

NATURAL INDIGO VAT

TUTORIAL
by Kraftkolour

Embarking on the process of preparing an Indigo Vat for the first time may seem challenging, but fear not. Our comprehensive step-by-step tutorial, complete with images, has been meticulously crafted to guide you through each stage easily.

With this resource, you can confidently achieve exceptional results from the outset.

WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

MATERIALS:

- Our 'Natural Bio Indigo Instructions' (Available from our Website)
- AN INDIGO KIT OR:
 - Soda Ash
 - Natural Bio Indigo Powder
 - Sodium Hydrosulphite (Hydros)
 - Any natural fabric or fibre (wash before dyeing)

EQUIPMENT:

- Rubber Gloves
- Wooden Spoon
- Stainless steel pot or plastic bucket
- Thermometer
- Measuring Jug
- Protective Clothing
- Heat Source

preparing the dyebath



Step 1

Get everything ready

Use a tarp or waterproof table cloth or work outside to keep the space clean.

Gather all equipment and materials needed.

Weigh around 500gms of items to dye.

Going over 500gms is fine if using heavy clips or bindings.



Step 2

Soda Ash

Put a full kettle on to boil.

In a heatproof jug or container, pour in 500ml of freshly boiled water.

Pour in 150gms of Soda Ash and stir.

If Soda Ash doesn't dissolve fully, add splashes of boiled water until it does dissolve.



Step 3

Indigo

In a heatproof jug or container dissolve 20gms of Natural Indigo in hot water from the kettle and stir until thoroughly dissolved.

Slowly add the Soda Ash solution to the Indigo

Thoroughly mix the solutions together.



Step 4

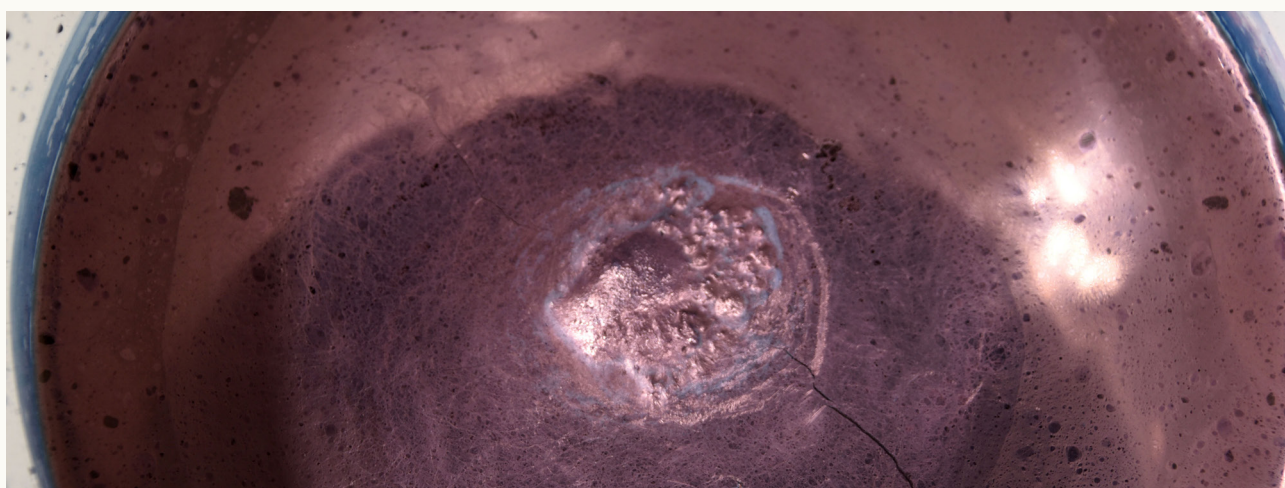
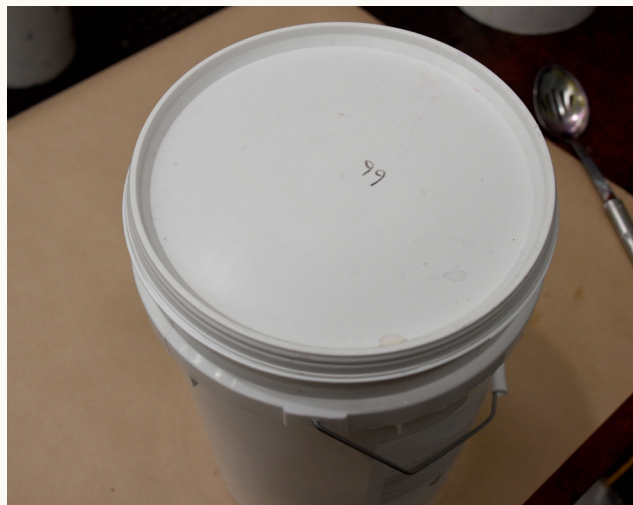
Dye Bath

In your bucket or pot, pour in 6.5 litres of hot water.

