

Herbal Pharmacy

Preparing Formulas from Parts

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This handout describes ways to prepare a formula when given parts rather than amounts. While it may sound confusing when written, it requires only simple math and can be done quickly once the basics are learned. This works in both metric and imperial (US) systems.

You are basically dividing the formula into parts. The number of parts depends on how many herbs are in the formula, the amount of each herb, plus the size of the bottle.

Example 1: in metric (an anti-inflammatory tincture)

Tincture in a 4 oz bottle

- Japanese knotweed (*Reynoutria japonica*) 4 parts
- Yucca (*Yucca glauca*) 4 parts
- Willow (*Salix alba*) 2 parts
- Licorice (*Glycyrrhiza glabra*) 1 part

1. First, determine the bottle size in milliliters (ml). Some standard sizes:

- 1 oz=30 ml
- 2 oz=60 ml
- 4 oz=120 ml
- 8 oz=240 ml

2. Add up all the parts to determine the total number of parts in the formula.

- Japanese knotweed 4 pt
- Yucca 4 pt
- Willow 2 pt
- Licorice 1 pt

$$4+4+2+1=11 \text{ parts}$$

3. Divide the bottle size (in milliliters) by the total number of parts in the formula.

This will show how many milliliters per part.

- There are 11 parts in the above formula going into a 120 ml (4 oz) bottle.
 $120 \div 11 = 11$ (rounding up from 10.9)
11 is the number of parts in this formula.

4. Multiply each herb individually by the above number. This will determine the total milliliters for each ingredient in the formula.

- Japanese knotweed $4 \times 11 = 44$ ml
- Yucca $4 \times 11 = 44$ ml
- Willow $2 \times 11 = 22$ ml
- Licorice $1 \times 11 = 11$ ml

$44 + 44 + 22 + 11 = 120$ ml (rounding down from 121)

5. Measure and pour the tinctures.

Example 2: in metric (a cognitive support tincture)

Tincture in a 2 oz (60 ml) bottle

- Ginkgo (*Ginkgo biloba*) 3 parts
- Gotu kola (*Centella asiatica*) 3 parts
- Calamus (*Acorus calamus*) 2 parts
- Rosemary (*Salvia rosmarinus*) 1 part

$3 + 3 + 2 + 1 = 9$ parts

$60 \text{ ml} \div 9 \text{ part} = 6.6$

- Ginkgo $3 \times 6.6 = 20$ ml (rounding up from 19.8)
- Gotu kola $3 \times 6.6 = 20$ ml
- Calamus $2 \times 6.6 = 13$ ml (rounding down from 13.2)
- Rosemary $1 \times 6.6 = 7$ ml (rounding up from 6.6)

$20 + 20 + 13 + 7 = 60$ ml

Example 3: in ounces (a sleep tincture)

- Skullcap (*Scutellaria lateriflora*) 5 pt
- Hops (*Humulus lupulus*) 4 pt
- Valerian (*Valeriana officinalis*) 2 pt
- Kava (*Piper methysticum*) 1 pt

Add up the parts

$5 + 4 + 2 + 1 = 12$ parts

Divide the bottle size (in ounces) by the total number of parts in the formula.
There are 12 parts going into a 3 oz bottle.

$3 \div 12 = 0.25$

- Skullcap $5 \times 0.25 = 1.25$ oz
- Hops $4 \times 0.25 = 1$ oz
- Valerian $2 \times 0.25 = .50$ oz
- Kava $1 \times .25 = 0.25$ oz

$1.25 + 1 + .50 + .25 = 3$ ounces