Soap Making Troubleshooting Guide

	PROBLEM	SOLUTION	ACTION
DRY SOAP	Soap crumbles when you cut into it.	Soap is lye heavy.	Too much lye or too little oil. Check your measurements.
SOFT SOAP	Soft soap is malleable and gelatinous.	Soap is lye deficient.	Too little lye or too much oil. Check your measurements.
DOES NOT SET UP	Soap is liquid after 24 hours.	Improper measuring or inadequate blending.	Check your measurements and/or be sure the soap is at a proper trace.
WHITE ASH	Soap has a white ash on top.	Soda ash forms when unsaponified lye reacts with carbon dioxide in the air.	Can be steamed off, washed off or planed off.
WEEPING POCKETS	Cut soap has weeping oil or lye pockets.	Improperly blended.	Be sure the soap is at a proper trace.
UNEVEN COLOR	Color is inconsistent throughout soap.	Improper blending.	Pre-mix your colorant with water, oil or glycerin before adding to soap.
UNEVEN SCENT	Scent is inconsistent throughout soap.	Improper blending.	Add your scent to your oils before adding lye solution.
OIL SLICKS	Soap feels slick after cutting.	Too much superfatting oils or scent can cause oils slicks.	Most of the time the oil will be reabsorbed during the curing phase.
HARSH/DRY FEELING	Soap feels drying to the skin.	An unbalanced recipe may remove the natural oil from the surface of the skin.	Choose a blended recipe of hard and soft oils. And/or increase your superfat ratio.
DISCOLORED	Soap has darkened.	Scents that contain a high degree of vanillin will cause soap to discolor.	Choose a fragrance that is vanillin free or design soap to suit the dark brown color.
SIEZED	Lye and oils hardened before molding.	The fragrance oil has sped up saponification.	Use a full water recipe and keep your oils and lye solution cool.
RICED	Lye and oils separated before molding.	The fragrance oil has been untested and not approved for soap making.	Check to make sure that the fragrance is approved for soap making.
GLYCERIN RIVERS	Soap appears to have crackled in places.	Titanium dioxide mixed with water and gelled at a high heat can cause glycerin rivers.	Mix titanium dioxide with less water or mix with oil and allow soap to saponify ungelled.
GRAINY TEXTURE	Cut soap has a grainy feel.	Improper blending.	Be sure that any additives you include are fully incorporated.
CRACK ON TOP	Top of soap has formed a crack.	Interior of soap has overheated.	Move soap to a cooler location with airflow around it.
WON'T TRACE	Soap will not come to trace.	Soap is lye deficient.	Lye solution is too weak. Check your measurements.
HOLES	Soap has small holes inside.	Too much blending can create air bubbles.	Tap down the mold to release any trapped air.
GEL RING	Cut soap has a darker ring in center.	Soap was gelled at too high of a temperature. Soaps gels from the center outward. If the center remains too hot for too long it will discolor and form a ring.	Keep soap in a cool location with plenty of airflow. Or place saponifying soap in refrigerator.