

## Filtering Low Grade Beeswax by Paul Yates

After sterilising my brood boxes with my steam stripper, I am left with large lumps of, putting it politely poor quality beeswax. With a little time and effort I am able filter this wax and use it to make candles to be given as Christmas presents. I'll cover making the candles in a separate document. Please don't think that this is show grade wax, it isn't. (I am though more than happy for **YOU** to enter this wax into the local show, my chances of a prize will then be increased exponentially ☺ )

You will need to have a number of items of equipment to undertake this task. It will help if you can use dedicated wax filtering equipment. I wouldn't fancy trying to use the sieves and bowls for anything else once they have been used for wax filtering.

I recommend the use of eye protection and rubber gloves while you undertake this task. Wear cotton clothing that covers your body to prevent any burns from spilled wax.

The first stage is to break the wax lumps into a manageable size, you may need to use a hammer to do this. Prepare your filter by lining an old sieve with two sheets of nappy liners. *The only place that I've been able to source these is ASDA.* I lay the nappy liners at 90 degrees to each other and secure them in place with clothes pegs. The lined sieve is then placed over an old Pyrex bowl. Note that the bowl needs to be deep enough to allow your wax to collect below the filter. At this point boil a kettle full of water. Now fill your sink with cold water to a depth of about two inches.

The wax lumps are then placed into a bain-marie and allowed to melt slowly. Don't allow the melted wax to get too hot. I try and keep my molten wax to around the 75 degrees mark. I use an old spoon to stir the wax to make sure that it has all melted.

Once the wax has melted remove the lined sieve and pour about an inch of boiling water into the Pyrex bowl. Now place the sieve back in the bowl.

Slowly pour your molten wax through the sieve. It will settle on top of the boiling water. Now while it's still hot, clean the bain-marie with sheets of kitchen paper. Once all of the wax has passed through the filter, remove the sieve and place it on some sheets of kitchen paper. Now place your bowl of melted wax into the sink of cold water and leave to cool down.

Remove the hot filter nappy liners from the sieve and lay them on a couple of sheets of kitchen paper. I then fold this paper several times to secure the waxed sheets which are then allowed to solidify inside. I use these sheets to light my wood burning stove.

You will see that the wax solidify as it cools down in the bowl. The cold water bath accelerates this process. Don't allow the wax to become cold. Once it has solidified and is cool enough to handle, use the edge of a knife to leaver the wax out of the bowl. At this point you will be able to scrape the muck that settles on the base of the wax off using the edge of your knife. Once this gunge has been removed, use your knife to cut the wax into useable lumps that will fit easily in your candle making bain-marie.

You will have a Pyrex bowl that contains very dirty water that can be poured down the drain. You are now ready to repeat the process with the next batch of dirty wax. I have found that by doubling up on my sieves & bowls I am able to speed up the process and complete the task in half the time. You may wish to do the same.



Wax ready to be broken up



Equipment you'll need



Line your sieve



Secure the filter with pegs



Boil the water in your bain-marie



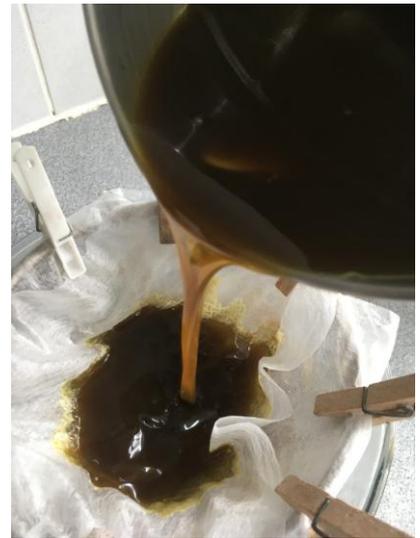
Add your lumps of wax to the pan



Melt your wax



Don't let it get too hot



Pour your wax through the filter



Wax starting to cool



Warm wax removed from the bowl



Note the gunge that needs scrapping off while the wax is still warm



Dirty water to be disposed of



The filtered wax ready for candle making