

Rust Dyeing Fabric Instructions

Rust Dyeing Supplies and Instructions

Rusted objects—nails, washers, mesh, grills, pipes, chainsaw blades. Use whatever you have on hand!

1 gallon white vinegar.

1 gallon water

Fabric—Muslin, cotton, light colored denim, canvas, silk, or any “ugly” fabric you want to over-dye.

1 gallon Zip Lock bags and kitchen trash bags

Twine or rubber bands if you want to wrap your bundle tightly

2 cheap aluminum roaster pans

1 medium plastic bowl, liquid measuring cup, spray bottle

Rubber Gloves

Instructions

1. In the plastic bowl, mix a 50/50 solution of vinegar and water. Use enough to thoroughly soak your fabric.
2. In one metal tray, lay out your soaked fabric. Place your rusty objects on the fabric. It can be random placement or a specific design. You will fold the fabric over the items, or roll fabric in a bundle around the items and secure with twine. Place the bundle in a zip lock bag. Use the kitchen size trash bag if your rusty bundle will not fit in a gallon zip bag.
3. Putting your fabric in the bag keeps some of the messiness contained as well as providing warmth for the rust to transfer to the fabric. Spray more vinegar/water solution into the bag so it is completely damp and zip/tie shut. Transfer your bagged bundle to the 2nd aluminum tray.
4. Continue soak fabric, place rusty objects, and wrap the bundle in the first tray if you have plenty of fabric and stuff to work with. Use both trays for the bundles when you are finished. Cover with a trash bag and weight them down. Try not to peek for a few hours! The heat, vinegar, and sunshine will start the dyeing process.
5. The dyeing process will need to be about 8 to 12 hours. It depends on how deep you want the color to be. You will begin to see the rust coming through and dyeing the fabric a soft orange probably in a few hours. Place your bags in the sunlight and weighted down with something heavy. The sun speeds up the dyeing process and the weights make sure fabric is in good contact with rusty items.
6. Check your bundles in a few hours. Open the bag & unwrap a little to see if you like what you have! If you want it darker, re-bag, rewet, and continue for a few more hours. Use gloves when you are open your fabric. This helps protect your hands from being stained or hurt.

Rinsing and treating fabric: supplies and instructions.

1 box of table salt and 2 buckets of water.

1. Have a bucket of warm water ready: 2 gallons to ¼ cup salt. Soak dyed fabric for 15-30 minutes. Rinse in clear water. Hand wash with mild detergent and line dry.
2. After you have all your new fabric treated, machine wash, dry, and iron. Your fabric is ready to use!

Sewing on Rust Dyed Fabric

1. I have used 2 kinds of needles sharp enough to go through each level of rust: Topstitch 14 and a Microtex 12.
2. Light to medium rust is not usually a problem, but I would slow your sewing speed a little.
3. Deep or heavy rust, slow down quite a bit!
4. Use cotton or poly/cotton blend thread.
5. When you are finished with your project, throw away that needle because rust will dull a needle quickly.
6. Experiment on a small sample either sewing your blocks or a quilt sandwich to practice all quilting stitches before sewing your actual quilt.