



# Introduction to essential oils

Our sense of smell is one of our most powerful yet under-used senses; researchers have revealed that we respond strongly to smell in the limbic brain, the part that deals with emotions and memories.

This explains why certain smells can trigger powerful emotions or physical reactions – such as becoming more relaxed or being able to sleep.

All of our essential oils are 100% pure and unadulterated. We believe that wild harvested and organically grown botanicals are better for you, and better for the environment, as organic farming severely restricts the use of artificial chemical fertilisers and pesticides.

Where possible we choose Soil Association organically certified essential oils to ensure that cultivation is managed under the highest, independently audited ethical and environmental standards.

With awareness and interest in natural and organic skincare and remedies on the increase, we run aromatherapy courses and workshops in our shops, as well as in our Covent Garden School of Natural Medicine.

Our Diploma in Aromatherapy & Essential Oil Science is world renowned, ensuring the standard of aromatherapy training in the UK remains at the highest level. Professional aromatherapists across the world rely on Neal's Yard Remedies' pure essential oils. Closer to home you'll find them in the Therapy Rooms in many of our stores.

We're also a member of the Aromatherapy Trade Council, the UK's self-regulating organisation to meet higher standards.

## What is an essential oil?

An essential oil is the natural fragrant essence extracted from flowers, leaves, bark, roots, fruit peel and berries. When you peel a mandarin, smell jasmine blossom or squeeze a sprig of rosemary, it's the essential oil you're inhaling. When extracted or distilled, these concentrated scents have qualities that can promote emotional and physical wellbeing, when used in combination with massage.

## How are essential oils produced?

### Steam distilled

One of the most common and popular ways of extracting essential oil is through steam distillation, which is especially suitable for woody, robust plants such as lavender. The plant material is placed in a still or container and hot steam is passed through it. The steam causes the plant matter to release its precious essential oils. These are carried away in the steam, which is then cooled, leaving a pure essential oil and distilled plant water (or 'hydrolat') as oil and water don't mix.

### Extracted

The essential oil of delicate flowers such as jasmine, which are too fragile to be steam distilled – the steam would destroy the flowers before they could release their essential oil – are solvent extracted. The solvents draw out the precious oils and the mixture is then dissolved in pure alcohol to remove the solvent, before the alcohol is allowed to evaporate. This leaves behind the essence of the flower, known as an absolute.

### Expressed

For some ingredients, including soft fruits like lemon and grapefruit, the essential oils are expressed. This simply means the peel is pressed to release the juice and essential oil.

## Choosing essential oils

Aromatherapy is easy to integrate into your everyday life. Just having a few essential oils at home means you can enhance your wellbeing and create the perfect aromatherapy moment.

To keep things simple we've given all our essential oils a key action: to energise, relax, balance, uplift or cleanse.

Decide how you'd like to feel, take a few breaths, smell the essential oil on a smell-strip or cotton bud, then trust your intuition and be playful with your choices.

Once you have chosen your first essential oil, try it with one other – this leaflet gives you some suggestions, but be brave and explore your own choices too. Three essential oils are a good start for creating your own blend.

Still unsure where to start? Why not try our pre-blended essential oils; developed by professional aromatherapists to help with the most common emotions and conditions.

## Using essential oils

### Massage

Massage is a wonderful way to ease aching muscles and relax or energise the body.

Place the required quantity of massage base, such as almond oil or a lotion, into a saucer (a typical full body massage uses 30ml of base product) then add the drops of essential oils based on the person you are massaging. See the dilution table for guidance, and stir thoroughly.

Be careful not to exceed the recommended total number of drops.

### Baths & showers

Bathing with pure essential oils is one of the most luxurious ways to enjoy their benefits; the essential oils are inhaled through the aromatic steam, as well as being absorbed by the skin.

Add 5 drops of essential oil to a teaspoon of base oil, bath oil or shower gel, then add to a full bath (don't add to running water).

Try to stay in the bath for 15 minutes to really benefit from the essential oil's properties.

### Vaporisation

Essential oils make fantastic natural air fresheners, fragrancing a room as well as setting a mood. Simply add a few drops of your chosen essential oils to a diffuser or burner, following the instructions.

