

ICE CUBE DYEING

by Susan Van Vorhees

This method is easy and fun, but not for drinking! Sorry. And you must not peek at your fabric for 24 hours (agony!)

Use any neutral colored cotton (PFD) or silk fabric of any length. You will be twisting, folding, and/or scrunching it in an orderly or random fashion, so find suitably sized containers to handle the bulk before you begin. Tall and thin, fat and wide--whatever containers you have on hand that will not be used for food and that will accommodate fabric and ice cubes.

Always wear a mask when using dry dyes. Wear gloves, have moist paper towels at the ready to catch loose dye, use a plastic table cover, and something similar for a drop cloth on the floor. As with most dyeing processes, this can be messy.

Other stuff:

- Soda ash
- Procion MX dyes
- Measuring spoons
- Measuring cup
- Large plastic dishpan or bucket for soaking fabric in soda ash
- Ice cubes (enough) for a layer at each color change in every container.
- Container of clean water for rinsing your gloves
- Synthrapol

Here's How:

Mix 1 cup of soda ash into 2 gallons of hot water in large dishpan or bucket. Place fabric in soda ash mixture for 30 minutes. Do one piece of fabric at a time. Squeeze out the excess and start the next fabric soaking.

Fold or twist treated fabric on tabletop. Place fabric on bottom of container. Leave loose folds and don't pack tight. If the fabric is scrunched too tightly, the base fabric will show through. Cover with layer of ice cubes.

Use measuring spoon or shake loose dye powder over the ice (1/8-1/4 tsp. per application). Repeat with another color or two. Rinse gloved hands. Place next fabric on top of ice cubes and repeat until container is full of ice and dyed fabric.

Cover container with plastic or a towel and set aside for 24 hours. As the ice melts the container may overflow, so set inside another container.

After removal from dye, rinse each piece thoroughly in cool water until it runs clear. Soak in hot water and Synthrapol to remove soda ash.

Wash on short cycle in hot water - use dryer or line dry, then iron for final color set.

