

WATERDYE™ *PROCEDURE for DYEING*

The following procedure is a suggestion for the traditional tie dye method using a soda ash soak and squeeze bottle application. There are many good dye books and articles available that offer a plethora of methods and variations for using fiber reactive dye that you can add to your resources along with the guidelines listed here.

Prepare to dye! Wear old clothes that you don't mind ruining; this can get kind of messy. Wear an apron used just for dyeing (not to be used around food again.) Be sure to wear a dust/particulate mask while working with dry soda ash and dye powders because airborne particles can cause respiratory irritation and sensitivity.

Prepare your work area using a large flat table with a protective covering like a plastic drop cloth or even garbage bags, to catch any liquid dye spills and splashes.

Use clean garments or fabric. Fold the goods in order to create the desired pattern. Tie with light rubber bands or string. * These steps can be delayed until after pre-soaking if you prefer. Pre-soak garments or cloth in the following solution for approximately 20 minutes. Wear long cuff nitrile gloves because the pH of Soda Ash is around 10-12, a strong base solution that will irritate skin. **DO NOT GET IN EYES!** Wear eye protection preferably.

Use a clean **5 gallon bucket** or plastic drum depending on how many garments or how much fabric you have.

- **Mix solution** using 1/4 lb. of Soda Ash per gallon of hot tap water. Stir well for 1-2 minutes.
- **Immerse garments** or cloth in Soda Ash solution for 20 minutes.

After Pre-Soak

- **Wring out** excess water from Soda Ash solution.
- **Fold** garments or cloth in the manner desired for dyeing and tie with light rubber bands or string (if you didn't do this earlier.)

Apply dye solution using preferred method: squeeze bottle, dipping, sponge, etc.

Making the dye solution: Wear dust/particulate mask. Volume depends on the amount of fabric you have. 1/2 cup water x 3 colors will tie-dye about 5 t-shirts.

- **Start with** 1/4 to 1/2 cup warm to hot tap water per color.
- **Add** 1-3 tsp fiber reactive dye powder; stir until dissolved well.
- **Test and adjust** for desired color by putting a spot of dye on a white paper towel. Add more dye powder for deeper colors; use less dye powder for pastels. Finished dye colors will always be much lighter than wet dyes.
- **Using a funnel**, pour liquid dye solution into a squeeze bottle that has a spout lid. Apply liquid dye by squirting onto fabric.

Cover garments or cloth with plastic or place in plastic bags after dyeing to seal in moisture. Let sit for 5 hours minimum. For the best results let them sit for 24 hours in an out of the way, warm space.

Rinse thoroughly in sink using cool water initially and then warm to hot water until most residual dye has been washed out.

Cut rubber bands or string being careful not to cut the fabric. If rubber bands can be removed carefully and rinsed, they can be used again.

Launder garments with Textile Detergent or Synthrapol (colored cycle). Can use fabric softener if desired to improve the “hand” of the fabric.