### Inhalation

Help clear the head and nose with 4-6 drops of essential oil added to a large bowl of steaming water. Now place a towel over your head and lean over the bowl – creating a tent effect to trap the steam – and inhale the vapour for a few minutes.

### Babies, children & asthmatics

Inhalation is not suitable for children under 12 years or those with asthma – instead place a bowl of hot water with added essential oils nearby or use a diffuser.

Children under 2 years should not be massaged or bathed using essential oils. Once over 2 years old they can be massaged or bathed with a 1% blend using only those essential oils indicated suitable for children over 2 years old in the guide overleaf.

## Safety information

Essential oils can contain compounds that may cause sensitisation by skin contact. Always use essential oils with care.

Discontinue use if a rash occurs. If you have sensitive skin, we advise doing a patch test (see below) before using over a larger area of skin.

Do not dispose of unused essential oils down the drain – in concentrated form they can be toxic to aquatic organisms and may cause long-term adverse effects in the aquatic environment.

Essential oils should never be taken internally without the advice of a professional practitioner.

Even when diluted, essential oils should be kept away from sensitive areas such as eyes. If the oil should come into contact with the eyes, wash thoroughly with cold water and seek medical advice if needed.

All essential oils should be kept out of the reach of children, if anyone accidentally swallows an essential oil please seek medical advice immediately.

As some essential oils are flammable, care should be taken with naked flames. They can also damage polished, plastic or painted surfaces.

Essential oils are best stored away from direct heat and light, and should be used within a year of opening.

If you are pregnant, suffer from a skin condition, epilepsy, asthma or are taking medication, we suggest that you seek advice from a professional aromatherapist before using pure or blended essential oils.

## How to do a patch test

Apply a small amount of product on the underside of the upper arm (skin above the elbow). If any redness or itching occurs do not continue use.

# Aromatherapy blends

### Calming

**Key action: Relaxing**  
Blended with children in mind, this is calming for them when they're overwrought. Beneficial for all of us when we need an aromatherapy hug. With calming chamomile and soothing lavender. Ideal for inhalation, massage and vaporisation. Suitable for children (over 2 years old).

### De-Stress

**Key action: Relaxing**  
Perfect for when you want to escape your troubles and be transported to a place of tranquility. With soothing ylang ylang and uplifting neroli. Ideal for inhalation, massage and vaporisation.

### Focus

**Key action: Energising**  
Clarifying for the head and refocusing for the mind, this helps you tackle difficult tasks with renewed clarity. With uplifting spearmint and energising rosemary. Ideal for inhalation and vaporisation.

### Meditation

**Key action: Relaxing**  
Enhance your mindfulness practice by inhaling the calming aroma to encourage slower, deeper breathing. With relaxing frankincense, restful sandalwood and uplifting mandarin. Ideal for inhalation and vaporisation.

### Night Time

**Key action: Relaxing**  
This comforting blend brings a sense of tranquility at the end of the day, making

it ideal to use at bedtime. With grounding vetiver and soothing lavender. Ideal for inhalation and vaporisation.

### Organic Defence

**Key action: Cleansing**  
A great all-rounder to cleanse and protect around the home and office. A natural air freshener, it creates a cleansing ambience that helps clear, easy breathing. With zesty lemongrass and purifying Niaouli. Ideal for inhalation and vaporisation.

### Optimism

**Key action: Balancing**  
Brings renewed optimism into your life, on those days when you need a little boost. With uplifting jasmine and energising grapefruit. Ideal for inhalation and vaporisation.

### Vitality

**Key action: Energising**  
A stimulating blend to boost flagging energy levels, this is revitalising and uplifting. With energising ginger and warming clove. Ideal for inhalation, massage and vaporisation.

### Women's Balance

**Key action: Relaxing**  
This harmonising blend works together to relax, calm and restore balance to body and mind. With calming rose and uplifting geranium. Ideal for inhalation, massage and vaporisation.

## Blending essential oils

As essential oils contain the active ingredients of botanicals in a highly concentrated form, they must be diluted into a carrier oil, lotion, bath oil or shower gel by adding a certain number of drops before being used on the skin.

