

Home Makes: Shibori Dyeing

This activity is perfect for Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 3 students aged 7 -13 with the help of an adult.

This activity involves heating water on a hob and should be supervised by an adult.

Shibori is a resist dyeing technique from Japan. Fabric is folded, tied or clamped and then dyed—the ties and folds stop the dye reaching the fabric and make a pattern.

Shibori usually uses blue indigo dye but in this activity you'll use turmeric and salt to create a yellow colour.



Materials:

You can use any cotton or polycotton fabric including old t-shirts, pillow cases, tea towels and tote bags. This will work best with light-coloured fabrics.

- • 3 cups of water
- 2 tbsp of turmeric
- 1.5 tbsp of vinegar (optional)
- • 2 tbsp of salt

Equipment:

- Elastic bands / string / bulldog clips / laundry pegs
- Kettle
- Saucepan
- Cardboard (optional)

You'll learn about:

Natural dyes, traditional Japanese dyeing and creating patterns

Time:

This activity can take from 30 minutes to two hours.

This activity is broken down into two halves—you can split it over two days or do it all in one go if you're really having fun!

Take a look at our shibori moodboard or our ideas on [Pinterest](#) for inspiration. Find out more about natural [dyes](#) here.

Part One: folding your fabric

- See what items you can find to dye. Check with the adults in your house to make sure this is ok.
- Fold and tie your fabric to create different patterns. The tighter you tie your fabric the more your patterns will show up.

You could try:

- Folding fabric in a concertina and then wrapping tightly with string or elastic bands.
- Pinching and wrapping your fabric to make circles.
- Tying small objects like coins or beads into your fabric.

Talk and Make

- What do you think your pattern will look like?
- What would happen if you folded your fabric into triangles or other shapes?
- How many times can you fold your fabric?

Part Two: dyeing your fabric

- Add the water, turmeric and vinegar to a saucepan. Heat on the stove until boiling, stirring to dissolve the salt.
- Add your fabric to the pan of dye and leave for 1 hour. You may get better results if you allow the mix to simmer on a low heat.
- When the hour is up, drain and rinse your fabric.
- Once the water runs clear you can unfold your fabric to let it dry.

Talk and Make

- Why does this work better with natural fabrics?
- What does the salt do?
- What does the vinegar do?
- What other natural materials could you use to dye fabric?
- Has our pattern come out as expected?
- What is resist dye?

Tips for adults:

- This technique will only work on natural and light coloured fabrics.
- The tighter the folds and the fastening is, the better the resist dye technique will work.
- If you have a larger item or more than one, you will need to increase the dye ingredients.
- The longer you leave the fabric in the dye the stronger the colour will be.
- Salt is used to 'fix' the dye.
- Vinegar will make the dye brighter.



Gather all of your materials and equipment together.



Start by tucking in any straps or sleeves and then fold the fabric like a paper fan (concertina).



From there you can fold or twist your fabric into different shapes. I chose triangles.



Try to fold as tightly as possible into as small a shape as you can.



Once you have your shape you need to secure it with elastic bands or string. I added a card triangle to help the top layer resist the dye.



Add the water, turmeric, salt and vinegar to a saucepan and bring to a boil. Add the fabric and submerge, letting it simmer for 1 hour.



Drain away the dye and run the fabric under cold water until the water runs clear.



Finally unravel your work and see how it looks!

Be sure to share photos of your work with us using the hastags; #EverydayMaking and #GetCreativeAtHome

 [@CraftsCouncilUK](https://www.facebook.com/CraftsCouncilUK)  [@CraftsCouncilUK](https://twitter.com/CraftsCouncilUK)  [@CraftsCouncil](https://www.instagram.com/CraftsCouncil)

Or send to us directly at participation@craftscouncil.org.uk for us to share!