

Survival Soap Making

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To make soap--

Extract grease from animal fat by cutting the fat into small pieces and cooking them in a pot. Add enough water to the pot to keep the fat from sticking as it cooks. Cook the fat slowly, stirring frequently. After the fat is rendered, pour the grease into a container to harden.

Place ashes in a container with a spout near the bottom. Pour water over the ashes, and in a separate container collect the liquid that drips out of the spout. This liquid is the potash or lye. Another method for obtaining the lye is to pour the slurry (the mixture of ashes and water) through a straining cloth.

In a cooking pot, mix two parts grease to one part potash. Place this mixture over a fire and boil it until it thickens.

After the mixture--the soap--cools, you can use it in the semiliquid state directly from the pot, or you can pour it into a pan, allow it to harden, and cut it into bars for later use.

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SOAP: Washing with soap leaves skin less waterproof and more prone to attack by germs. However, soap is an antiseptic, better than many others, such as iodine, which destroy body tissue as well as germs. It is ideal for scrubbing hands before administering first-aid. Save supplies for this.

SOAP-MAKING: TWO ingredients - an oil and alkali - are needed. The oil can be animal fat or vegetable, but not mineral. The alkali can be produced by burning wood or seaweed to produce ash.

To make soap, wash the ash with water then strain and boil it with the oil. Simmer until excess liquid is evaporated and allow to cool. This soap is not antiseptic. Add horseradish root or pine resin to make it antiseptic. Too much alkali in the mix will dry the skin, leaving it sore.