

CANDLEMAKING

By Lady Gina Dragoni

I found the beeswax candles to be soothing and smelled great. You can use this same wax in other projects - like cosmetics, writing boards (medieval PDA) or simply for waxing your thread.

The Candle Wax

- Find a honey producer that is willing to give you or cheaply sell you the wax from his/her aperies. This wax will be dirty (with grass, dirt, dead bees imbedded into the wax)

Cleaning Process

1. Start with a large pot that you will NOT be using for food. Add at least 1 inch of water to the bottom of the pot and then add chunks of your dirty wax. The overall ratio can be 1/3 water to 2/3 wax.
2. Bees wax has a very low melting temperature (about 63C) so make sure your heat is quite low. The water help keep the wax from burning, but more importantly the dirt & gunk sink to the bottom. Do not let the wax boil as this will darken the colour and be as pretty.
3. At this point, you will need a second pot or container for the hot wax and a strainer. It would not be a bad idea to coat the second container with a stray of Pam or something similar. I used pantyhose (not heavy tights because the grain is too tight). Stretch the pantyhose over the opening of the pot and very slowly pour the hot wax mixture into this second container. This will eliminate most of the debris from the mixture.
4. Let the mixture cool here for several hours (maybe overnight). When the wax has sufficiently cooled, it will have shrunk and loosened itself from the edge of the container. Loosening the wax along the edges, remove a block of cleaned wax - be careful, there is still water underneath it.
5. You may still have some gunk at the bottom of the wax. This can be scraped off and use as compost along with the water mixture.
6. You can repeat the straining of the wax until you are happy with the outcome.

CANDLEMAKING

By Lady Gina Dragoni

Ready To Make Candles?

1. You need some sort of mold to hold the hot wax. This can be anything round. If you have candle mold for tapered candles (I'm jealous), use them. Otherwise, you can use pop cans, Pringles cans, beer cans, frozen orange juice containers. Grease the containers before you pour any wax into them. You will be grateful for this later.
2. I used purchased candlewick string from the hobby store. Poking a hole in the bottom of the container and using cooled wax and tape to hold the bottom in place, I then tied the top up with a pencil & tape to hold it in position. Clay is supposed to work for the bottom hole as well. The heated wax is very hot on the skin, so PLEASE be careful when working with it.
3. Before you begin to pour, set up your area for easy clean up. Lay down a plastic cloth on the surface and newsprint on the floor to catch any spills. Also cover yourself with an apron or clothes that you don't mind getting messed up a little.
4. Pour the hot wax slowly but steadily and you will achieve what you want.