

DYE CRAYONS (MAKE AND DRAW)

TECHNIQUE COMPATIBILITY	
WITH HEATFIX DYES	WITH STEAMFIX DYES
YES, GOOD	YES, EXC.

This technique involves using white school chalks that have been soaked in liquid dye, to draw on fabric.

Method

- Select suitable liquid dye colours and immerse the white chalks in these dyes for 5 minutes.
- Withdraw the dye coloured chalks and leave them to drain for about 5 minutes then if necessary dab them on blotting paper to remove excess dye.
- The chalks are now dye crayons ready for drawing onto the fabric. To prevent your fingers from becoming dye coloured while drawing with the crayons, either wear rubber gloves or wrap some packaging tape around the crayons.
- To facilitate drawing the fabric should be stretched on a frame (see TECH. INFO. SH. 4 STRETCHER FRAMES). It is also helpful to have something beneath the fabric to press on during drawing. For this a screen printing screen with open mesh is best (see TECH. INFO. SH 3, the diagram at the top of page 2). The fine porous screen mesh allows hot air from a blowheater to pass through it, plus the fabric being drawn on. It also provides good support for crayon and hand pressure. For absorbent fabrics hot blowheater air may be necessary to halt the diffusion of damp dye imparted by the crayon. However I've found that most fabrics are not so absorbent that sharpness is lost during drawing; even without a blowheater. (BLOWHEATER TABLE explained in TECH. INFO. SH. 3).
- During drying the drawing will become chalky white as the dye migrates from the chalk deposit into the fabric and dries.
- Fix the dye and rinse as usual. During the rinsing procedure the white chalk deposit mentioned above will be removed from the fabric.

Notes

- When drawing on cellulose fabrics, 5% COTTONFIX® must be added to the dyes prior to being absorbed into the chalk. Alternatively the cellulose fabric must be mordanted with 3.5% SODA ASH prior to being drawn upon.

- Some really interesting textured drawing effects can be transferred by lying the stretched fabric on embossed surfaces and then drawing over this. The high points of the embossed design will be imprinted onto the fabric in the same way as brass rubbings are made. Imprint detail is much sharper if the crayon strokes are done in one direction only.
- Stationery stores stock standard size school chalks. "Crayola" make jumbo size chalks. For even thicker chalks, farm supply merchants stock a range called "raddles" for stock and wool pack marking.
- If 20% THIN RESISTAD is added to the dye which is absorbed into the chalk, then lines drawn on the fabric will also be coloured resist outlines, providing they have always penetrated right through the fabric.