



Tincture

The active substances of plants are soluble in water, alcohol or fat. A tincture is a good way of extracting the alcohol-soluble substances of a plant and is also a mixture that will last almost forever. To make a tincture, herbs are soaked in alcohol or glycerine for a month. Normally, dried herbs and roots are used as they provide a more highly concentrated tincture than fresh herbs. The extract is very strong and potent and can be used externally for treating wounds and skin problems, or internally as a substitute for herbal tea.

The internal dose is 1 teaspoon in half a glass of water three times a day.

1. Take one part dried herbs to two parts vodka or unspiced schnapps (35-40 %).
2. Crush the herbs using a pestle and mortar.
3. Put the crushed herbs in a glass jar and fill it up with alcohol.
4. Put the lid on and leave the mixture to soak for a month. You may need to add more alcohol after a few days, as the herbs absorb the alcohol.
5. Shake the jar carefully every day.
6. After a month, strain the tincture using a textile filter. Try to squeeze all the alcohol out of the herbs.
7. Pour into a dark glass bottle. The tincture has an almost eternal shelf life.

It's also possible to make a tincture using glycerine. A glycerine tincture is less dehydrating for the skin.

Mix 7 parts glycerine with 3 parts boiled cool water.

Use the glycerine mixture in the same way as the alcohol in the recipe above. A glycerine tincture will last for 3 years.

See next page for what plants to use.



Herbs good for tincture

TORMENTIL ROOT (*Potentilla erecta*) – I always keep a bottle of tormentil root tincture in my handbag, just in case someone gets injured. Tormentil root contains lots of tannins and is an excellent blood stopper. It's also wound healing, antiseptic and good for inflammation of the gums. A small bottle lasts a long time.

VALERIAN ROOT (*Valeriana officinalis*) – Doesn't taste great, but is soothing, calming and calms nervous anxiety.

DANDELION (*Taraxacum officinale*) – Aids the digestion and relieves flatulence. Good for gall bladder problems and infection of the urinary tract.

GOLDEN ROD (*Solidago virgaurea*) – Good for infection of the urinary tract.

ECHINACEA (*Echinacea purpurea*) – Strengthens the immune system and is anti-bacterial, anti-viral, anti-fungi and wound healing.

COMFREY (*Symphytum officinale*) – Repairs injured skin and bone tissue. May aid in scar healing.

ARNICA (*Arnica montana*) – Heals bruises, bumps, swellings, varicose veins and sprains.

ROSE ROOT (*Rhodiola rosea*) – Enhances physical and mental energy but should only be used occasionally or for short periods of time.

ST JOHN'S WORT – For internal use against mild depression, PMS and sensitivity towards changes in the weather. External use against muscle inflammations and cuts.

HEATHER – For external and internal use if you get bruised easily and have varicose veins. Good in a vein-strengthening ointment with arnica.