

Hot Process Series: Crock Pot Camo

Tutorial by Anne-Marie Faiola

Ever wondered what the difference is between CPOP, HPOP, and CPHP? I'm hoping to set the record straight when it comes to various methods of using heat to aid in the soapmaking process. Or, at the very least, I've set out to tell my own accounts of what happens when I attempt these different methods. We've already visited CPOP, so next up let's take a look at CPHP.

Recipe and Tools:

6.25 oz. Coconut Oil	1.4 oz Sleigh Ride Fragrance Oil
1.25 oz. Meadowfoam Oil	1/2 teaspoon Burgundy Oxide
8.25 oz. Olive Oil	1/2 teaspoon Yellow Oxide
6.25 oz. Palm Oil	1/2 teaspoon Hydrated Chrome Green
1.25 oz. Sweet Almond Oil	1.5 Tablespoons Sunflower Oil (or any liquid oil)
1.25 oz. Shea butter	2 pound Wood Loaf Mold with Wingnuts
3.5 oz. Sodium Hydroxide (Lye)	Crock Pot
8.25 oz. Distilled Water	

CPHP: Crock Pot Hot Process. This method of using hot process calls for heat being applied through the use of a crock pot (or a double boiler or jacketed soup tureen). Like the oven's purpose in CPOP, the crock pot in CPHP facilitates holding the temperature of the soap at or above 160 degrees, speeding up the saponification process. Remember from the CPOP post that according to Professor Kevin M. Dunn, author of Caveman Chemistry and Scientific Soapmaking, heat speeds along the saponification process. The major difference is that CPHP cooks the soap before it goes into the mold instead of after, which gives the finished soap a more rustic look. Scroll to the end of the tutorial for some FAQs!

COLOR PREP: Disperse the pigments in 1/2 Tablespoon of liquid oil each. Use a mini mixer to make quick work of the dispersing, but be sure to saturate the powdered pigments in the oil with the tip of the mixer before turning it on (or you'll wind up with a bit of a mess!).

MOLD PREP: Line the Wood Mold with freezer paper shiny side up. In this tutorial, I used an early-release exclusive-to-Bramble Berry silicone liner for the 2 pound molds. Want to know when we receive the full stock? Send an email to SMA@brambleberry.com and we'll be sure to keep you in the loop!

SAFETY FIRST: Suit up for safe handling practices! Goggles, gloves, and long sleeves are your soap making uniform. Be sure that kids and pets are out of the house or unable to access your soaping space, and always soap in a well-ventilated area. Make sure the soap volume will not fill up more than half of your crock pot. If you have never made cold process soap before, I highly recommend you get a couple of basic recipes under your belt before trying out this tutorial. Check out this (free!) 4-part series on cold process soap making, especially the episode on lye safety. Bramble Berry carries quite a few books on the topic as well, including this downloadable e-book on making cold process soap.



1. Slowly and carefully add the lye to the water. Stir until clear, then set aside to cool.
2. Melt and combine the Palm and Coconut Oils. Add the Shea Butter to the warmed oils and still until melted. Add the Meadowfoam, Olive, and Sweet Almond Oil and stir to combine. Pour the oils into your Crock Pot's pot. Slowly add the lye water to the oils.
3. Mix with a stick blender until a thick trace is achieved.
4. Put the lid on the Crock Pot and set it to low. After 15 minutes, check the soap to see the progress made. Starting from the outside, the texture and color of the soap will start to change. If the middle does not appear to be changing, stir the batch to ensure even cooking. Don't be surprised if the soap starts to grow in volume and tries to climb out of the pot. Do not leave your soap unattended in the first 30 minutes of cook time for this reason. If the soap gets too high in the pot, take the pot off heat and stir like crazy.
5. The batch will be ready when it's the texture of mashed potatoes. This may take another 15 minute session or even two or three more stir'n'waits. When you think it's ready, use a pH strip to test the levels. It should be showing below a 10. Be sure not to overcook the soap; you don't want too dry a texture for the next steps!



NOTE: The amount of time that the soap takes in the Crock Pot phase can depend on the size and shape of your Crock Pot. The flatter ones meant for roasts may go a bit quicker because the soap will be spread out thinner on the heated surface. The crock pot in the Soap Queen Lab is a stainless steel industrial one, so my soap cooked fairly quickly.

6. When the soap is ready, add the Sleigh Ride Fragrance Oil and mix well. Split the soap into three even parts (you can totally eyeball this part).

7. Color one split batch with 1/2 teaspoon of the dispersed Burgundy Oxide, another with 1/2 teaspoon of the dispersed Yellow Oxide, and the third batch with 1 teaspoon of the Hydrated Chrome Green Oxide. Stir in each of the colors well.

8. "Plop" a small dollop of the Burgundy colored soap in 2-3 random spots in the lined 2 pound Wood Mold. Follow up with the Chrome Green and Yellow colored soaps, dolloping each randomly through the mold. Repeat this process, alternating colors, until the mold is full. **TIP:** Tamp the mold on the table after each color to get rid of any air bubbles that might form during the plopping process. You want to work fast because warm soap adheres better than cool soap.

9. Using a spatula or piece of plastic wrap, press the soap into the mold while at the same time forming an even and rounded top layer. The soap is very warm and should not be touched without a barrier between your hands and the soap.

10. Allow the soap to harden in the mold for 1-2 days. Unmold and cut. This soap is ready to use right away but will last longer in the shower after a full 4-6 week drying time.

