

Soap Making

Yucca Root Soap Making

6th-8th

See Resource File 1-History of Soap Making for information on how indigenous peoples of the Southwestern borderlands used the yucca for soap making.

See Resource File 4-Related Images for pictures of the Soaptree Yucca plant.

Yucca Root Soap Procedure –

1. Dig up a root from the Soaptree Yucca plant.
 - a. It is really important that you aren't taking a root from private property or from local, state, tribal, or national lands. Depending on what root you take, there is a chance the plant may die.
 - b. Yucca roots can also be purchased at produce stores (depending on where you live).
2. Saw off a small piece of the root. The piece must be able to fit inside whatever sealable container you are using. The entirety of the root can be used for this process in batches.
3. Clean the dirt off the root using some warm water and the scrub brush.
4. Knock off and remove the bark from the root using the hammer.
 - a. It will be much easier to knock the bark off when the root is wet.
5. Pound the root into a pulp.
 - a. Note: It is much easier to do this step when using a fresh root. It is possible to use dried root for this process. The soap batch will still be successful. However, this step will be much harder with a dried root.
6. Place pulped root into the sealable container.
7. Add warm water and close lid on container.
8. Shake the container vigorously. You will begin to see the saponins mix with the water as suds will form. Shake until well mixed.
9. Pour out the mixture into a strainer, separating the root from the liquid. Your soap is now ready for use!
10. Use this soap as dishwashing, laundry, or bathing soap.

Materials Needed:

- Soaptree Yucca root
- Sealable containers (2-3)
- Hammer
- Small strainer
- Scrub brush
- Warm water
- Small saw