

## What is “ice-dyeing”?

Ever want to learn a new technique, but not sure where to start? What do you do when different sources give you different directions? I’m a newbie at using dyes, but saw pictures of a fabric exchange challenge in a quilt magazine, several described as ‘ice dyed’ or ‘shibori ice dyed’. They looked exciting but what to do? Especially since many online videos I saw use dye types I don’t have. We carry Rit liquid dyes, Synthrapol and Retayne -- not Procion powdered dyes and soda ash, etc. But sometime you just decide to go ahead and experiment! How hard can it be??

1. Using natural fiber fabrics, prepare by washing, using Synthrapol to help the fabric take the dye.
2. “Shibori” seems to be used to describe - not just the ‘dots’ of Japanese tradition - but various ways of folding or pleating the wet fabric. Put a thin shim of wood or cut plastic template fabric on either side of the folds/pleats and hold in place with tightened C-clamps.



*online picture from Saharakraft.com*

3. Crumple, fold or twist the fabric and place it on top of a rack that will sit inside a container. The container should have some bottom drainage, and drain into something that will collect the runoff.
4. Pile ice on top of the fabric - cubes or crushed - so that it is fully covered with a thick layer of ice. Shake the dye bottle well then pour on top of the ice in any arbitrary manner - the more you do, the more you will figure out how

to make designs you like best. Try using 2 or 3 colors scattered over the ice surface.



*online photo from Highfibercontentblogspot.com*

5. Gather up your patience and go away overnight or longer till the ice all melts. Let it sit long enough that the ice melt and excess dye work their way through the fabric and drains to the lower catch bin. (There were some nice arrangements shown on line; what I had on hand to experiment with was a square plate rack with ~6” legs, sitting in a laundry basket, draining into a cat box.)
6. To try to make the dye more permanent, I used a spray bottle to spritz Rit Color Stay Dye Fixative over the top of the fabric as it was in the draining stage. Since I was counting on it draining through the crumples and the shibori folds, I sprayed on a lot!
7. Several hours later I was out of patience, so I decided it had drained enough. I took the fabric to a sink, removed the clamps and shims, and rinsed the fabric till the water ran clear in the sink. WEAR GLOVES.
8. I put the fabric in the washer with Retayne, which helps fabrics, well -to retain, their color. As I put it in the dryer, I ran an empty washer cycle with hot water and detergent to clean dye residue out of the machine.  
Be BOLD - look at online videos, Rit’s website has information, see magazines - then just TRY it!