Use the dilution table to work out how many drops you need to blend safely into your base product. We advise that you also read the Safety Information overleaf before experimenting.

## Dilution table

For applications to the skin during massage or bathing

	Amount of base (oil / lotion / bath oil / shower gel)				
	10ml (2 tsp)	15ml (1 tbsp)	30ml (2 tbsp)	60ml (4 tbsp)	100ml (3.4 fl.oz)
	Maximum number of drops of essential oil*				
Children over 2 years, adults with delicate skin, or applications to face (less than 1%)	2	3	6	12	20
Adults with no skin sensitivities (2.5%)	5	7	15	30	50

\*Please check overleaf for specific cautions on individual oils.

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# Pure essential oils

**Basil (Organic)**  
*Ocimum basilicum*  
**Key action: Energising**  
*Steam distilled from the herb.*  
Stimulating, sweet and peppery, this is a great restorative when overwrought. Blends well with Bergamot, Chamomile and Lavender. Caution\*: potential toxicity due to Methyl chavicol content, do not use for prolonged periods of time (more than 3 weeks) and avoid during pregnancy.

**Bay Laurel (Organic)**  
*Laurus nobilis*  
**Key action: Energising**  
*Steam distilled from the leaves and young branches.*  
Warming, sweet and spicy, this is naturally refreshing and beneficial for the respiratory and digestive systems. Blends well with Cypress, Juniper and Frankincense. Caution\*

**Bergamot (Organic)**  
*Citrus aurantium bergamia*  
**Key action: Relaxing**  
*Expressed from the citrus fruit's peel.*  
Uplifting and fruity, this is balancing for the skin and calming for the emotions. Blends well with Neroli, Frankincense and Black Pepper. Our Bergamot is bergapten-free. Caution\*

**Black Pepper (Organic)**  
*Piper nigrum*  
**Key action: Energising**  
*Steam distilled from the dried, crushed fruit of the pepper vine.*  
Warming and spicy, this gives your body a natural boost and helps ease tired muscles. Blends well with Rose, Fennel and Lavender. Caution\*

**Cardamom (Organic)**  
*Elettaria cardamomum*  
**Key action: Relaxing**  
*Steam distilled from the aromatic seed.*  
Comforting and sweet, this is soothing for the mind and beneficial for the digestion. Blends well with Rose, Lavender and Mandarin. Caution\*

**Cedarwood (Organic)**  
*Cedrus atlantica*  
**Key action: Balancing**  
*Steam distilled from the wood.*  
Toning and woody, this has soothing and purifying properties. Blends well with Lemon, Neroli and Rosemary.

**Chamomile Blue (Organic)**  
*Matricaria recutita*  
**Key action: Relaxing**  
*Steam distilled from the flowers and leaves.*  
Soothing and herby, this has remarkable calming properties and is ideal for dry or itchy skin. Blends well with Lavender, Yarrow and Rose.

**Chamomile Roman**  
*Anthemis nobilis*  
**Key action: Relaxing**  
*Steam distilled from the flowers and leaves.*  
Calming and fruity, this is balancing and tension-easing and, being naturally milder, is more suitable for children than Chamomile Blue. Blends well with Mandarin, Neroli and Rose. Suitable for children over 2 years old. Caution\*

**Cinnamon (Organic)**  
*Cinnamomum zeylanicum*  
**Key action: Energising**  
*Steam distilled from the leaves.*  
Warming and spicy, this is stimulating for the digestion. Blends well with Orange, Frankincense and Black Pepper. Ideal for vaporisation. Caution\*: use only highly diluted on the skin.

**Citronella (Organic)**  
*Cymbopogon nardus*  
**Key action: Cleansing**  
*Steam distilled from the grass.*  
Uplifting and citrusy, this blend is useful for summer evenings outdoors. Blends well with Orange, Lime and Peppermint. Ideal for vaporisation. Caution\*

**Clary Sage (Organic)**  
*Salvia sclarea*  
**Key action: Relaxing**  
*Steam distilled from the leaves and flowers.*  
Warming and calming, perfect to use at bedtime. Blends well with Rose, Lavender and Vetiver. Caution\*: avoid alcohol after use.