Slowly stir in the Indigo/Soda Ash solution.



preparing the dyebath cont.



Step 5

Hydros

Sprinkle 80gms Sodium Hydrosulphite (Hydros) over the surface of the vat and stir gently.

You will start to see the top of the Vat turn metallic, this is good!

Once the Hydros is mixed in well, cover the vessel and leave it to 'vat out*'. Covering the dyebath will stop oxidation and stop any debris falling in.

Come back in 5-10 minutes and the dyebath will be ready to use when the top has brassy bubbles on the surface with a clear greenish yellow colour underneath.

If the dyebath is still blue and cloudy, the dye is not dissolved properly and you will need to add a little more Hydros.

**Vat/Vatting Out: The dye is dissolved with Soda Ash or Caustic Soda and then Sodium Hydrosulphite is used to remove the oxygen from the dyebath. This is known as 'vatting out'. When Indigo is vatted out in solution it changes from blue to yellow/green. The surface of the dyebath should be a bluish, brassy colour with some bubbles on it which is known as 'the flower'. This is caused by the Indigo returning to its insoluble state where it comes into contact with oxygen. A healthy Indigo dyebath should be greenish/yellow.*

dyeing the fabric

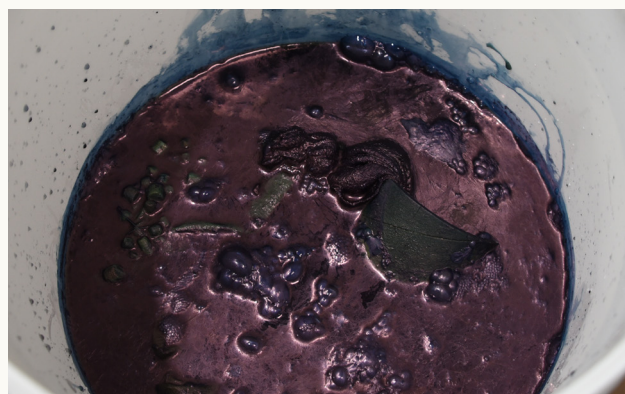


Step 6
Test

Test the Indigo by dipping a fabric or paper sample into the vat before dyeing the fabric.

The Indigo should turn blue when exposed to the air after coming out of the dyebath greenish yellow.

Allow a few minutes for the Indigo to change color.



Step 7
Submerge

Maintain the vat at 50°C in colder areas or during winter. Heating the dyebath may not be necessary in warmer weather.

Ensure the fabric is fully submerged in the dyebath.

Leave the fabric in the dyebath for at least 10 minutes.



Step 8
Remove

Remove fabric or items from the dyebath, squeeze out excess dye and allow it to OXIDISE. You will see your pieces turn from a yellowish green to a lovely blue.

To darken the shade re-dip the dyeing for a further 10 minutes or leave it longer.



Step 9
Rinse and Dry

After you have oxidised your fabric and you're happy with the colour, wash well in hot soapy water to remove excess dye and chemicals.

Now you can remove any resist/shibori methods you may have used.

Let your fabric/items dry, give them a good iron and enjoy.



t i p s

WASHING OUT

To conserve water, soak larger items in warm water and add a splash of Dynazol to remove dye faster.

FLOWER STAINS

To prevent permanent imprints or stains, gently move the flower at the top of the vat aside using a spoon or spatula before placing your fabric into the vat.

RETURNING TO YOUR VAT

If you need to take a pause in your dyeing, you can cover your vat and reactivate it.

If your break is longer (like months) then you can revive your Indigo Vat.

See our instructions on *'Maintaining an Indigo Vat'* for more information.

FURTHER HELP

Indigo can be notoriously temperamental, but following should provide a smooth and fun experience.

If problems do arise, we always suggest checking your materials and then going over the instructions once more.

Please note that Hydros only has a shelf life of 6-12 months.

For more resources on Indigo and problem solving, please see the *'Instructions'* section on our website.

n e e d s u p p l i e s ?



We've got you covered!

If you're a beginner or just need a new set of materials, try one of our Indigo Kits.

Or if you need to replenish your supplies, all materials can be purchased individually.

c o n n e c t w i t h u s

Thank you for learning with us!
We love help people get started and thrive with their textile adventures.

We would love to see your progress and #sharethelove with our **kreative** community.



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