drink a cup of tea and observe how it makes you feel
- Keep a plant journal
- Walk in nature and notice which plants draw your eye

Connection is the root of herbalism - not perfection.



Beginner-Friendly Herbal Recipes

1. Calming Evening Tea

A soft, soothing bedtime blend.

Ingredients:

- 1 tsp chamomile
- 1 tsp lemon balm
- Optional: pinch of lavender or rose

Method:

Steep in hot water 10–15 minutes.

Sip while winding down.

2. Uplifting Morning Herbal Tea

A bright, refreshing start.

Ingredients:

- 1 tsp peppermint
- 1 tsp lemon balm
- A slice of fresh ginger (optional)

Method:

Steep 5–10 minutes.

Great for clearing the mind.

3. Cooling Rose Mint Iced Tea

Perfect for warm days or when you want something refreshing.

Ingredients:

- 1 tsp rose petals
- 1–2 tsp peppermint
- Honey or lemon to taste (optional)

Method:

Make a strong tea → cool → pour over ice.



4. Simple Ginger Decoction

A cosy warming drink.

Ingredients:

- 4–5 slices fresh ginger
- 2 cups water

Method:

Simmer 10–20 minutes.

Add lemon if desired.



5. The Beginner's Herbal Infused Oil

Use for balms, massage, or simple skin care.

Ingredients:

- Dried lavender or calendula
- Jojoba or olive oil

Method:

Fill a jar $\frac{1}{3}$ with herbs → cover with oil → infuse 4–6 weeks (or gently warm 1–2 hours).

Strain and store.

6. Lavender & Calendula Balm

A soft, gentle salve for dry skin.

Ingredients:

- ½ cup infused oil (lavender or calendula)
- 10g beeswax

Method:

Melt beeswax into the oil → pour into tins → cool.

That's it!



7. Mint & Rose Facial Steam

A simple herbal beauty ritual.

Ingredients:

- Handful dried rose petals
- Small handful peppermint

Method:

Add herbs to a bowl → pour hot water → drape towel over head → steam 5 minutes.



8. Lemon Balm Herbal Honey

Gorgeous in tea or on toast.

Ingredients:

- Fresh or dried lemon balm
- Honey

Method:

Fill a small jar ¼ with lemon balm → cover with honey → stir → infuse 1–2 weeks.

9. Beginner Herbal Sugar Scrub

For soft, glowing skin.

Ingredients:

- 1 cup sugar
- ½ cup infused oil (lavender, rose, or calendula)
- Few drops natural vanilla or lavender (optional)

Method:

Mix → store in jar → use gently on damp skin.



10. Calendula Glow Oil

Bright, sunny skin-supportive oil.

Ingredients:

- Dried calendula
- Jojoba or sweet almond oil

Method:

Infuse 4–6 weeks → strain.

Use 3–4 drops on skin as needed.



11. Rose Water Mist (Super Simple Version)

A dreamy botanical spray.

Ingredients:

- 1 tbsp dried rose petals
- 1 cup hot water

Method:

Steep 20 minutes → strain → cool → pour into spray bottle.

Use within 1–2 days (fresh preparation).

12. Herbal Bath Soak

A relaxing bath ritual.

Ingredients:

- 1 tbsp chamomile
- 1 tbsp lavender
- 1 tbsp rose
- Optional: 1–2 tbsp oat flour

Method:

Put herbs in a muslin bag or sock → drop into bath.

13. Nettle Nourishing Tea (Mineral Rich)

Great as a daily gentle tonic.

Ingredients:

- 1 tbsp nettle leaf

Method:

Steep 20–40 minutes for maximum nourishment.

14. Marshmallow Cold Infusion (Silky + Soothing)

A hydrating, gentle tea.

Ingredients:

- 1 tbsp marshmallow root
- 2 cups cool water

Method:

Steep 4–6 hours → strain → drink slowly.

15. Herbal Room & Energy Spray

Freshen a room or create calm atmosphere.

Ingredients:

- Small spray bottle
- 50% water, 50% witch hazel
- 10 drops lavender or peppermint essential oil
- Optional: a pinch of dried rose petals inside the bottle

Method:

Shake before use.

Avoid spraying on skin if using essential oils.

Shelf Life

Herbal creations don't last forever.

Simple guide:

- Fresh teas: same day
- Infused oils: 6–12 months
- Balms: 6–12 months
- Scrubs: 1–3 months
- Herbal honey: 3–6 months
- Water-based mists: 1–2 days (unless preserved)

If it smells “off”, change colour, or grows anything - compost it.



What To Do Next



Now that you've met your gentle beginner herbs, here are simple next steps to continue your herbal journey with ease:

1. Start Small

Choose 3–5 herbs you feel drawn to and begin a tiny home apothecary with clean jars, labels, and a few basics like oils, honey, and shea butter.

2. Apprentice Yourself to One Herb

Pick ONE herb and work with it for two weeks - as a tea, an oil, a seasoning, or a bath. Notice how it makes you feel.

3. Keep a Simple Herbal Journal

Write short notes about taste, sensations, mood, and the recipes you try. This is how confidence grows.

4. Make One New Recipe Each Week

Try a tea blend, a soothing oil, or a balm. Keep it fun, light, and experimental.

5. Notice the Plants Around You

On walks, observe leaf shapes, colours, and what grows naturally around you. Awareness is the first step to becoming an herbalist.

6. Connect for Support

Join herbal spaces - online communities, garden groups, foraging walks, or podcasts - to stay inspired and supported.

7. Follow the Seasons

Work with lighter teas in spring, oils in summer, syrups in autumn, and warming blends in winter. Let nature guide you.

Your Herbal Journey Has Only Just Begun

Thank you for walking this first chapter of your herbal journey.

- You've met your beginner herbs.
- You've learned the gentle ways they work.
- You've made your first recipes,

You've opened a doorway many never think to step through.

Where you go next is entirely yours:

- Brew a daily cup of tea
- Make one simple recipe each week
- Keep noticing the plants around you
- Let each season teach you something new



A Garden's Gift

May every leaf you brew and blend
bring quiet healing, gentle mend.

May herbs remind you day by day
that soft is strong in every way.

Wherever tender green things grow,
the path of peace is yours to know.



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