

Grace Leep

What to Do with Old Half-Used Perfume Bottles

While falling in love with Young Living Essential Oils and at the same time becoming educated about how topical solutions can either help or hurt us, I came to the conclusion that my relationship with perfume has finally come to an end. I have always had a fondness for perfumes, evidenced by the dozens I purchased over the years. Yet, over time, I might tire of some and simply hand them over to my mother who hasn't had to purchase one for the past decade thanks to my constant growing collection. This all changed with YLO. Not only don't I want to wear scents that are filled with chemicals and solvents but I also don't want my loved ones to either. The good news for my mom is that she has also embraced Young Living Oils and wears them as fragrance too. So, the question arises what do I do with these half used bottles of perfume?

After some research, I found a few ideas for unloading them while also avoiding the taxing effects on the planet. A site called Basenotes has a thread forum which allows those to donate or exchange their unwanted perfumes. Although you might end up paying for shipping, one could look at this as a charitable contribution toward mother earth while avoiding the unleashing of toxins into our waters and landfills. On Ebay, apparently, there is a demand for used perfumes especially ones that have been discontinued or who's formula has been altered over time. These buyers are willing to even purchase perfumes that have long been expired should they desire certain "vintage" scents that are hard to find. Additionally, some businesses offer recycling and/or incentive programs. Bond No. 9 and Saks in NY accept any empty perfume bottle and will do the recycling work for you. The Body Shop will also accept empties of their own products or will send you an address where you can ship them. Even emailing a fragrance company directly for recycling purposes is another strategy that some have used, which should make sense to an industry who's business is to make and save dollars. Finally, I wouldn't be opposed to taking them along with some empty paint cans, perhaps, to my local hazardous waste facility and hope for an understanding and environmentally conscious attendant.

To date, I continue to save my empty YLO bottles while watching the stack grow. Occasionally, I take baths with them trying to remove any clinging drop left or I add some carrier oil to them for massage or moisturizer uses. Taking the empties to trade shows seems to be a popular idea, allowing for potential buyers to smell the scent while never having to worry about spillage or one gone missing. At the end of the day, if we recycle our YLO's properly, we can rest assured that no harm will be done to the very environment needed to create more of the same. However, this concept doesn't quite work for the toxic-laden chemicals found in some of our favorite brand-name perfumes.