

Essential Oils Quick-Start Guide

The parts that apply to the bottle you actually buy — dilution, sunlight, food-use labelling, and where to begin. From aromaessentialoils.eu, an independent guide to the doTERRA range.

1 • Dilution: the only table you need

Essential oils are concentrated. Undiluted on skin they can irritate and, over time, sensitise — a reaction that does not go away once it develops. Dilute in a carrier oil: fractionated coconut, jojoba, sweet almond or olive.

Strength	Drops per 10 ml carrier	Typical use
0.5 %	1–2 drops	Face; over 65; sensitive skin
1 %	3 drops	Children over six; daily body use
2 %	6 drops	Adults, general body use
3–5 %	9–15 drops	A small area, for a short period

More is not better. Above roughly 5 % the risk rises and the benefit does not. Never in eyes, ears or on mucous membranes — if oil gets near an eye, wipe with a carrier oil, not water.

2 • The nine oils that react with sunlight

Cold-pressed citrus peel contains furocoumarins, which react with ultraviolet light. Skin that has had one of these applied and then meets sun or a sunbed can burn or discolour — sometimes days later, and the marks can last months. **Keep treated skin out of direct sun for twelve hours.** Diffusing is unaffected.

Bergamot	Lime	Grapefruit
Wild Orange	Lemon	Juniper Berry
Tangerine	Petitgrain	Green Mandarin

Bergamot is the strongest of the nine by a distance. Steam-distilled versions of the same fruit generally are not photosensitising — the bottle in your hand is the authority, not the fruit on the label.

3 • The 24 oils labelled for food use here

In the European shops an oil may go into food only when it is sold and labelled as a flavouring, and the label then states a limit — on these, one drop per day. The other fifty-four in the range are not labelled for food, whatever an American recipe suggests. **Wild Orange, Bergamot and Lavender are not on this list.**

Basil	Black Pepper	Cardamom	Cassia
Celery Seed	Cilantro	Cinnamon Bark	Clove
Coriander	Fennel	Ginger	Grapefruit
Lemon	Lemongrass	Lime	Marjoram
Oregano	Peppermint	Pink Pepper	Rosemary

Spearmint	Tangerine	Thyme	Turmeric
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Two mechanical rules: oil does not dissolve in water — carry it in fat or sugar first; and add it late, because the volatile compounds evaporate with heat. For strong oils, dip a cocktail stick rather than counting a drop.

4 · Six oils worth starting with

Oil	What it is for
Lavender	Mild enough for daily skin use at low dilution, and it goes with almost everything else.
Lemon	The household workhorse: diffuser, surface sprays, sticky residue. Photosensitising on skin.
Peppermint	Sharp and strong — one drop where you would use three of something else.
Tea Tree	Cleaning and skin blends. Blends better with citrus than you would expect.
Frankincense	Resinous, survives heat, good in facial oils at 0.5 %.
Wild Orange	Diffuses beautifully. Not labelled for food use in Europe.

5 · The diffuser

Thirty minutes on, thirty off — the nose stops registering a constant smell within minutes, so intermittent running smells stronger and uses a quarter of the oil. Three to five drops in a 100–150 ml ultrasonic diffuser, not fifteen. Ventilate, and clean the disc weekly with alcohol on a cotton bud.

Children and pets: short sessions, ventilated rooms, and always a way for an animal to leave. Oils high in 1,8-cineole or menthol — eucalyptus, peppermint — are not for the room of a baby or toddler.

6 · What this guide will never tell you

That an essential oil diagnoses, prevents, treats or cures anything. It does not, and claiming otherwise is not permitted here. Essential oils are pleasant, useful household and cosmetic ingredients. If something needs a doctor, it needs a doctor.

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