

How to Dye!

By: @kaynoxxcrafts

Step 1: don't die.

Jk

Ok so remember there's a TON of ways to dye yarn and this is just the way I do it. There's some really great methods out there using Crock-pots, microwaves etc. and it varies by type of yarn you're dyeing and how much time you have etc. I like this method because it allows me to control how the yarn will turn out the most.



This is pretty lengthy and detailed with lots of pics and shitty MS paint illustrations for when I don't have photos.

OK, materials:



1. Yarn: pick a bare/neutral yarn. You can get a whole range from KnitPicks (www.knitpicks.com) or go to your local yarn store. It has to be a natural fiber! Synthetic yarn (acrylic, polyester, etc)

needs to be dyed using very heavy chemicals and I don't cover that here. Best choice is 100% superwash for your first time.

2. Dye: OK, so this depends on your yarn. There are 2 types of dyes: for plant fibers and for animal fibers. From there you can pick acid dyes, inks, natural dyes etc. I prefer a brand called CIBA which are acid dyes – I find they give the biggest range of colors and the most vibrant tones. They're a local (Canadian) company, but I've found Jacquard to be a comparable brand and they sell very specific colors, so if you want a forest green or a jewel purple you can buy them exactly the shade you want. Also, available online and in lots of stores. Alternatively, you can mix your own colors. You're the boss, do what you feel comfortable with.
3. Gloves. Like the plastic kind that doctors wear. Trust me on this one...
4. LOTS of cling-wrap.
5. White Vinegar.
6. Synthrapol or dawn dish detergent.
7. A BIG steamer pot. I got mine from Value Village for \$4. Make sure you have a lid and the separate steamy compartment.
8. Jars or containers for your dyes. I just clean out old jam jars.
9. A small pot to make your dye in.
10. Foam brushes, syringes, paintbrushes, applicators. (I get a bulk pack from the hardware store for \$2 that lasts me for a year).
11. Measuring cup(s) (optional)
12. Stove.
13. Lots of paper towels. A roll, to be safe.
14. Spray bottle. (optional)

Note: any pots, measuring cups, etc. CANNOT be used for food after you dye in it. So make sure you either designate these things to yarn dyeing or find cheap alternatives. I got all my pots/utensils from value village and it cost me less than \$10.

OK the actual dyeing:

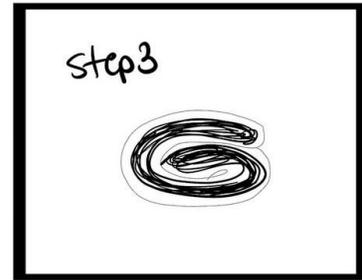
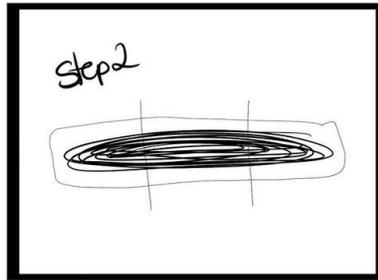
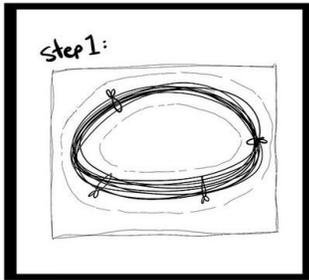
1. If it isn't already, put your yarn in a skein but without twisting it. Tie off in 3-4 places intermittently. This will mean less tangles for you later.
2. Fill your pot (without steamy compartment) with enough water to comfortably cover your yarn and add half a cup to 3/4ths of a cup of vinegar. Depends how many skeins you stick in there. Stick your skeins in there. Let em hang out for at least half an hour.
3. While your yarn is hangin, mix your dyes! Depends on the instructions of your dye but for me I put half a cup of water in a small pot, bring it to a boil and then add a heaping teaspoon of dye in. Sometimes I add a tiny drop of dawn dish detergent. Mix that sucker and then check the color. I usually rip off a strip of paper towel and dunk a section in and see how it looks. Colors like: red, yellow, black usually need more dye than others. So some more powder might be needed. I like my dyes to start out very concentrated and then I dilute/mix them after. Some people prefer to mix them at this stage. Up to you. Then, take the pot off the stove and put it in a jar. Fill with cold water. You're set for that color. If you're doing more than one color, do those. I usually mix 5-6 at a time and then use them over and over for a few months.

