

ACTIVITY 11

TIE DYE

Dye cloth to create unique and colourful pieces of clothing

AGE: 10 - 14 years | ACTIVITY LENGTH: ?????

MATERIALS REQUIRED

*1 cotton t-shirt (white is preferable, but any light solid colour will work)
Ground cover, a plastic sheet or similar
Empty sauce, wash-up liquid or water bottles (the squeeze type), salt, dye (1 colour will do, but the more the merrier), a rack of some kind, (clothes airer or kitchen trivet etc.), a basin, elastic bands, rubber gloves, old clothes)*

Before you start, make sure to dress in old clothes, and put on some plastic gloves. Cover any working surfaces with plastic sheets or bin liners. Dye will stain clothes, furniture and even skin, so make sure none can get on anything which is not disposable.

Step 1

Get some powder dyes. These can be found in many supermarkets. ‘Dylon’ brand is most common, but any powder brand dye will work just as well. You need only one pack, but the more colours you use, the more colourful your t-shirt will be.

Step 2

Collect one plastic bottle for each dye colour you intend to use. Wash out the bottles very thoroughly.

Step 3

Add 3 tablespoons of dye and 1 tablespoon of salt to each bottle. It’s a good idea to mark each bottle with a marker so you know which bottle holds which colour.



Step 4

Fill each bottle almost to the top with lukewarm water, cap the bottles tightly and shake each bottle thoroughly.

NOTE: Dye works just like paint. You can mix dyes together to get new colours. For example, if you mix red and yellow dyes together, you will get orange. If you mix colours, you still need to use 3 tablespoons of what you have mixed in total.

Step 5

Now, soak your t-shirt in cold water. Then, squeeze it out and lay it flat on your work surface.

Step 6

Pinch the t-shirt between your thumb and forefinger, right in the centre of the garment. Now, twist it around until the whole t-shirt has formed a wheel shape.

Step 7

Take 4 elastic bands and wrap them around the t-shirt as shown in the photograph. The bands should cross over each other in the centre of the wheel shape. You should end up with 8 separate areas on the surface of the t-shirt.

Step 8

Place the rack flat over a basin, and then put the t-shirt on the rack.



Step 9

Now, cover each separate area with a different colour of dye. You can use the same colour in more than one area, but its best if you don't put the same colour on two adjoining areas. You can also leave an area blank of colour. It does not matter if dye goes over the edges of an area, it is all part of the look. Make sure to use plenty of dye on each section.

Step 10

Turn the t-shirt over and repeat Step 9. Match each section with the colour you used on the front of the t-shirt.

Step 11

Now, place the t-shirt in a bin-liner, seal it and put it aside for 24 hours to allow the dye to set.

Step 12

The following day, take your t-shirt out of the bin liner and rinse it under the cold tap until the water runs clear.

Step 13

Now, remove the elastic bands, and rinse again under the cold tap.

Step 14

Hand-wash in lukewarm water with a non-bio detergent and allow to dry on the washing line.