

5 Herbs to Start Your Apothecary

A free starter guide from KBA & Co

You do not need a cabinet full of jars to begin. A real home apothecary starts with a handful of gentle, forgiving herbs you will actually reach for. Here are five to start with, why they earn their place, and the easiest way to use each one.

1. Chamomile

The classic calming herb, and one of the easiest to grow and use. Chamomile is gentle enough for most people and lovely before bed. **Easiest way to start:** a simple cup of tea. Steep the dried flowers in just-off-the-boil water, covered, for ten minutes.

2. Calendula

The bright orange “first aid” flower. Calendula is the herb people reach for to soothe the look of irritated, scraped, or dry skin, which is exactly why it leads our Boo-Boo Butter. **Easiest way to start:** infuse the dried petals slowly in olive oil, then use the oil on dry skin, or stir in a little beeswax to make a simple salve.

3. Peppermint

Cooling, brightening, and useful from the kitchen to the bath. A few leaves wake up a cup of tea and settle a heavy feeling after a meal. **Easiest way to start:** fresh or dried leaf tea. Grow a pot of it; peppermint is happy and hard to kill.

4. Lemon Balm

A gentle, lemony member of the mint family with a long history as a calming, mood-lifting herb. It is the lead in our Restful Night salve for a reason. **Easiest way to start:** crush a few fresh leaves into hot water, or add to a pitcher of cold water with citrus.

5. Lavender

The herb that calms a room. Beyond its scent, lavender has a soothing reputation for skin and rest. **Easiest way to start:** a small muslin sachet of dried buds by your pillow, or a few drops of properly diluted lavender in an evening bath.

What to do next

- **Grow or buy a little of each.** Start with dried herbs from a reputable source, or grow chamomile, peppermint, and lemon balm from seed; they are beginner-friendly.
- **Keep it simple.** Tea, an infused oil, and a basic salve will carry you a long way.
- **Learn as you go.** Our blog walks through making salves and tinctures, starting your own apothecary, and the research behind each herb we use.

When you are ready for ready-made, our small-batch salves and teas are built around these same herbs, handcrafted in Kansas City.

Welcome to the garden.

This guide is for educational purposes only and is not medical advice. Talk with your healthcare provider before using herbs, especially if you are pregnant, nursing, or taking medication.