

Practical Assignment: Eucalyptus Still

This project should be done in a classroom, under adult supervision.

The aim of the experiment is to demonstrate how Oil is 'distilled' from the eucalyptus leaves using steam. A small-scale model 'Still' can be made using basic science lab equipment plus everyday items (most readily available at hardware stores).

You will need:

- Glass tubing
- Eucalyptus leaves & water
- Heat source (ie. Bunsen burner)
- Tripod or small wire rack to hold billy over flame
- Cooling tank (ie. baby's bath containing water)
- Flexible rubber tubing
- Glass collection jar

Directions:

Assemble still using diagram as a guide. Place eucalyptus leaves in the distilling tank and cover with water. Apply heat. As the water heats, steam flows through the tank and extracts or 'vaporises' oil from the leaves. The steam carries the tiny droplets of oil down the tube into the cooling tank. As it cools, the steam condenses back into water, and the oil separates from it. When it drips into the collection jar, the Oil will float to the surface.

Warning: exercise caution with the experiment. Never leave a flame unattended and do not let children near boiling water/ steam. Eucalyptus is considered harmful if swallowed, seek medical attention immediately. Do not induce vomiting.

