

Garment Dyeing

Here are the recipes for the dyes and the soda solution used in this workshop. Please refer to the video for the full method.

Health and Safety

When working with dyes observe all usual health and safety precautions. Wear protective clothing at all times and wear a mask when mixing dye powders. Work in a safe way and clean up splashes and spills immediately. Store dyes and solutions in thoroughly labelled containers and keep away from pets and children. Read all guidelines that come with the dyes that you are using. Note that specific product instructions supersede the general guidelines given here. Tools and equipment used for dyeing processes must be kept purely for that purpose and cannot be used for culinary purposes afterwards.

What you'll need

- Procion MX dye in colours to suit
- Soda (soda ash or washing soda or swimming pool soda - please note required quantities are drastically different)
- Plastic container for mixing dye
- Spoons
- Container for soda solution
- Scales
- Measuring jug
- Plastic tubs/trays for dyeing
- Fabric
- Protective clothing (gloves, apron, mask)

Recipes

Dye recipes vary, here's what works for us:

Dye solution - 1 heaped teaspoon dye mixed with approx 250ml warm water. Mix dyes with care. In a plastic container pop a little warm water and then add dye powder, mix to a paste and then top up with more warm water. Mix thoroughly, allow to stand and then mix again to ensure all dye powder is dissolved.

Soda solution - 9 tablespoons soda ash (or swimming pool soda) dissolved in approx 3.5 litres of water OR 600g washing soda dissolved in 3 litres of hot water.

Salt - Add salt if you want to. We add up to approx. 100g per litre of water and simply add it to the soda solution.

Soda and soda/salt solution can be stored indefinitely in a clearly labelled sealed container. Dye solutions are best used immediately (at least on the same day) but leftovers can be kept for another session. We try not to keep dye solutions for any longer than one week. If you have to save dye solutions for another day store them in a lidded container - a jam jar for instance, clearly labelled. Rather than keeping dye solution try to use it all up during the same session, just get plenty of fabric ready for dyeing!

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