

Knotty Lady YARN S

How to Dye Yarn Part 2

So now that we have a general idea of how the dye process works and the supplies needed, let's dive deeper into working with the more common acid dyes. More specifically, let's explore how to prep a dye solution and a few different dyeing methods. Depending on the dyeing process you plan to use, you may be suggested to prepare a stock solution. A stock solution is when you mix 0.25 to 2.0 grams of dry dye powder with a specific amount of water. This helps if you are dyeing a large quantity over a short period of time. Stock solutions, depending on the brand of dye, are only good for 6 months. Some colors keep better than others. However, if you are wanting to dye 10 skeins in a month period of time, a stock solution may be the way to go to get consistent colorways. Make sure to label your stock solutions with the intensity and the color so as to not get them confused at a later time. Other dyeing methods give you common measuring spoon amounts to use. It is important to note that when using this method to pre dissolve the powdered dye. This can be done by completely dissolving the powder in a small amount of water before adding to your yarn or dyebath.



To see Jacquard Acid Dye's color intensity recommendations visit: <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5ac4eb022971149bb6d709d3/t/5b3e482570a6ad4a13aa69c8/1530808358592/Acid+Dye+Instructions.pdf>

Check out ChemKnits.com or on youtube.com for a tutorial on how to make acid dye stock solutions.



We will start by dyeing a solid color with a common method called kettle dyeing. This requires your basic materials, including a heat source. Once you know if you are to use a stock solution or powdered dye, it is time to prep your yarn. This same method can be used for roving. The basis of this process are simple, but varies between dyers and products used. So here are two basic methods that you can work off of and adjust as you see fit.

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Method 1 according to fiberartsy.com:

- Fill your dye-only pot halfway with hot water and add 1 cup of vinegar per 3 ounces of yarn (the average weight of a 100-gram skein of wool yarn).
- Add your yarn and gently poke and submerge it to release all air bubbles. Let sit for 1 hour.
- Remove enough water to barely cover your yarn.
- Add your dissolved dye under the yarn. This can be done by lifting and separating the yarn with chopsticks or a spoon. Be careful not to move your yarn too much especially if using multiple colors.
- Once the yarn is covered in dye. Place on the stove and turn the heat to low for 15 minutes.
- Then turn to medium until it begins to simmer then turn back to low and leave for about 45 minutes. Simmer until the dye dissolves and water is clear.
- Once the water is clear turn stove off and cover the pot and leave until the water is completely cool, or overnight.
- Rinse in room temperature water until water runs clear.
- Hang to dry completely.

This method is simple and appealing because you are not only using one pot but there is an option to use multiple colors. Once completed you can walk away from it knowing you won't ruin the yarn by possibly shocking the fibers with cold water. It is a good "walk away" method to go and do something else while the dye and yarn are soaking and "cooking" so you don't overwork the yarn.



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Method 2 according to ChemKnits.com

(also has extensive video tutorials on youtube.com):

- Pre-soak the yarn in tap water for a minimum of 20 minutes.
- Fill your dye-only pot with 12 cups of water and bring it to a simmer.
- Add 3 tablespoons of white vinegar to your pot.
- Add 1 cup of dye from your stock solution.
- Turn heat down a bit to a low simmer
- Squeeze out excess water from your yarn and add the yarn quickly to the dyebath. Gently agitate it with a spoon.
- Let the yarn simmer in the dyebath for 10-15 minutes or until the water is mostly clear.
- Turn off the heat and let sit for another 15 minutes.
- Remove yarn from the dye pot and rinse and wash the yarn with soap. Hang yarn to dry completely,



This is another simple method that shows the benefits of a stock solution. Additionally, it is a faster method that won't take as much time to dye. This is also a great method for subtle tonal colorways and to play with stock solutions, color saturations, and to find the right color tone. With more precise measurements it is easy to adjust the number to make that dream colorway a reality.

There is no right or wrong way to dye yarn. This makes each skein extra special. There are many tricks out there to play with including caking up your yarn. This will provide more of an ombre or gradient effect to your yarn. We will continue this series next month with other methods.