TINCTURES

You can make your own tinctures and store them in glass bottles for at least 10 years, using and mixing and matching as you need.

Start with a wide mouth glass jar (such as a big pickle jar). If you can get dark coloured glass jars, good, otherwise you can spray paint the outside of jars black to prevent light from entering. Do the same if storing herbs. Clean the jar and sterilize it with either bleach or hydrogen peroxide, rinse well to get rid of any residue. If you don't have these products, boil or steam the lid and jar for 30 minutes.

Get the plant material you wish to use ready. It can be leaves, buds, stems, flowers, bark, root. Wash to get rid of dirt and bugs. Leaves and flowers can be used as is, but cut up bark, roots, or any hard pieces into 1" size pieces.

Use one part (eg. 1 cup) of the cut up plant material, to 5 parts (eg. 5 cups) alcohol. If you are using flowers, or leaves or buds they are soft and easy to extract the constituents you can use any type of alcohol such as brandy, vodka, rye. However, if you are using the harder roots, bark or stems, you will need to get the 100 proof type alcohol.

Mix the plant material with the alcohol in the jar, put the lid on and leave for 4-6 weeks. Shake it gently every day to help encourage the action of the tincture.

When finished, strain and bottle in sterilized glass bottles and store in a dark, cool place (not the refrigerator).

The usual dosage is 1 teaspoon taken 2-3 times a day. It will taste strong because of the alcohol therefore most people dilute it with 1/2-1 cup of water. For alcohol sensitive people, pour 1/2 cup boiling water over the teaspoon of tincture in a cup and let it sit for 5 minutes to cool, the alcohol will have dissipated.

You can make tinctures from wild weeds as well as herbs that you have growning in the garden, fresh or dried. Keep your eyes open when you travel across country for different herbs that grow in areas that you can use. There are many herb books on the market as well as good information on the internet to help you know what to use for what. In addition, in this book you a good idea of what to use for different ailments. Here's a easy list of what you can try to make into tinctures:

Rose Hips
Plaintain - all parts
Chickweed plants and flowers
Irish moss
Yarrow flowers
Mullein leaves
Dandelion root and leaves
Calendula flowers
Nettle, Stinging nettle
Comfrey root or leaf