

Co-Learning with Earth Colors + Fibers



Basic Dye Recipe written by Grace

I. SET INTENTION

II. **CHOOSE NATURAL FIBER:** The material you use will influence *process*. Cotton is cellulose fiber and wool is protein fiber, they take color slightly different. There are also fibers called bast fibers, such as flax that are more difficult to dye. This recipe includes the measurements to dye 10 Bandanas (dharma supply in San Rafael) & 20 4x4 Cloth squares (Climate Beneficial Cloth)

III. **CHOOSE COLOR:** What grows locally in your area? Gather harvest baskets and clips if needed.

- **Marigolds:** Yellow, Light Orange | **Coreopsis:** Orange to Earthy Brown | **Mugwort:** Soft Earthtone Pale Yellow **Avocado Pits:** Plush Light Pink | Other dye plants include Toyon, Black Walnut, Weld, Goldenrod, etc. Consult books and other sources for lists and recipes.



IV. **DESIGN YOUR SET-UP for class experience:** get all your materials together and assess your space for all parts of the process. Including post dye drying and storage.



V. **PREP YOUR CLOTH:** for dye immersion.

- This is called *mordanting*. First, wash & clean cloth in washer or bin with natural soap. Let it dry. Measure out ALUM, a natural food-grade metallic salt mordant. *Alum Amount = 10% of Weight of Fabric (WOF)*. Find a pot that fits your material comfortably. First, add alum solution over heat until dissolved and immersed in the water. Second, add cloth and let simmer for at least 30 min or overnight with no heat. Let mordanted cloth dry for future color sessions, or immediately transfer material to dye pot.
- 10 Dharma Bandanas. WOF = 355 grams ; ALUM = 35 grams (pic)
- 20 4x4 Wool Squares. WOF = 90 grams ; ALUM = 9 grams
- Natural mordant: Oak Galls of Valley Oak Trees.



VI. **PREP YOUR DYE:**

- **Marigolds:** Use around 2.5 cups of dried or fresh marigolds for a 5 gallon pot (or similar large pot). Medium heat low simmer for between 30 min - hour to release color
- **Coreopsis:** Use around 2 cups of dried flowers for 5 a gallon pot (or similar large pot). Low to medium heat to release color before immersing cloth. Do not overheat flowers ~ the color is delicate
- **Mugwort:** Harvest from abundance. Gather a paper grocery bag worth of mugwort for a pot. Bring to a boil and then a high simmer for around an hour to release color.
- **Avocado Pits:** Food waste! Save avocado skins and pit, bring to a high simmer for at least 1 hour.

VII. **IMMERSION:** Strain out any dye material to compost. Immerse the cloth in the dye pot. Take the cloth out.

- **Marigolds:** simmer 30 - 1 hour | **Coreopsis:** low simmer 30 - 45 min | **Mugwort:** high simmer for 1 hour | **Avocado Pits:** simmer for 30 min min, and leave overnight, then simmer again.

VIII. **COMPLETION:** Squeeze, rinse lightly and let dry. Use gentle PH neutral soap to wash and discover the final color. Make sure to breathe, stretch, reflect, and slow down during all parts of this process