



Dye Gradations

with Susan Purney Mark

Part One of "Colour Play" Workshop

You will need:

- soda ash
- one 2 quart jug such as a juice container
- four fat quarters (1/4 yard) of white 100% cotton fabric-prewash with no fabric softeners
- four 1 quart containers such as yogurt pots
- plastic measuring cups and spoons
- rubber gloves
- dust mask
- Procion MX dye in colour(s) of your choice
- table salt
- 8-10 oz. squeeze bottle such as ketchup container
- a couple old towels for spills
- Synthrapol detergent

1. Mix the Soda Ash Solution:

- 1/4 cup soda ash
- 2 quarts warm water
- Stir well to dissolve the soda ash

2. Pour 1 1/4 cups of the soda ash solution in each pot and add one fat quarter of fabric. Move the fabric well to make certain it is well soaked with the solution.

3. Put 1 cup of water into the squeeze bottle, add 1/2 teaspoon of salt. Put on the dye mask and rubber gloves to add 1 teaspoon tsp. dye powder to the water in its container. Stir carefully to dissolve.

4. Once the dye powder is mixed you can remove the dust mask but keep your gloves on whenever handling the dye. Stir thoroughly. This dye solution will keep for 2-3 weeks at room temperature.

5. Starting from one side, begin with one pot and remove the fabric, squeezing the soda solution out of the fabric. Then add the following amounts of dye solution into each pot. stir well to mix the dye and then replace the fabric into the pot.

- **Pot 1** **1 teaspoon dye solution**
- **Pot 2** **3 teaspoons dye solution**
- **Pot 3** **6 teaspoons dye solution**
- **Pot 4** **9 teaspoons dye solution**

* you can have more dye pots and fabrics to increase the range of values from light to dark. Try making a six or eight value gradation!

6. The more the fabric is moved and massaged in the pot, the more even the dye colour will be, if you want pieces with texture then try not to move the fabric too much.
7. The chemical reaction will take place over the next 1-3 hours but you can leave the fabric in the dye solution for longer.
8. Put on your gloves and rinse the fabric in each pot with cold running water unless most of the dye colour has disappeared. When all the pieces are rinsed, run through washing machine on a gentle cycle. Use a mild detergent or Synthrapol to remove any "free" dye particles.
9. Dry thoroughly on "hot" setting of your dryer. Ironing will help bring out the natural colours of your fabrics.

Resources for dyes, chemicals and fabrics:

- Dharma Trading www.dharmatrading.com
- ProChemical and Dye www.prochemicalanddye.com
- Maiwa (Canada) www.maiwa.com
- Kraftkolour (Australia) www.kraftcolour.com.au

Join Susan for other workshops by visiting:

www.susanpm.com/online-workshops

©2014 Susan Purney Mark

