

Adventures in Ice Dyeing

Supply list (2 pages)

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Normally, dyeing fabric is a messy, expensive process, that requires precise formulas to prepare, use, and store dyes. This compact method using powdered fiber reactive dye, is a really cool (no pun intended) way to dye fabric. The results are unpredictable but yield some very interesting forms and textures on the fabric depending on how you crumple and scrunch it, and sometimes unexpected colors as well. The method shown in class makes the process neater, cleaner, and portable as opposed to having to set up a dedicated dye studio space, making it easy to dye small batches of fabrics with ease. Other things can be dyed as well – embroidery threads, lace, even pieces of clothing. **Note: The class fee includes use of instructor's dyes, chemicals, and ice.**

Please be courteous to others by arriving for class with the correct supplies. Contact me at 503-888-9784 or helene.m.knott@gmail.com if you have any questions.

A Note to Students: Many students do not realize that once the teacher is paid, the shop offering a class makes little if any income on the class itself. The shop is relying on product sales to continue offering quality classes to you. Therefore, I urge you to patronize this shop when buying your supplies for this class as much as possible and remind you that big chain stores do not offer the variety of classes that the smaller shops do. Keep quilt classes alive by supporting this shop. Thank you, Helene

TOOLS/MATERIALS:

- **PFD Fabric:** Stands for 'Prepared For Dyeing'; you can purchase it at many quilt and fabric stores. You can also prepare your own fabric by 'scouring' regular white or colored fabric in hot water and a good strong detergent (preferably Synthropol® - available at quilt shops). White fabrics will show true colors but you can get interesting results by over-dyeing commercial fabric; they should be light as the dyes are transparent and will not cover dark fabric. Using colored fabric will affect the colors you plan to over-dye with. Depending on the size of plastic container you use, you should be able to dye 1 – 1 ½ yards or so of fabric. If you bring fat quarters you can experiment with different colors in various areas of your dye vat.
- **'Other' items to dye:** You can dye old lace and table linens, embroidery threads (6-strand floss or Perle Cotton – you can create your own custom variegated floss), shirts, scarves, cotton socks, canvas tennis shoes... I have dyed cheese cloth, leftover pieces of Warm & Natural® batting and scraps of canvas duck to use in my fiber art projects and as foundations for embellishment. The only consideration is that the fiber content must be cotton (silk and wool require an acid based dye). You can buy a limited selection of 100% cotton lace at JoAnn Fabrics but I will have some lovely imported lace available for purchase as well. Ice Dyeing is also a great way to over-dye stained handmade lace you might find at thrift stores.
- **Protective Gear:** Gloves (latex or plastic) - choose well fitting gloves as it's hard to work in gloves that are too big and have fingers that stick out well past your own; **AND** a particle mask rated at N95. The mask is very important as Procion dye powder should not be inhaled so buy the type with the metal nose piece that can be squeezed to fit your face snugly. You won't be exposed to the dye powder for long but in using any chemical product – SAFETY FIRST!
- **Sealable container to dye in:** The dye needs to 'cure' for 24 hours or so, you need to bring a container to dye the fabric in that can be sealed for safe transport home without sloshing dye in your car. The Sterlite storage containers, particularly those with locking latches on the lids, work well. Don't get one too big for your fabric; it needs to be packed pretty densely to get good patterns. A 'shoebox sized container will hold about 1 ½ yards of fabric - more if you plan to use an extra layer of fabric to raise the

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top layer out of the liquid (NOTE: the best patterns are obtained if you keep the fabric out of the pool of dye that collects in the bottom of the container anything submerged will come out muddy). Make sure the container you choose has a lid that snaps on securely and check to make sure it isn't cracked.

- **2" thick Sponges or foam rubber (optional):** To get the best results, the fabric must be kept out of the pool of melted dye that will collect in the bottom of your container. Some 2" thick sponges, foam rubber or even blocks of florist's or Styrofoam that will fit snugly as a bottom layer in your container to suspend your fabric or items above the pool of melted dye. The Dollar Store may yield some clever mesh storage organizers that would fit in your container and keep your fabric or lace up out of the pool of melted dye.
- **Rubber Bands (optional):** these can be used to wrap your crumpled fabric to keep it scrunched.
- **Old Clothes and shoes:** While Ice Dyeing is a little less messy than dyeing with liquid dyes, you should wear old clothing as you may get dye on your clothing and possibly your shoes as well, make sure you wear something you don't mind turning into a piece of modern art.



Additional thoughts on fabrics and other items to dye: White-on-white prints yield fascinating results (as long as the printed motifs are in that sort of printed 'paint' that lies on the surface – it resists the dye), this is also a great way to modify otherwise ugly or stained or faded fabrics. If you don't want to dye regular fabric, you can experiment with unusual things – cotton clothing, t-shirts, cotton lace, six-strand or pearl cotton embroidery floss (**Note:** #12 perle cotton or cotton tatting thread on pre-wound balls can be dyed and then used on a sewing machine if rewound onto bobbins)... I even dyed a strip of canvas duck that has become the base for my Stumpwork Sea Anemones panel. You can pretty much dye anything made from cotton.

