

# Homemade Vanilla Bean Soap Using Cold Process



The handmade vanilla bean soap turned out perfectly and I am ready to try another recipe. But first let me share this story with you. For years, I watched other homesteaders and bloggers share their beautiful handcrafted soaps. I was in awe of their bravery, and slightly green with jealousy that they had the time and confidence to tackle such a difficult craft. You see, I thought it was a time consuming, tricky, and even slightly dangerous craft that needed lots of special ingredients and time. I had the same misconception before I tried [making salves](#) and lotions. Now time is a factor. None of us feel we have enough time. But the rest of my fears turned out to be hogwash! There was one thing I did need.

# Hand Holding for Making Vanilla Bean Soap

I needed a friend to walk me through the process. Someone who would tell me what was about to happen and push me gently onward. I found that person. She wrote a book. The book was not like other books I had read. This book fit my comfort level. It empowered me and gave me confidence. Jan Berry's book *Simple and Natural Soapmaking*, was the key to my soap making journey.

To make the trip even sweeter, I invited two friend along for the ride. Weren't they brave to come mix caustic ingredients with me? We had a good time learning the process, while reading and re-reading the book, as we went along.

Our choice for the first adventure was a vanilla bean soap that also called for one egg yolk. Seemed like a good idea and well worth the sacrifice of one egg, during the fall molt. (eggs are scarce as chickens grow in their winter feathers). We gathered up all of the ingredients.



## Vanilla Bean Soap Uses Simple Ingredients

Vanilla beans, egg yolk, oils, butters, sodium hydroxide, and distilled water, were gathered. The important point here is to weigh your ingredients. I suggest getting a simple [digital kitchen scale](#) that can switch between grams and ounces. Using the tare setting allows you to easily measure liquid or messy ingredients. The other piece of equipment I like to have is a [small electric hot plate](#). Sometimes fumes from making wonderful products can be irritating. This allowed us to work with the lye outside on my deck instead of in the house.



The vanilla bean soap recipe was easy. In fact it was so easy I wondered why I had put off soap making for so long. We scheduled another day to get together as soon as we could. Soapmaking is a little addictive apparently. The vanilla bean soap gave us the confidence to move on to other recipes in the book.

*\*\* Note: Do not use vanilla extract or vanilla flavoring in place of the inside of a vanilla bean. This will not yield the same results in your vanilla bean soap.*

I love projects that use ingredients right from the farm. For fall gifts or for your own decor' try [Apple Cider Soap](#) and [Pumpkin Soap](#)!

## **From Jan Berry's Simple & Natural Soapmaking**

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### **Vanilla Bean & Egg Yolk Soap**



Lecithin-rich egg yolk adds protein and vitamins to this creamy soap while specks of vanilla bean offer a touch of exfoliation and visual interest. I used unrefined cocoa butter in this recipe since I wanted its natural scent to remain in the finished bars.

Skin nourishing sweet almond oil or sunflower oil moisturizes and soothes skin, while coconut oil provides lather. The naturally high pH of soap helps preserve and prevent spoilage, even with the fresh egg included. I don't recommend hot processing this recipe as it needs to stay cool to prevent the egg from overheating.

**YIELD: 7 TO 8 BARS OF SOAP (2.5 LBS/1.13 KG)**

8.5 oz (241 g) distilled water  
3.9 oz (111 g) sodium hydroxide (lye)  
7 oz (198 g) coconut oil (25%)  
4 oz (113 g) unrefined cocoa butter (14.3%)  
14 oz (397 g) olive oil (50%)  
3 oz (85 g) sweet almond or sunflower oil (10.7%)  
1 vanilla bean  
1 room temperature egg yolk, beaten

## **The Instructions**

Wearing protective gloves and eyewear, carefully stir the lye into the distilled water.

Set the lye solution aside in a safe place to cool for about 30 to 40 minutes or until the temperature drops to around 100 to 110°F (38 to 43°C).

Melt the coconut oil and cocoa butter, then add to the other oils. Split the vanilla bean, scrape the inside into the warm oils and mix so the vanilla specks are evenly distributed.

Temper the egg yolk by removing about a cup (240 ml) of the warm oil and vanilla bean mixture and stir together with the beaten egg yolk. Return the yolk/oil mixture to the remaining oils and blend until thoroughly incorporated. Add the cooled lye solution. Using a combination of hand stirring and an immersion blender, stir the soap until it reaches a very light trace.



At trace, pour into a prepared mold. This soap does best when kept on the cooler side, so you may want to consider individual molds to prevent partial gel phase (see page 21 for more on gel phase) and/or tucking the soap in the refrigerator for 12 to 24 hours after pouring.

Cut into bars or unmold individual bars. Cure on coated cooling racks or sheets of wax paper about 4 weeks before

using.

You can check out more from Jan Berry and [The Nerdy Farmwife](#) on her website. Jan also has an offer for an email based set of [soap making lessons!](#)

If you are thinking about soapmaking for the first time, grab a copy of [Simple & Natural Soapmaking on Amazon.](#)

