

# TIE-DYEBASICS

## STEP-BY-STEP INSTRUCTIONS

### STEP 1

**Fold and tie your garment.** Fold and/or tie the fabric into the desired patterns. Rubber bands or waxed thread such as our Flat Sinew work best. For more defined patterns wet the shirt and squeeze or spin out excess water before folding.

### STEP 2

**Soak garments in soda ash solution.** Wear your dust mask & gloves! Use - 1 cup (8 oz.) of Soda Ash Fixer per gallon of warm water. A gallon of the Soda Ash solution will soak 10-12 adult XL tees.

Soak the tied garments about 5-15 minutes, until thoroughly saturated. Squeeze out the garment so it is damp but not dripping. You can keep using the solution until it is gone.

### STEP 3

**Mix your dye.** Wear your dust mask & gloves! Measure urea and warm water into a container, an old pitcher works well. Check the name of each color on the label of the jar, some colors need more dye, they are marked with an \* by the name.

Paste up your dye with the urea water, then add rest of water and stir 'till thoroughly dissolved. Pour into squeeze bottles using your funnels. (diagram to the right)

A wet, tied up adult tee size M or L will absorb about 1/2 cup of liquid dye. Use this as a guide to help you decide how much to mix up. If you have hard water, we also recommend adding water softener to your dye mix (1/4 tsp for clear colors).

### STEP 4

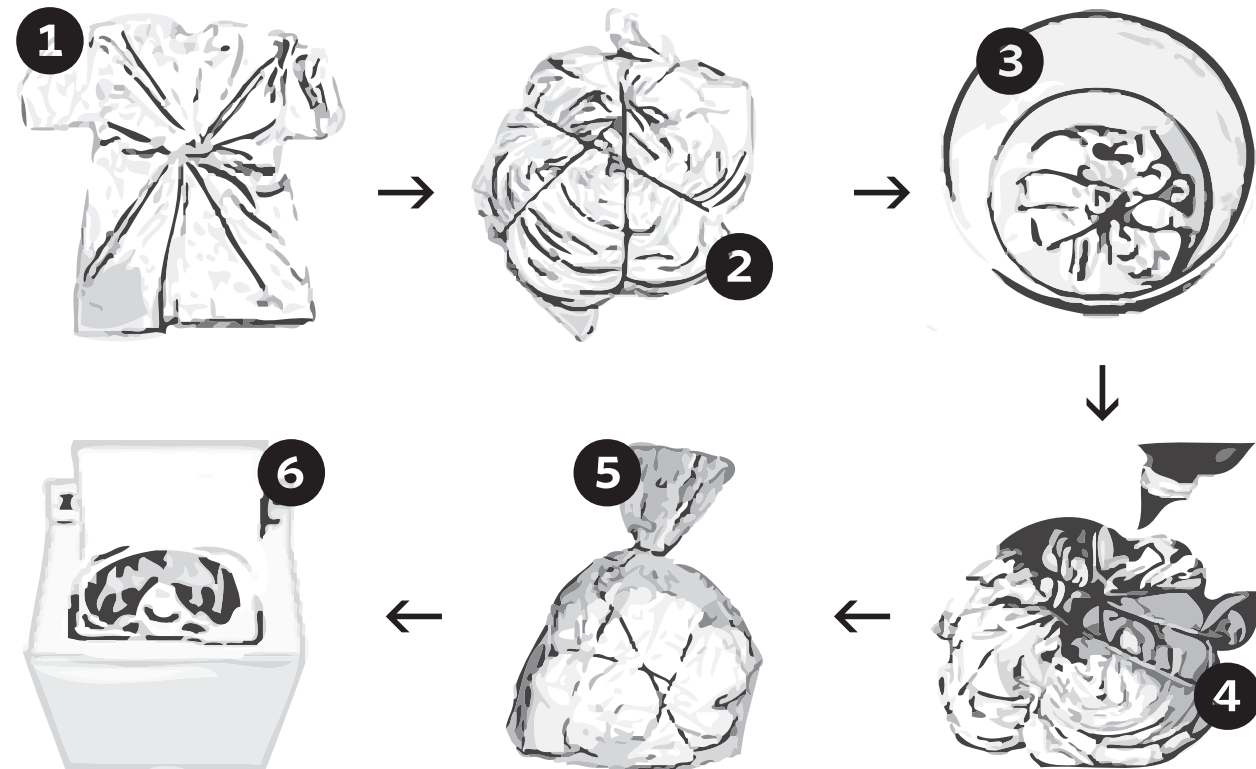
**Squirt on your dye.** Apply dye with squeeze bottles, paint brushes, sponges, etc., as many colors as you want.

