



OOAK Artist Emporium

Custom Dyeing Viscose and other fibers or fabrics

The idea of dyeing something can be intimidating. Many of us have used liquid dyes in the past and did not get very good results. We ended up being a little disillusioned by the process.

The dyes today are much better at ease of use and results. There are many types of dye on the market, but I'm going to show you how I use Jacquard Acid Dyes.

The Jacquard colors are accurate and the strength of the color will depend on how much water to dye powder you use.

While the instructions from Jacquard is great for dyeing pounds of laundry, the weight vs. dye ratio is not the same for dyeing doll hair or small pieces of fabric.

I'm starting with Jacquard Golden Yellow #603, Acid dye. Using the end of a plastic spoon, I only take out enough to make a small batch.

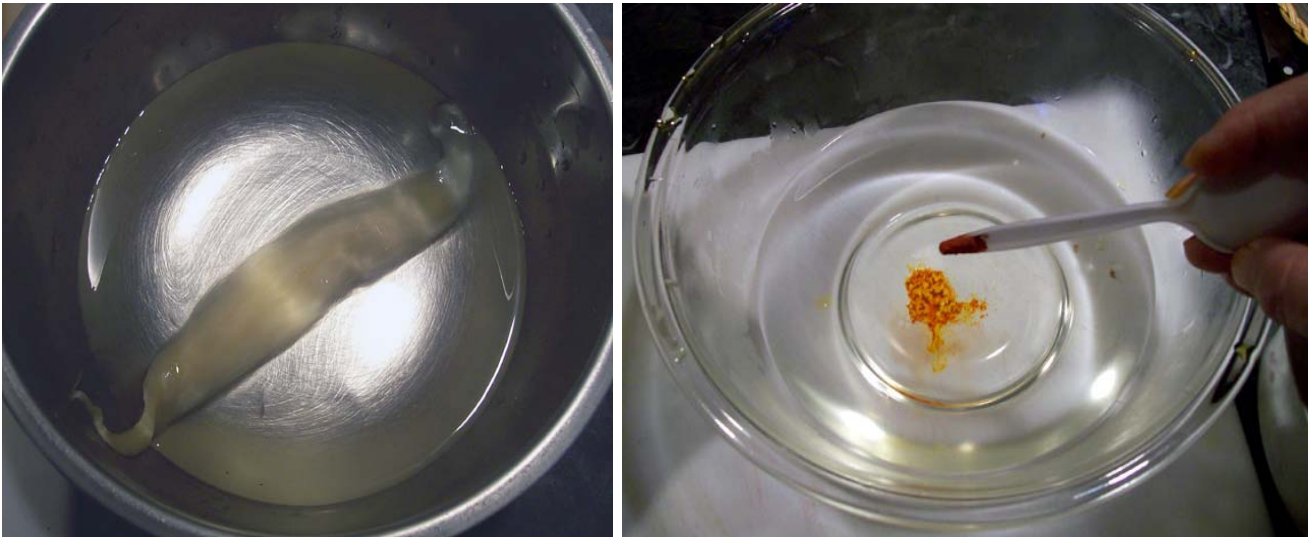
It's better to start with less and if you need more color, you can add more powder.



For this demonstration, I'll be adding a bit more yellow color to Pale Blonde Viscose doll hair. I am using this color because I want to keep the blonde shade, but just add a bit more gold to it. If I use Platinum, the result would be to orangey.

First, bring water to almost boiling using a tea kettle or large pot. You will need enough water for 2 of the 3 bowls.

I'm using medium size mixing bowls. My preference is glass, but I don't have enough so a stainless steel mixing bowl and a glass casserole dish is what you will be seeing.



When you start to see a little steam coming from your pot of water, turn it off and pour about 2 cups into the first bowl (stainless steel bowl image). Then pour 3 cups into the second bowl and 2 cups of **regular cool tap water** into the third bowl with about 1/4 cup of white vinegar added to it.

The first bowl should be used to dip your dry fibers or fabric in first. Let it get completely wet. When doing Viscose or Silk fibers, it's not a bad idea to use a twist tie on one end, just to have something to hold on to. We don't want to be burned by the hot water.