**Clove (Organic)**  
*Eugenia caryophyllata*  
**Key action: Energising**  
*Steam distilled from the dried flower buds.*  
Stimulating and strongly spicy, this is well known in dental care and for its distinctive aroma. Blends well with Orange, Eucalyptus and Frankincense. Caution\*: use only highly diluted on the skin.

**Cypress (Organic)**  
*Cupressus sempervirens*  
**Key action: Balancing**  
*Steam distilled from the needles and twigs.*  
Calming and woody, this is toning for the skin and uplifting for the emotions. Blends well with Lemon, Juniper and Geranium. Caution\*

**Eucalyptus (Organic)**  
*Eucalyptus globulus*  
**Key action: Cleansing**  
*Steam distilled from the leaves.*  
Stimulating and expansive, this helps to clear the head for easy breathing. Blends well with Fennel, Pine and Ravintsara. Caution\*

**Eucalyptus Lemon (Organic)**  
*Eucalyptus citriodora*  
**Key action: Cleansing**  
*Steam distilled from the leaves.*  
Uplifting and zesty, this helps to relieve tired muscles. Blends well with Thyme Linalol, Tea Tree and Lemon. Caution\*

**Eucalyptus Radiata (Organic)**  
*Eucalyptus radiata*  
**Key action: Cleansing**  
*Steam distilled from the leaves.*  
Cooling and refreshing, this is stimulating for the senses and helps to clear the head for easy breathing. Blends well with Mandarin, Melissa and Frankincense. Suitable for children over 2 years old. Caution\*

**Fennel (Organic)**  
*Foeniculum vulgare*  
**Key action: Cleansing**  
*Steam distilled from the crushed seeds.*  
Detoxifying, sweet and herby, this helps to relieve digestive discomfort. Blends well with Geranium, Lavender and Rose. Caution\*

**Frankincense (Organic)**  
*Boswellia sacra*  
**Key action: Relaxing**  
*Steam distilled from the resin, extracted from the bark of the tree.*  
Uplifting and fresh, this is rejuvenating for the skin and helps when feeling stressed. Blends well with Lemon, Grapefruit and Chamomile Roman. Caution\*

**Geranium (Organic)**  
*Pelargonium graveolens*  
**Key action: Balancing**  
*Steam distilled from the leaves and flowers.*  
Uplifting and floral, this is stabilising for the emotions and skin. Blends well with Lemon, Rose and Bergamot. Caution\*

**Ginger (Organic)**  
*Zingiber officinale*  
**Key action: Energising**  
*Steam distilled from the root.*  
Warming and stimulating, comforting and muscle-easing. Blends well with Myrrh, Orange and Juniper. Caution\*

**Grapefruit (Organic)**  
*Citrus paradisi*  
**Key action: Energising**  
*Expressed from the peel of the fruit.*  
Refreshing and zesty, this is uplifting for the emotions and toning for the skin. Blends well with Black Pepper, Bergamot and Jasmine. Caution\*

**Immortelle (Organic)**  
*Helichrysum italicum*  
**Key action: Balancing**  
*Steam distilled from the flowers.*  
Head, honey-like with warm and spicy undertones, this is uplifting, with skin-soothing properties. Blends well with Chamomile, Geranium and Lavender.

**Jasmine Absolute**  
*Jasminum officinale*  
**Key action: Uplifting**  
*Extracted from the delicate flowers.*  
Sensual and sweet, this is nourishing for the skin, self-confidence and sensuality-boosting. Blends well with Black Pepper, Bergamot and Frankincense.

**Juniper (Organic)**  
*Juniperus communis*  
**Key action: Cleansing**  
*Steam distilled from the dried crushed fruit of the vine and twigs.*  
Detoxifying, this is toning for the skin. Blends well with Cedarwood, Lemon and Black Pepper. Caution\*

**Lavandin (Organic)**  
*Lavandula hybrida*  
**Key action: Relaxing**  
*Steam distilled from the flowers and leaves.*  
Fresh and floral, this is cleansing and calming. Blends well with Chamomile, Tea Tree and Vetiver. Caution\*

**Lavender (Organic & Non-Organic)**  
*Lavandula angustifolia*  
**Key action: Relaxing**  
*Steam distilled from the flowers and leaves.*  
Cleansing and refreshing, this is soothing for the skin and mind. Blends well with most other essential oils. Suitable for children over 2 years old.