### STEP 5

**Let it rest.** Put tied fabric in a plastic bag (you want to keep it damp). Let it cure for at least 4 hours but preferably 24 hours for the brightest colors. In temperatures below 70° F, it takes longer.

### STEP 6

**Wash it out.** Pre-fill your washing machine with HOT water and Synthrapol or Professional Textile Detergent, 1/4 cup per machine load. Rinse the shirt thoroughly before putting in the machine. Leaving ties on, rinse under cold running water (faucet, hose or shower), to stop the dye reaction. Next rinse in warm water while you untie the folds and after untying. Keep rinsing until water runs fairly clear. Throw in machine as soon as it is rinsed, running it through a full cycle. You can use Milsoft professional fabric softener in the final rinse to make your tie-dyes super soft!



### DYE FORMULAS FOR STEP 3 ▼

WATER	DYE	DYE*	DYE**	UREA
1 cup	2 tsp	4 tsp	8 tsp	1 Tbsp
1 pint	4 tsp	8 tsp	5 Tbsp	2 Tbsp
1 quart	8 tsp	5 Tbsp	1/2 cup	1/4 cup
1 gallon	1/2 cup	1 cup	2 cups	1 cup

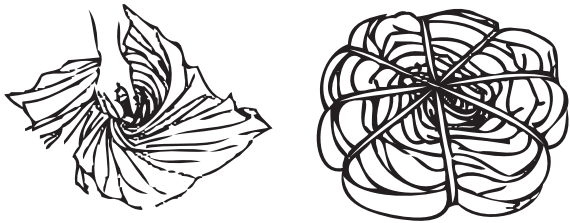


**Dharma Trading Co.**  
www.dharmatrading.com  
1-800-542-5227

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## FOLDING TECHNIQUES

**SPIRAL:** Lay fabric flat on a table, then pinch the fabric where you want the center of the spiral to be. Start twisting and keep flattening down the fabric with your other hand as you twist. When you're done it should look like a flat pancake. Secure as shown with rubber bands or sinew. Apply dye to both sides, get into creases.

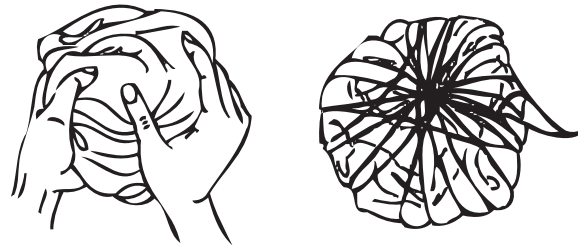


**KNOTTING:** Take the two opposite ends of your fabric and twist into a long rope, tie the "rope" into as many knots as you have room for.



**SCRUNCHED:** Dampen fabric and scrunch it up on a protected flat surface. Start with the middle and work your way out until you have a flat scrunchy pancake. Bind it together with rubber bands or flat sinew

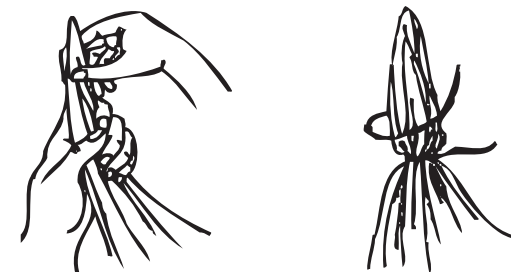
so it holds its shape. Squirt on dye colors and mush it in (with gloved hand) for less white. Flip over and dye the back too.



