

Mordanting Cellulose Fiber (cotton/linen etc.)

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You need:

Your fiber/yarn/fabric/clothing

Detergent (preferably pH neutral such as Synthrapol)

Soda ash

Aluminum Acetate (NOT Aluminum Sulfate)

Wheat Bran

There are many different recipes for mordanting. I used the instructions in this video for mordanting on cotton and linen and it turned out very well. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fyz1rIkV9NI>

1. Measure

Weigh the fibers (when dry). You will need 10% of the Weight of Fiber (WOF) of aluminum acetate, and 5% of WOF of wheat bran.

2. Scour the cellulose material

Clean the textile using a pH neutral detergent such as Synthrapol. If possible simmer your fabric with the detergent and some soda ash for an hour, then rinse. For 1 pound of goods add 2 teaspoons Synthrapol and 4 teaspoons soda ash.

3. Put water and alum in a pot

Put the aluminum acetate in a bowl/jar. Add a little bit of boiling water. Mix until dissolved.

Use a pot big enough to allow your textiles to move around in the pot. Fill with warm water (110-120f, hot bath temperature), put the alum in it, stir well. Add fibers. Leave it in for 45 mins.

Put the pot on low to keep the temp at 110-120f. Or if the room is warm it might stay at that temperature without putting it on the stove.

4. Make a wheat bran "tea"

Put your amount of wheat bran in a cheesecloth, laundry or nut milk mesh bag. Fill a pot or bucket with warm (110-120f) water, put the wheat bran bag in it. Let steep for 30 mins. Remove the "bran tea bag"

5. Put the textiles into the bran tea.

Stir the fiber in the bath. Soak for 30 mins.

6. Rinse the fabric.

In the video linked above, the fabric is not rinsed. I am concerned that loose aluminum acetate will float around in the dye pot stealing dye, so I rinsed the fabric a bit and it still works well.

7. Dye or dry

You can now dye the textiles or let them dry until you are ready to use them.