[**Paraffin wax**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paraffin_wax) is a white or colourless soft solid that is used as a lubricant and for other applications

 It is derived from petroleum and consists of a mixture of [hydrocarbon](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hydrocarbon) molecules containing between twenty and forty carbon atoms

. It is solid at room temperature and begins to melt above approximately 37 °C (99 °F)

;[[1]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paraffin_wax#cite_note-1) its boiling point is >370 deg C.

[[2]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paraffin_wax#cite_note-2) . In chemistry, **paraffin** is used synonymously with "[alkane](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alkane)", indicating hydrocarbons with the general formula C*n*H2*n*+2. The name is derived from [Latin](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Latin) *parum* ("barely") + *affinis*, meaning "lacking [affinity](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Electron_affinity)" or "lacking [reactivity](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reactivity_(chemistry))" indicating paraffin's unreactive nature.[[3]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paraffin_wax#cite_note-3)

