

Blending Essential Oils



Essential Oil Blending Basics

Essential oil blending is as much an art as it is a science. There is no one “right way” to blend oils. Each person is different and may enjoy different blends and different ratios of essential oils in their blend. This guide is a starting point to help in blending oils.

Blending by Category

Essential oils can be categorized into broad groups based on their aromas. An example categorical system is as follows:

- Floral (i.e. Lavender, Neroli, Jasmine)
- Woodsy (i.e. Pine, Cedar)
- Earthy (i.e. Oakmoss, Vetiver, Patchouli)
- Herbaceous (i.e. Marjoram, Rosemary, Basil)
- Minty (i.e. Peppermint, Spearmint)
- Medicinal/Camphorous (i.e. Eucalyptus, Cajuput, Tea Tree)
- Spicy (i.e. Nutmeg, Clove, Cinnamon)
- Oriental (i.e. Ginger, Patchouli)
- Citrus (i.e. Orange, Lemon, Lime)

Oils in the same category generally blend well together. There are exceptions to the general rules, but to get you started, below are some categories that generally blend well together:

- Florals blend well with spicy, citrusy and woody oils.
- Woodsy oils generally blend well with all categories.
- Spicy and oriental oils blend well with florals, oriental and citrus oils. Be careful not to overpower the blend with the spicy or oriental oils.
- Minty oils blend well with citrus, woody, herbaceous and earthy oils.

Blending oils by Fragrance Note:

Some essential oils evaporate more quickly than others. As the oils in a blend evaporate, the aroma will change to reflect the aroma of the remaining oils.

Top notes are the lightest of the all the notes. They're the first ones you smell, and they're the first ones to evaporate, usually within 1-2 hours. This is because they have the smallest molecules. You can often distinguish top note essential oils because they're often thin in consistency and are usually derived from flowers, leaves, and flowering herbs.

Middle notes are like the “ties that bind” only they are binding your other essential oils together into a harmonized blend. These are the oils that complete your blend by balancing the light top notes with the deep base notes. The aroma of middle notes lasts longer than those of top notes, but not as long as base notes. Oils that evaporate with 2-4 hours are considered “middle notes.” These oils can vary in consistency and are often derived from whole herbs and spices.

Base notes are deep, heavy, and often earthy in scent. These are the oils that ground your blend and help its aroma last the longest due to the large molecule size. Base notes are often derived from trees, roots, and barks,

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and their oils tend to be thick and viscous. Oils that take the longest time to evaporate, typically over 4 hours, are referred to as "base notes". *Note: Some base notes can take several days to evaporate.*

As a rule of thumb, the combination between top, middle and base notes should be in harmony and the following formula is normally used:

Select oils from all three categories but use less of the top and middle notes than that of the base note.

There are some "general rules-of-thumb" that people like to mention, and these being that a well-rounded fragrance will normally be composed as follows:

- Top notes 25-35% of the blend.
- Middle notes 40-60% of the blend.
- Base notes 10-30% of the blend.

A good starting point is 30%/50%/20% For example - you would use 5 drops of Geranium (middle note) with 3 drops of Eucalyptus (top note) and 2 drops of Ylang Ylang (base note).

Even with such a "rule", the most important factor to keep in mind is that you, or the person on which the oil blend is going to be used, likes it.

Here are common "Notes" of various oils. You should also refer to the individual profiles for Essential Oils for their note. Additionally, many oils can be considered borderline on more than one note.

The following essential oils are considered top notes:

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| • Basil (To Middle) | • Lemon | • Ravensara |
| • Bergamot (To Middle) | • Lemongrass (To Middle) | • Sage |
| • Cajuput | • Lime | • Spearmint |
| • Cinnamon | • Mandarin | • Tagetes |
| • Clary Sage (To Middle) | • Neroli (To Middle) | • Tangerine |
| • Coriander (To Middle) | • Niaouli | • Tea Tree (To Middle) |
| • Eucalyptus | • Orange | • Thyme (To Middle) |
| • Grapefruit | • Peppermint | • Verbena |
| • Hyssop | • Petitgrain | |

The following essential oils are considered middle notes:

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| • Bay | • Ho Leaf | • Myrtle |
| • Black Pepper | • Ho Wood | • Nutmeg |
| • Cardamom | • Hyssop | • Palma Rosa |
| • Chamomile | • Juniper | • Pine |
| • Cypress | • Lavender (To Top) | • Rosemary |
| • Fennel (To Top) | • Marjoram | • Spikenard |
| • Geranium | • Melissa (To Top) | • Yarrow |

The following essential oils are considered base notes:

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- Balsam Peru
- Cassia (To Middle)
- Cedarwood
- Cinnamon (To Middle)
- Clove
- Frankincense
- Ginger (To Middle)
- Jasmine
- Myrrh
- Oakmoss
- Patchouli
- Rose
- Rosewood (To Middle)
- Sandalwood
- Valerian
- Vanilla
- Vetiver
- Ylang Ylang (To Middle)

You can often find Fragrance notes tied to your oils in the Essential Oil Profiles provided by your oil supplier.

Here are some sample blends show the blending by Note:

- Blend #1 (citrus, floral, spicy): lemon (T) + neroli (M) + ginger (B)
- Blend #2 (floral): geranium (T) + lavender (M,T) + ylang ylang (M,B)
- Blend #3 (minty, woody): peppermint (T) + pine (M) + angelica (M,B)

Blending Tips

When creating a new blend, start out small with a **total number of drops** of either 5, 10, 20 or 25 drops. 25 drops should be the most that you start with. By starting small, you waste less oil in your blending experiments. It makes it much easier to adjust your blend. Smell your oils. Every oil's note is not equal. For example, ginger Root is extremely pungent and can over-power many other oils. You may want to adjust the starting point accordingly.

To blend and store your beautiful creations, small amber bottles are an inexpensive choice when blending small quantities. They are available from glass bottle packaging suppliers, online retailers like Amazon, and aromatherapy vendors. Larger bottles in array of glass and packaging options are also available.

Start creating your blend by only using essential oils, absolutes or CO2s. After you have designed the blend, then you can dilute it by adding carrier oils, alcohol, etc. If you hate the blend you created, you have then not wasted any carrier oils or alcohol.

Keep a notebook that lists each oil that you used with the number of drops used for each oil. When the creative juices flow, it is easy to get carried away and later forget the exact recipe for your blend; one drop too much or too little of even one oil can drastically change the aroma of your blend. When you find that perfect blend, you want to be able to reduplicate it, and it's near impossible if you didn't take notes! If you are especially ambitious, it's also a wise idea to note the vendor name of the oil that you used as the aroma and quality of oils do vary between vendors (even with the same vendor, the aroma of oils can vary from batch to batch, due to crop fluctuations and resourcing).

Be sure to label your blends clearly. If you don't have enough room to specify exactly what your blend is, label it with a number that corresponds to a number in your notebook.

Final Thoughts:

Blending oil can be fun, and remember that the end result should be to your liking, so it is no problem if you do not follow the guidelines about using the different notes at all - they are only guidelines to help you along.