

# Make Your Own Natural Insect-Repelling String Ties

These insect-repelling string ties are really easy to make, and are great for keeping insects away from BBQ's, camping areas, picnic tables, and other outdoor events. The compact dispenser this string is stored in is small enough that it can easily be taken backpacking, hiking, biking, or on any other outdoor excursion.

## You will need:

- Cotton yarn or thick string. (Cotton seems to work really well for this project).
- 30ml plastic salve/ointment container.
- 50 ml spray bottle. This is used to mix the essential oil blend and jojoba together in. Other small bottles or containers can be used, however a spray bottle has the added benefit that when you are done using it, you can add some distilled water to the bottle to create your own insect-repelling spray.
- 15ml Jojoba oil. Other unscented vegetable oils can also be used as carrier oils for this project, but they may go rancid if unused for a long time. Jojoba oil, which is technically a liquid wax rather than a true oil, tends to be more stable than regular vegetable oils.
- Essential oils: This recipe calls for lavender, lemongrass, peppermint, and thyme essential oils. If desired, however, you can substitute other insect-repelling essential oils, like citronella or cedarwood.



## Instructions:

- Wind cotton yarn into a ball or coil until it is approximately 1.5"(4 cm) in diameter (if you coil the yarn, it may be easiest to wind it around a small 1" (2.5cm) long wood dowel).
- Place the wound yarn into the plastic salve container.
- In the spray bottle or chosen receptacle, blend 30 drops lavender, 30 drops lemongrass, 20 drops peppermint, and 10 drops thyme essential oils (or you can substitute 90-100 drops of your own choice of essential oil or ready mixed blend).
- Add 15ml of jojoba oil to the essential oils. Secure the bottles cap and shake the bottle for a few seconds to help mix the oils. Allow the oil mixture to sit for a few minutes to allow it to meld together.
- Slowly pour about ½ of the oil mixture onto the yarn inside the plastic container, allowing the oil to soak in before pouring more. Turn the yarn over, and pour the remaining ½ of the oil mixture onto the other side. If you want to make an insect-repelling spray in the 50ml bottle, leave a small amount of the oil mixture in the bottle, and then add distilled water until the bottle is nearly full. Screw the spray top on the bottle. To use the spray, shake the bottle vigorously for a few seconds to mix the oil and water, and then spray in the desired location as needed.
- Screw the lid onto the plastic salve container, and let the container sit for 2-3 hours to allow the oil mixture to soak thoroughly into the yarn.
- To use the insect-repelling string ties, remove the desired length of string from the container and tie it onto tree branches, fences, tents, poles, or other objects around the desired area (if you tie them onto tree branches, be sure to remove them when finished, or the string may end up causing damage as the branch tries to grow wider).

## Extra Ideas:

- Convert the salve container into a great dispenser for your string with a few easy steps. Drill a small hole (approximately the same diameter as the yarn or string you used) through the lid of the container. Thread a small amount of the yarn through the bottom of the hole in the lid. Screw the lid back onto the container, being certain to hold onto the yarn that has been threaded through the hole so it doesn't slip back down through the hole. Apply a small label or sticker over the top of the hole and yarn to help seal the container until needed. To dispense from this container, simply pull the desired length of yarn through the hole, then carefully cut it approximately 1" (2.5 cm) above the hole.
- For a more formal event, create insect-repelling strings from two or more complimentary colours. Hang the different colours in attractive patterns, braid the colours together, or twist the colours together to create a decorative element with the strings.

**Primrose Aromatherapy supplies a kit containing a 50ml spray bottle, 10ml insect repellent essential oil mix, 30ml jojoba carrier oil. Sufficient to last the season.**