



## **Spinderella's Creations Guide to Dyeing Washed Fiber, Roving and Yarn**

Dyeing your own roving, yarn or fiber for spinning or needle felting projects or the like is easy and fun. All you need to begin dyeing is some acid dyes and a heat source and a mordant, i.e. vinegar, citric or acidic acid. There are no set rules for how to apply the dyes to the roving, yarn or fiber, but here are a few suggestions and guidelines.

Feel free to be creative. Use as many colors as you want, cover all the roving with color or leave areas blank to added variety.

### **Things you'll need:**

- Acid Dyes
- Vinegar or Citric Acid ( you may use acidic acid as well )
- Stainless Steel, Pots
- Sponges or squirt bottles
- Plastic Wrap or baggies
- Disposable Or glass Cups that will be used for dyes only
- Dawn or other dishwashing detergent – some people use Synthrapol, but due to the carcinogenic nature of the solution I do not use it.
- Kosher or Glaubers Salt
- Microwave

### **Instructions:**

1 - Soak your roving or yarn in warm water and add a few drop of Dawn. This will help "wet" the fiber. If it is fiber, I find it best to dye it right after washing when it is wet.

### **Pot Dyeing:**

Fill a pot with water and you choice of mordant. Use 1 Tablespoon of Citric or acidic Acid, or 1 cup of white vinegar and 1 tbls of dyestuff to every pound that you want to dye. If you want richer color you will want to add 1 tbls. Of Kosher Salt.

2. Start to boil water in a pot. Add citric acid. Chose you method of color:

**A-** Mix your dyes in a cup to make a solid solution, to make solid color.



1.) If you are using a disposable cup for solid dyeing, add boiling water and the amount of dye that you want to use. After the dye has dissolved completely, add to the cup to the pot of heating water. Allow to come to a simmer or 180 F

2.) Add your yarn, fiber or roving to the pot and allow to simmer for ONE hour. Do not turn the pot off just because you see the water clear.

**B** - Add the dye to the dye pot and stir a little just to break up clumps. (Splitting the dye) *This is our method of choice as it gives you more depth of color since all the colors that make up the dye are allowed to adhere to the fiber instead of one solid color.*

- 1.) Add fiber, roving or yarn to the pot, you do not have to wait for the pot to simmer. You will bring it to 180 degrees and leave it for 1 hour!
- 2.) If using yarn, you may want to twist the yarn or tie it in a knot before adding to the pot. This creates a different look and can be untied and tied again and added to another color. Just make sure you are working from the lightest color to the darkest color if you want to dye in more than one color.

3. Turn pot off and allow to cool a little.

4. Rinse fiber but spinning in a washer, last rinse.

5. Fill again with hot water and add a little Dawn. Allow to soak a few minutes and rinse

6. Rinse until the water is clear.

### **Hand painting Method for roving and yarn**

1. Wind your yarn into skeins. Tie them in at least 4 places around the skein to insure your yarns will not tangle in the process. - Lightly- do not tie tightly or the dye will not penetrate that area. This is great if that is what you want. Leave for about ½ hour.
2. Make sure you have enough yarn or roving for your project since it is not easy to duplicate the colorway.
3. Soak the yarn or roving in a pot of warm (hot) water, mordant and a little Dawn to wet the fibers and make them ready for dye. This pot will contain 1 tbs of mordant (or 1 cup of vinegar) per pound of fiber. You can also add your salt to this water.

4. While your fiber is soaking, prepare your colors in dye cups of warm water and 1 teaspoon of dyestuff to 1 cup of water. Stir to blend well. I usually take a spoon after mixing all the colors and go from light to dark, swirling once. This may or may not make much difference, but I was taught that this keeps the colors consistent and makes a difference in the end. This might be a “cutting off the end of the roast” story, but one I have used for 25 years.
5. Prepare your table with plastic wrap and ready your sponges or squirt bottles.
6. Gently squeeze the water from your yarn or roving.
7. Wind the yarn or roving in a snaking fashion on the plastic wrap.
8. Proceed to add color to the fiber where you want it to go. Some people love a random yarn and will make the yarn that way; others will measure exact and precise repeatable colors. Press as you go to insure the yarn or roving will contain dye to the underside of the fiber. If not you will end up with a natural color, which is also fine if that is what you want. Experiment! This is where the creative juices get going and there really is no right way of doing this.

There are a few methods of setting the dyes- you chose which you prefer.

1 – Have a large turkey pan and snake the fibers in the pan. Turn your oven to 170 F. Cover with foil and leave for 1-2 hours. Remove and rinse

2. Roll the yarn or fiber into a roll- resembling a cinnamon roll. Put this into a plastic bag and leave for 24 hours before rinsing. This is a good method to do in the sun or when you have just enough time to dye but not finish the yarn or roving.

3 Make a cinnamon roll with your yarn/roving and place in a large quart zip lock bag- do not seal the bag. Place the bag in a glass bowl. Put the bowl in a microwave for 8 minutes. Take the bag out, being careful not to burn yourself and turn over. Place the bag back into the microwave for about 4 minutes. Take out and let cool. Rinse.

Dry your yarns on a rod, letting the yarn hang- DO NOT WEIGHT!!

Dry your roving flat - on a screen.

ENJOY your creation!



***Handpainted skein- tied and ready to wrap and either sit for 24 hours or go into the microwave.***



***Wrapped in cellophane and ready to go into the microwave.***



***Roasting pan method- snaking the fiber or yarn in the pan. Sprinkling or squirting the dye on top of the fiber and into the oven.***

***Courtesy of Spinderella's Creations***

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