

INSTRUCTIONS FOR GLUE RESIST DYEING

Materials:

Fabric-100% cotton, white or a light color, washed and dried without fabric softener. Cut into manageable sizes for your samples.

Dyes-liquid Rit Dye, Setacolor Transparent Paint, Adirondack Color Wash spray dye, thinned liquid acrylic paint, or liquid fabric paint. Rit Dye, acrylic paint, and fabric paint can be found at WalMart, Michael's, Joanns, and Hobby Lobby. The other products can be found on-line.

Resist-Elmer's Washable School Glue Gel. It's clear or blue and is available everywhere.

Latex or rubber gloves, plastic wrap, freezer paper, cups or jars for mixing colors, foam or chip brushes, spray bottle of water.

Optional-stencils, blue water soluble pen, stamps.

Technique:

Designs are drawn on fabric using a washable glue. When dry, the glue acts as a resist to the applied dye. The dyes or paints are brushed or sprayed on. Depending upon which product is used, the dyes cure and are heat set. The glue resist is washed out.

Prepping the fabric- Take a piece of freezer paper larger than your fabric and iron the fabric to the plastic side to stabilize it and make it easier to apply the resist.

Choosing designs-Random dots, triangles, squiggly lines, starbursts, spirals, cartoon critters, and other simple shapes allow you to get good results with your first effort. If you don't trust yourself to freehand your designs, draw them on the back (paper) side of the freezer paper so after it is ironed to your fabric you can see enough to trace your design from the front. If you want to freehand your designs on the fabric, draw them on the fabric with a blue water-erasable marker to fine-tune your design. The lines will be erased by the glue and the application of the dye. Use the tip of the glue bottle to draw lines on the fabric. Heavy lines work better than thin ones. Whatever you apply will stay and resist the dye, so if you aren't happy with your design, wash out the glue and start with another fabric piece. The washed fabric can be ironed dry and used again.

Stencils and stamps are great for glue-resist. For stamping, pour the glue in a plastic bowl and use a brush to load the stamp with glue. Press the stamp lightly so the glue doesn't squish out the sides. Use a small paintbrush to sharpen the edges and load more glue onto missed spots. Stencils are easy--use painter's tape or masking tape to secure the stencil at the corners. Pour a glob of glue off to the side of the stencil openings and use an off-set spatula or a silicon bowl scraper to spread the glue evenly through the stencil. Use a flat side to scrape and pull the glue around until the stencil is full. Scrape the excess glue from the stencil surface and return it to the glue bottle. Lift off the stencil carefully.

The glue resist must be completely dry before dyeing. Leave overnight or use a hair dryer to hasten the process, but be careful not to scorch the fabric. When the glue is dry, you're ready to dye.

Important--protect your work surface, your clothes, and your hands from the dye. All utensils must be dedicated to dyeing and never used for preparing or serving food. Cover the work surface with plastic or newspapers. I dye in my bathtub, putting down a garbage bag in the tub and newspapers on the floor, just in case.

Rit Dye-- Lay down plastic wrap to cover an area larger than your fabric. Pull the fabric from the freezer paper and place your dry prepared fabric on top of the plastic wrap. Put on rubber or latex gloves. Dye recipe--put one teaspoon liquid Rit Dye in a one-cup container. Add a half-cup very hot tap water and stir. For more color, add a bit more dye. You can mix up two separate colors that will blend well, like green and blue, or red and purple. Mist the fabric with water to dampen so your brush marks won't show and if you have two colors, they will blend. Use a foam brush or chip brush to apply the dyes. Paint and blend but don't scrub the brushes or you'll start to dissolve the glue. Cover the fabric with plastic wrap, extending over the edges. Pick up the edges of the plastic wrap and enclose the fabric completely. Gently fold the fabric so it will fit into the microwave. Set the timer for two minutes on high and watch as the package steams and inflates. Watch so the plastic doesn't melt. This is the heat-set for the dye. Using your rubber gloves, remove from the microwave and take care as it'll be hot. Let cool for a short time and lay in the sink to remove the plastic wrap. Rinse the fabric until the water is clear and the glue is removed. Iron dry between some paper towels just in case there's some residual dye left.

Paints and spray dyes--Read the package instructions for heat-setting for the various products. Leave the fabric on the freezer paper to apply the dye and pull the fabric off when it's dyed and dry. The Setacolor transparent paint was painted on and dried with a hairdryer. After it was dry and removed from the freezer paper, I ironed it with a protective layer under and over it. After it was heat-set, I rinsed out the excess dye and the glue. The resist lines were crisp and the color dried looking very soft and cloudy. The spray dye was left to dry overnight and treated the same as the Setacolor-- ironed to set and then rinsed. I think allowing the dye-saturated fabric to sit overnight caused the glue to dissolve a bit and a more-subtle hand-dyed look was the result. It was my favorite piece.

If you use thinned acrylic craft paint or fabric paint, a textile medium will need to be added so the paints will be permanent. The medium can be added to the paint before it's applied. Read the instructions on the product for setting the colors. I would use these in pieces that won't need to be washed, like art quilts or postcards.

More information and samples are on-line. Google "glue resist dye" and find Pinterest sites dedicated to this technique. Rit Dye has complete instructions and samples on their official website. If you have a new baby in the family, glue-resist dye a onsie with a heart, or dye a pair of your canvas shoes. Have fun!

Call me if you have questions or run into problems. Linda Rech.

