

Herbal Ratio Cheat Sheet

Use this cheat sheet to guide your herbal formulations by preparation type. Adjust based on plant material (fresh vs. dried), plant part, and desired strength.

Tinctures

Plant Material	Ratio (Herb : Alcohol)	Alcohol % (Typical)	Notes
Dried Herb	1:5	40–50%	General use, shelf stable
Fresh Herb	1:2	95%	Higher water content in fresh plants
Resins	1:10	90–95%	Long maceration, heat may help
Barks/Roots	1:5	50–70%	Long maceration recommended

 "1:5" means 1 part herb to 5 parts alcohol by weight to volume (e.g., 1 oz herb to 5 fl oz alcohol).

Teas & Infusions

Type	Ratio (Herb : Water)	Steep Time	Notes
Leaf/Flower	1 tsp per 8 oz water	10–20 minutes	Cover while steeping
Strong Infusion	1 oz herb to 1 quart water	4–8 hours or overnight	Used for nourishing herbs (e.g. nettle, oatstraw)
Cold Infusion	1 oz to 1 qt cold water	4–12 hours	Best for mucilaginous herbs (e.g. marshmallow)

Decoctions

Type	Ratio (Herb : Water)	Simmer Time	Notes
Roots/Barks	1 oz per 16–24 oz water	20–30 minutes	Reduce by ½ for strength

Syrups

Component	Ratio	Notes
Herbal Decoction	1 part	Base liquid
Sweetener (Honey/GF)	1 part or more	Equal to or more than decoction by volume for preservation
Alcohol (Optional)	10–20% total volume	For shelf-stable syrup

Oxymels

Vinegar : Honey	Typical Ratio	Notes
Vinegar Heavy	2:1	More stimulating, shelf-stable
Balanced	1:1	Most common
Honey Heavy	1:2	More soothing, sweeter

Spirit Infusions

Type	Ratio	Notes
Tea : Alcohol	1:1 or 2:1 (tea to tincture)	Combine strong tea with tincture for shelf-stable blend
Enhanced	Strong tea + tincture + rum	Used to reduce alcohol while maintaining potency



Oils & Salves

Type	Ratio	Notes
Infused Oil	1 oz herb : 1 cup oil	Adjust based on herb density
Salve Base	1 oz beeswax : 8 oz oil	Softer salve; use more wax for firmer texture



Bitters & Digestive Blends

Use	Ratio Guideline	Notes
Bitters Formula	50% Bitter, 25% Aromatic, 25% Support	Balance taste and function
Digestive Aperitif	Equal parts Aromatic & Warming herbs	Flavor-forward & functional



Formulation Framework (10-Part Method)

Role	% of Blend	Purpose
Mother	~50%	Primary action
Support	~35%	Secondary or synergistic herbs
Grandmother	~10%	Restorative, nourishing, ancestral
Catalyst	~5%	Activator, mover, or taste balancer

Keep in mind: Ratios are guidelines. Adjust for the plant, the person, and the season.