

## Ice Dyeing

Ice dyeing involves covering your textile with ice and then sprinkling on powdered dye. As the ice melts, the dye will be distributed throughout the piece. This can create beautiful patterns both from the way the ice melts and distributes dye and in the way the different pigments found in the dye can separate and disperse throughout the piece.

### **Basic Procedure:**

1. Mix up a solution of soda ash (2 cups/gallon of water). Soak your fabric pieces in the solution for 20 minutes. Wearing gloves, remove your piece and wring out excess solution.
2. Lay your piece out on a rack and cover with ice. The rack will prevent water/dye from pooling on the bottom of the piece as the ice melts. I often use aluminum foil to create a little nest but you can play around with it and use what you have (just don't use kitchen items-dye utensils should always be kept separate from cooking utensils!).



*Figure 1 Fabric in foil nests.*



Figure 2 Fabric covered with ice.

3. Sprinkle dye powder on top. We are using Dharma's Fiber Reactive Dyes. This is a fine powder so wear a mask and be mindful that dye can get everywhere on a windy day.



Figure 3 Fiber Reactive Dyes

4. Leave your piece until all ice melts. Do not disturb for 24 hours so colors can set.
5. Rinse your piece in cold water until the water runs clear.
6. Wash in the washing machine with hot water.
7. Admire your finished piece and think about how awesome you are.

**Play with variables!** Below you can see a little experiment I did showing the difference between light ice vs heavy ice and light dye vs heavy dye. All pieces used the same three dyes (coral pink, ecru, and terracotta). For the two on the left, I added a small amount of ice and for the two on the right, I added lots of ice. For the top two, I sprinkled dye on sparingly and for the bottom two I sprinkled on a lot.



As you can see in the next image, playing around with variables can give you different results.