**Lavender English (Organic)**  
*Lavandula angustifolia*  
**Key action: Relaxing**  
*Steam distilled from the flowers and leaves.*  
Cleansing and refreshing, this is soothing for the skin and mind. Blends well with most other essential oils. Suitable for children over 2 years old.

**Lemon (Organic)**  
*Citrus limon*  
**Key action: Cleansing**  
*Expressed from the peel of the fruit.*  
Uplifting and fruity, this is toning and clarifying for the skin and environment. Ideal for vaporisation. Blends well with Peppermint, Rosemary and Juniper. Caution\*: use only highly diluted on the skin.

**Lemongrass (Organic)**  
*Cymbopogon schoenanthus*  
**Key action: Cleansing**  
*Steam distilled from the grass.*  
Energising and zesty, this is refreshing and muscle easing. Blends well with Ginger, Thyme and Peppermint. Caution\*

**Lime (Organic)**  
*Citrus aurantifolia*  
**Key action: Energising**  
*Expressed from the peel of the fruit.*  
Uplifting and fruity, this is gently detoxifying and toning for the skin. Blends well with Orange, Jasmine and Peppermint. Ideal for vaporisation. Caution\*: use only highly diluted on the skin.

**Litsea (May Chang) (Organic)**  
*Litsea cubeba*  
**Key action: Energising**  
*Steam distilled from the fruit.*  
Purifying and citrusy, this is calming for the emotions and cleansing for oily or blemish-prone skin. Blends well with Frankincense, Rosemary and Juniper. Caution\*

**Mandarin**  
*Citrus nobilis*  
**Key action: Relaxing**  
*Expressed from the peel of the fruit.*  
Warming and soothing, this is calming for the emotions and is especially good for soothing fractious children. Blends well with Rose, Lavender and Chamomile. Suitable for children over 2 years old. Caution\*

**Marjoram Sweet (Organic)**  
*Origanum majorana*  
**Key action: Relaxing**  
*Steam distilled from the leaves.*  
Warming and herby, this is muscle easing and comforting. Blends well with Geranium, Lavender and Clary Sage. Caution\*

**Melissa (Lemon Balm) (Organic)**  
*Melissa officinalis*  
**Key action: Balancing**  
*Steam distilled from the herb.*  
Uplifting, sweet and citrusy, this is calming in times of stress and is cooling and soothing on the skin. Blends well with citrus oils, Chamomile and Rose. Caution\*: use in less than 1% dilution on the skin.

**Myrrh**  
*Commiphora myrrha*  
**Key action: Relaxing**  
*Steam distilled from the resin, extracted from the tree.*  
Rejuvenating and earthy, this is toning and soothing for the skin. Blends well with Rose, Frankincense and Marjoram.

**Neroli**  
*Citrus aurantium amara*  
**Key action: Relaxing**  
*Steam distilled from the flowers of the bitter orange tree.*  
Relaxing and floral, this is nourishing for the skin and uplifting for the emotions. Blends well with Mandarin, Cardamom and Vetiver. Suitable for children over 2 years old.

**Niaouli (Organic)**  
*Melaleuca viridiflora*  
**Key action: Cleansing**  
*Distilled from the leaves and twigs.*  
Clarifying and fresh, this is purifying, helping you to breathe more easily. Blends well with Lemon, Pine and Thyme. Caution\*

**Orange (Organic)**  
*Cymbopogon sinensis*  
**Key action: Energising**  
*Expressed from the peel of the fruit.*  
Uplifting and sweet, this is revitalising and gently detoxifying. Blends well with Lemon, Vetiver and Frankincense. Caution\*

**Palmarosa (Organic)**  
*Cymbopogon martini*  
**Key action: Cleansing**  
*Distilled from the fresh grass.*  
Soothing, green and floral, this is balancing for the skin and emotions. Blends well with Bergamot, Cedarwood and Geranium. Caution\*

**Patchouli (Organic)**  
*Pogostemon cablin*  
**Key action: Relaxing**  
*Steam distilled from the leaves.*  
Grounding and woody, this is toning and rejuvenating for the skin. Blends well with Bergamot, Geranium and Rose.

