

Natural Egg Dyeing



A note from Sonya Joy, Community Engagement Manager and Garden Educator

This unstable moment has created a deep need for grounding and stability in me. Even while the challenges arise to our health and economy, I still have an irrepressible desire to celebrate the arrival of spring.

Spring is such a lively time! Unfurling magnolias, daffodils, and lilacs. The ancient smell of rich, wet soil. Crunching fresh bitter greens and pungent chives. Baby animals! Sweet rains. No matter what we're facing, spring can still be a reminder to hit the refresh button. To renew our commitments to what brings us joy. To savor being of the earth, on the earth.

Dyeing or decorating eggs is a spring tradition in many parts of the world. It's a fun activity to do with children, although these natural recipes will stain clothing and light kitchen counters, so try covering your craft area with old towels or newspapers to work on.



You will need:

- 1 dozen white-shelled eggs
- 1 beet
- 2 tablespoons turmeric
- 2 teaspoons vinegar
- 2 teaspoons salt
- 2 cups boiling water
- 1 push pin
- 1 paper clip
- masking tape
- towel or cutting board you don't mind staining



Procedure:

1. Put a small piece of masking tape at the tapered ends of each egg. Using a push pin, create an initial hole through the tape. Open a paper clip and use it to widen the initial hole and also to break the yolk inside the egg.
2. Blow whites and yolk out of the egg into a bowl. Use egg in cooking, but only for yourself or people who you are quarantined with in your household! Gently rinse eggs and dry with a towel or air dry overnight.
3. To make the pink dye, grate the entire beet and cover with $\frac{1}{2}$ cup hot water, 1 teaspoon vinegar and 1 teaspoon salt. Stir to combine and allow to sit for 5 minutes. Squeeze juice from shredded beets. Strain the liquid into a small cup or ball jar.
4. To make the golden dye, mix turmeric with $\frac{3}{4}$ cup hot water, 1 teaspoon vinegar and 1 teaspoon salt.
5. On a towel or cutting board that you don't mind getting stained, place 1 egg into each cup of dye. You will need to rest a heavy spoon or cup filled with water on top to weigh them down into the dyeing liquid. Let them soak for anywhere from 10 minutes for a light color to 30 minutes for a deeper color. Allow to dry.
6. Once dry, paint with designs. Hang throughout your home for fun spring decorations!

Quick Tips

- Be prepared, blowing the whites and yolks out of the eggs takes some effort! If you find yourself frustrated, just widen the holes and try again. It took me about 3 egg-y tries to get the hang of it! Kids might say "ewwww" at first, still they will find it a gross sort of fun. ;)
- I've heard that purple cabbage makes a delightful blue color although I didn't try it.
- FYI matcha green tea will not dye your eggs green no matter how long you wait.
- Have fun experimenting with natural dyes and celebrating spring in your own silly, creative way.

