

# The science of beard products

People have been using oils, balms, and waxes to style and condition their beards for hundreds of years. Here we look at their ingredients and the differences between them.

## Carrier oils

Carrier oils make up the bulk of beard oils and beard balms. These oils moisturize beard hair and the skin underneath.

### Some common carrier oils



Jojoba oil

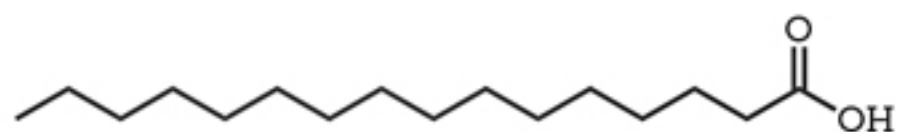


Castor oil



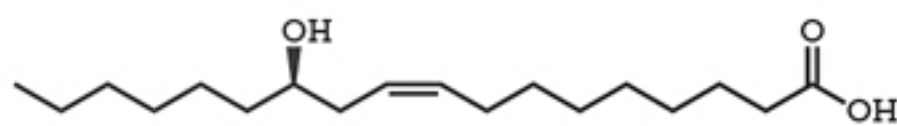
Argan oil

These oils replicate the role of the skin's natural oils, coating and hydrating beard hairs. Oils containing a higher proportion of saturated fatty acids are less prone to oxidation and rancidity than oils containing a higher proportion of unsaturated fatty acids.



Palmitic acid

A saturated fatty acid in castor oil



Ricinoleic acid

An unsaturated fatty acid in castor oil



## Essential oils

Manufacturers add small quantities of essential oils, which give beard oils, balms, and waxes their scents.

### Some common essential oils



Bergamot



Peppermint



Sandalwood

Terpenes are the primary organic compounds that give essential oils their scents. They also provide antimicrobial and anti-inflammatory properties.

## Butters, waxes, and preservatives

Beard balms and waxes contain waxes and butters. For a firmer hold during styling, beard waxes contain more wax than balms do.

### Some common butters and waxes



Beeswax



Cocoa butter



Shea butter

Balms and waxes are thicker than oils, meaning hair absorbs them over a longer period. Additional compounds, like vitamins C and E, prevent oils from oxidizing and going rancid.