**Peppermint**  
*Mentha piperita Mitcham*  
**Key action: Energising**  
*Steam distilled from the leaves.*  
Cooling and refreshing, this is stimulating for the mind and a great digestive tonic. Blends well with Lime, Lavender and Lemon. Caution\*: use only highly diluted on the skin.

**Petitgrain (Organic)**  
*Citrus aurantium amara*  
**Key action: Energising**  
*Distilled from the leaves and twigs of the bitter orange tree.*  
Uplifting, fresh and floral, this is soothing for the spirits. Blends well with Neroli, Clary Sage and Rosemary. Caution\*

**Pine (Organic)**  
*Pinus sylvestris*  
**Key action: Cleansing**  
*Steam distilled from the needles.*  
Refreshing and foresty, this cleansing oil is excellent in steam inhalations and for muscle rubs. Blends well with Cedarwood, Juniper and Lemon. Caution\*: use only highly diluted on the skin.

**Ravintsara (Organic)**  
*Cinnamomum camphora*  
**Key action: Cleansing**  
*Steam distilled from the leaves.*  
Cleansing and expansive, this helps you to breathe more easily. Blends well with Lemon, Ginger and Thyme. Caution\*

**Rose Absolute**  
*Rosa damascena*  
**Key action: Balancing**  
*Extracted from the flowers.*  
Nurturing and floral, this is calming for emotional or tense times. Blends well with Mandarin, Lavender and Cardamom. Caution\*

**Rose Otto**  
*Rosa damascena*  
**Key action: Balancing**  
*Steam distilled from the flowers.*  
Sweet and sensual, this is calming for emotional or tense times. Blends well with Geranium, Bergamot and Black Pepper. Suitable for children over 2 years old. Caution\*

**Rosemary (Organic)**  
*Rosmarinus officinalis*  
**Key action: Energising**  
*Steam distilled from the leaves.*  
Strengthening and toning, this helps to focus the mind and enliven the body. Blends well with Lemon, Marjoram and Juniper. Caution\*

**Sage Spanish (Organic)**  
*Salvia lavandulaefolia*  
**Key action: Cleansing**  
*Steam distilled from the herb.*  
Stimulating and herby, this is often used as a tonic for the digestive and respiratory systems and in muscle rubs. Blends well with Juniper, Ginger and Lemon. Caution\*: potential toxicity in larger doses due to its thujone content, use with caution and not more than in a 1% dilution. Not suitable during pregnancy.

**Sandalwood**  
*Santalum album*  
**Key action: Relaxing**  
*Steam distilled from the wood.*  
Rich, woody and warming aroma. Helps to promote a profound feeling of wellbeing. Blends well with Rose and Frankincense.

**Tea Tree (Organic)**  
*Melaleuca alternifolia*  
**Key action: Cleansing**  
*Steam distilled from the leaves.*  
Stimulating and medicinal-smelling, this helps to clear the head and is purifying for the skin. Blends well with Eucalyptus, Lavender and Lemon. Caution\*

**Thyme Linalol (Organic)**  
*Thymus vulgaris ct linalol*  
**Key action: Cleansing**  
*Steam distilled from the leaves.*  
Protective and herby, this helps to ease breathing and is cleansing and purifying for the skin. Blends well with Black Pepper, Lemon and Ravintsara. Caution\*

**Vetiver (Organic)**  
*Vetiveria zizanoides*  
**Key action: Relaxing**  
*Steam distilled from the root.*  
Calming and earthy, this is grounding and restorative. Blends well with Rose, Ginger and Bergamot. Caution\*

**Ylang Ylang (Organic)**  
*Cananga odorata*  
**Key action: Relaxing**  
*Steam distilled from the flowers.*  
Sensual and floral, this is soothing for the emotions, helping to create a sense of calm. Blends well with Grapefruit, Bergamot and Patchouli. Caution\*

For further advice on our products or courses please contact our Customer Advisors on 01747 834 634

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\*Caution: contains components that may cause sensitisation in some people. Recommended use in less than 1% dilution on the skin.