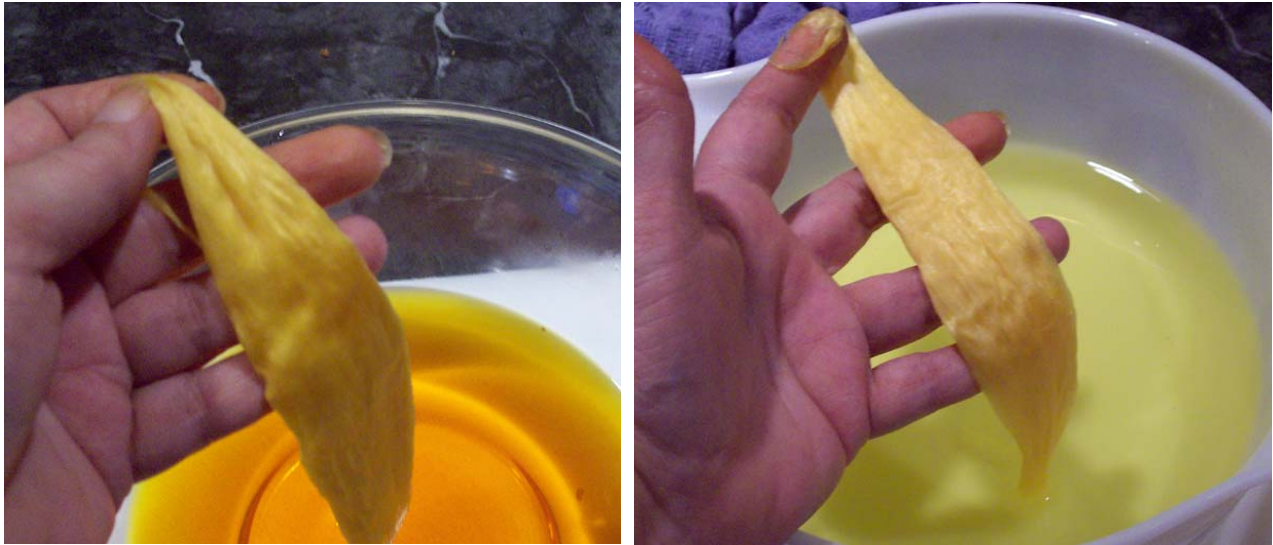
DO NOT SWISH OR STIR THE FIBERS.

The hot water will open the shaft of the fiber and the dye will be more evenly distributed. This is true if dyeing Tibetan or Mohair as well. It also removes any residue from the cleaning process for the natural animal fibers.

Mix your dye powder into the second bowl. Make sure you dissolve the powder completely. You should not see any particles in the bottom of the bowl. Take a test piece of fiber and dip it into the first hot water bath and then into the dye bath. Check the color. If you need more color, add a small bit more of the dye powder using the end of the plastic spoon. If you have too much color, add about 1 cup or more hot water to dilute the mix. Test again.



I removed my fiber from the hot water bath and dipped it for a couple of seconds into the dye bath. I did get the color I wanted, so it went directly into the cool water vinegar bath (white casserole dish). As you can see, some of the color bleeds out in this rinse phase, but there is plenty of color in the fibers. The vinegar (acid) is what sets the color.



Do not stir your fibers while in any water. If you do, they will start to matt up.

The original Pale Blonde Viscose is the top image, over a previously dyed portion of fiber. The Pale Blonde has only been in the first hot water bath at this point. You can see that it is a lighter shade.



This is the Pale Blonde after the dye bath over the same previously dyed piece. The color is the same. This is exactly the color I needed.

When I'm finished, I lay my portions on a couple of paper towels on a cookie sheet. They should dry completely before starting to smooth them. When they are completely dry, you can start the wefting process by pulling the ends repeatedly until they are all uniform in length. The pulling process also smooths out any of the rippling caused by getting wet.

Tussah Silk
#604 Burnt Orange



Tussah Silk
#628 Royal Blue



Viscose
#608 Pink



Tussah Silk
#624 Turquoise



White Tibetan - #639 Jet Black



Strawberry Viscose—#611 Vermillion