4. Prep your table. I'm fortunate to have a glass tabletop which means cling wrap sticks to it really well. I line the whole table with it (overlap a few times). If you don't have a glass table, just tape the edges down with masking tape.
5. Take your soaky yarn out of its vinegar bath, squeeze (don't wring) some water out (if you agitate the water/yarn too much, it might felt. Some yarns felt easier than others so be careful! Superwash is great for this as it will not felt so you have some room for mistakes). You want it to stay damp but not too drippy. Place it on your cling-wrapped surface and spread it out so you can access the most of the yarn as you can.
6. Put on your gloves. Time to start dyeing.
7. This is usually where I mix my colors. You can dilute them with water in separate jars to make the colors paler, and mix to get color combos. Basic color theory applies. Yellow and blue will turn green etc.
8. I prefer "painting" my yarn with the foam brushes. It's exactly what it sounds like, you can either pour some color on bigger sections and then spread it around with the brush or you can make very delicate variegations in the yarn that way. Keep in mind that the dryer the yarn is, the more "solid" your lines will be. So if you want drastic color changes make the yarn more dry, and if you want a gradual gradient color shift, use a spray bottle to blend the colors. If you want speckles, the yarn should be more dry.



9. Make sure to flip your yarn hank over and do the other side. You'd be surprised at how much you miss! Flip it sideways instead of top to bottom so that any color that pools under the hank doesn't mix! Mop it up if you have big puddles.
10. When you're done and happy with how your yarn looks it's time to pack it up and steam it.
11. Fill your steamer pot with enough water (a few cm less than the steam compartment) and let boil/steam. Add some vinegar into the water if you want. I add 1/3 cup into my pot but it's a huge pot.

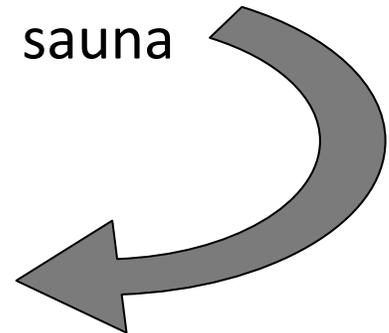
12. Pack up your yarn. Cut the bottom cling-wrap to the size of the hank, add some more cling-wrap on top and then fold it in half length-wise and then into threes to make it small and compact. The goal is to keep the colors from touching each other.



13. Stick your yarn packs into the steamer. Let them sauna in there for at least 20 mins.



Sexy yarn
sauna



14. **IMPORTANT:** check on how much water is in your steamer every 10 mins. That stuff evaporates FAST and there's nothing fun about smelling burnt metal in your kitchen.
15. Done steaming? Take those sexy yarn packs out and let them cool. **DO NOT** rush it and try to unwrap them. You will burn yourself and it will hurt. If you're impatient, fill your steamer pot with cold water and just chuck those yarn packs (cling-wrap and all) right in there.
16. Once cooled, Unwrap!
17. Rinse
18. Rinse using Synthrapol or a drop of dawn dish soap.
19. Rinse
20. Rinse
21. Once your water runs clear you're done. Certain yarns will take longer to rinse. Alpaca takes forever.
22. Hang your yarn to dry. I would not recommend sticking it in a dryer. Tangle City.



23. Is it dry yet?

24. Yes!! Now you have yarn!

Congrats!

Did you try it?? Let me know!

I'm on tumblr and instagram as @kaynoxxcrafts. Come say hi and tag me in your yarn photos. 😊