**ACCORDION FOLD:** Fold material like an accordion and tie or bind it at different intervals. Experiment with getting the dye deep into the crevasses, or not for different effects.



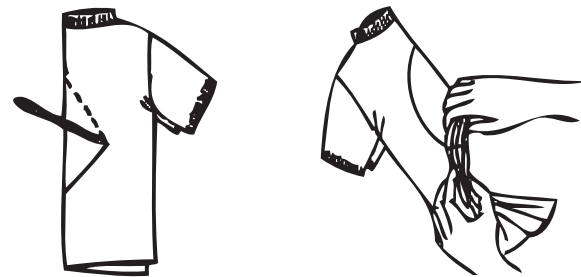
**CIRCLES:** Holding the fabric at the center, gather it irregularly and tie it with sinew or rubber bands at different intervals. Wind string or rubber bands several times around the material, and then knot or secure it. The distance between ties determines the distance between the circles produced when the dye is applied.



**STRIPES:** Roll the fabric loosely into a long tube. The stripes will be at right angles to the length of the tube. Using rubber bands or string, bind the fabric tube into as many segments as you want there to be stripes. The tighter you bind the fabric the more distinct your white stripe will be.



**SIMPLE SHAPE STITCHING:** Fold your fabric in half and with a pencil or vanishing marker trace out one half of a simple shape such as a diamond, circle, heart etc. Take a needle and thread (preferably a synthetic thread that won't take the dye) and run a simple over and under basting stitch along the line that you traced and gather the fabric along the stitch line until it's bunched up as much as you want. Hold your fabric in place by tying a knot in your thread or securing it with a rubber band.



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## HELPFUL HINTS

- Any natural fiber is great for tie-dye: cotton, rayon, hemp, linen, ramie etc.
- When tie-dyeing silk or wool or other protein fibers, keep in mind that Fiber Reactive colors shift on these fibers, and you cannot get a true black.
- Pre-wash fabric and garments; fabric softeners and other finishes can prevent the dye from absorbing into the fiber.
- Cover your work surfaces with old newspapers or folded paper towels to absorb extra dye. Or elevate on racks.
- Make sure you get everything covered with dye. After applying dye to one side, flip garment over and repeat the process. Insert squirt bottle tip deep into folds.
- Got a leaky squirt bottle? A couple wraps of white Teflon plumber's tape around the threads solves this problem.
- Use Water Softener if you suspect you have "hard" water to get the brightest colors. You can tell you need it if your water leaves a white residue on stuff.
- **DON'T USE HOT WATER** to mix up the dyes. The dyes work best in lukewarm water (105 degrees).
- Urea helps dye to dissolve, so dissolve the Urea in the water first. Add this water to the dye powder gradually and paste it up to avoid lumps.
- With this dye, there is always lots of "excess dye" to be washed out. Rinse well & don't crowd your washing machine with too much tie-dye or the water gets too muddy and so will your tie-dyes.

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR RINSING AND WASHING TIE-DYED ITEMS:

- 1 Leave your damp shirt tied, in the baggie, for at least 12 hours, 24 hours is better.
- 2 Wear gloves for this step! While rinsing in COLD running water, remove rubber band ties, then continue rinsing until water runs fairly clear.
- 3 Wash rinsed garment in very HOT water, using Synthrapol or Professional Textile Detergent if available. Otherwise, Dawn liquid dish soap or the equivalent will work fairly well. Never crowd the washing machine. Repeat wash if necessary. Rinse twice. This removes any excess unattached dye.
- 4 It never hurts to wash garment separately for the first few wearings. After that you can wash them with anything.

For dye, supplies, white clothing and instructions, visit:

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