

Fiber Reactive Dyes

The following is a simplified version information that covers basic rope dyeing for beginners, not a complete "how to" process rope - your results may vary. We recommend researching and testing various techniques and methods to find what works best for you

Specially formulated for natural fiber ropes, these powder fiber reactive dyes create vibrant, colorfast and long lasting colors on natural cellulose fibers such as hemp, jute, cotton, silk, bamboo, etc. Fiber reactive dyes react to form a true bond with the fiber involved.

The following yields can and will vary but give you an approximate to work with:

1/2oz = 20ft of rope a medium shade

1oz = 25-40ft of rope a medium shade

2oz = 35-55ft of rope a medium shade

If you want vibrant, deep colors, use more dye. Lighter, paler colors, use less dye. We recommend using the whole dye packet in your dye bath to prevent streaking.

The following instructions are for kitchen dyeing in a simplified method called "immersion dyeing":

1. Rope must be thoroughly clean before putting into dye bath.
2. This recipe is for **one pound** of rope dyed a medium shade (about 25ft of rope). Adjust all additions proportionately to the weight of rope being dyed.
3. Put 1/2 ounce of dye into a plastic disposable cup and add lukewarm water a little at a time and stir into a paste. Use a disposable or plastic spoon.
4. In an enamel pot, stainless steel pot, plastic bucket or pail, but not aluminum (do not use your cooking pots!) put two gallons of hot tap water (as hot as you can get from your tap which is usually about 105-110 deg F.) Put the dissolved dye into this 2 gallons of hot water and mix well. This proportion of 1/2 oz. of dye powder to 1 pound of rope will give you a medium shade. If you wish light or pale shades, add only 1/2 or 1/4 of the dissolved dye to the dye bath. Or if you wish to mix colors you can add 1/2 the dissolved dye of two different colors to the bath. To make lighter colors you **only** reduce the amount of the dye, **not** the amount of salt and soda - these stay the same, based on weight of rope being dyed. You only reduce the amount of salt and soda if you are reducing the amount of rope being dyed.
5. Add 1 pound of plain table salt (can be found at any grocery store) Stir to dissolve the salt. (Yes, you add one pound of salt for one pound of rope being dyed.) If you are trying

to dye a deep color (such as black or navy) you can even add 1.5 lbs of salt. The salt helps to "push" the dye into the rope.

6. Stir gently for a minute. Let the rope sit in the bath of dye for 10 minutes or so, make sure to cover the rope completely with the dye bath. Stir gently every 5 minutes to help distribute the dye evenly. Meanwhile in a cup of warm water dissolve 2 tablespoons (about 2 oz) of Soda Ash which sets the dye into the rope. Slowly add the dissolved soda to the rope in the dye bath, stirring gently and continually. This is when stirring will really help to prevent streaking while the dye is being set into the rope.

7. Allow the rope to sit in the dye bath until the desired color level is reached. Stir gently and often. Light shades will take 20-30 minutes while deep shades will take up to an hour or more. The rope will be darker when it is wet and can lighten considerably as it dries.

8. After dyeing is complete it is essential to wash the rope in hot soapy water and rinse well. For deep shades you may want to wash 3-4 times with rinsing in plenty of water.