

REMUSS

Natural Dye Terms

Acidity: The level of acids in a water. High acidity usually weakens the colour in dye baths.

Alkalinity: The buffering capacity of water to neutralize acids and remain stable. Alkalinity is important for natural dyeing as it yields a more effective dye bath, as acids affect the dyeing process. Baking soda has an alkalining effect which often helps with enhancing the brightness of the dye bath.

Alum: Alum, also known as Aluminium Sulphate, can be formed in several ways; one way being as an industrially created chemical compound formed from aluminium hydroxide and sulphuric acid, and another way being from clays or Bauxite, a sedimentary rock containing a high level of aluminium. It is a popular metal mordant used in the natural dye process. For protein fibers, only the alum mordant may be required; however for cellulose fibers, the metal mordant and tannin are often recommended. To mordant add up to 20% of the fiber weight of Alum to a pot filled with water, bring the pot to a boil and then reduce the pot to a simmer. Add the fabric to the dye bath and agitate gently for 45 minutes. Allow fabric to cool before handling (remove with tongs or leave overnight)

Aluminium Acetate: another popular mordant recommended for plant based fibers.

Binder: Similar to a mordant, it helps to enhance the bond between the dye and the dye material or fabric. However, while a mordant acts to serve as a chemical bond between the dye bath and fabric, a binder, used primarily on cellulose fabrics, simply acts to enhance the protein like qualities of cellulosic fabrics so they better take in the dye material. Protein fabrics (i.e wool and silk) dye much more easily than cellulose fabrics and often don't require much mordanting at all for home dyeing experimentation and personal use. A popularly used "binder" is Soy Milk

Induction Cooking: The process of cooking by means of heating magnetic cookware through electromagnetic induction instead of the indirect heating performed by most gas and electrical stove tops with an approximate energy efficiency of 40% most stove top alternatives.

Modifier: An additive added to shift the colour. Baking soda has been used as a modifier in this workshop.

Mordant: A substance that acts as a dye fixative to bind the dye to the fabric by forming a chemical reaction between the dye bath and fabric. Not all dyes require a mordant; however, it is an essential

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step for most natural dyes to fix more effectively onto the fabric. Examples of popular mordants used

Scouring: The process of removing impurities from textiles before dyeing them. Different from pre washing your fabric, scouring is a pre-treatment process that requires boiling the fabric with soda ash otherwise known as soda carbonate or “washing soda” for an hour.