

How to Decorate Eggs

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Make them worth the hunt.

Eggs are perfect natural canvases—they take on color well and have smooth surfaces, and their naturally elegant shape invites something more. Take your egg decorating to the next level with:

- The egg-decorating tools you'll need, along with basic how-to techniques
- Tips on how to make and use dye for coloring eggs
- More than a dozen imaginative egg decorating projects, step by step



How to Prepare Eggs for Decoration

Before you can start decorating an egg, you first have to prepare it so that it doesn't break and make a runny mess as you decorate it. To prepare eggs for decorating, you can either blow out the eggs' contents or cook the eggs' contents. For either method, the first thing to do is examine your eggs and throw away any that have visible hairline cracks, a noticeably slimy texture, or powdery spots that come off when touched.

How to Blow Out an Egg

Blowing out the contents of an egg produces a light, hollow shell that won't go bad or start to smell over time. You can blow an egg using specialized tools or just those you have around the house.

How to Use an Egg-Blowing Tool

If you're planning on decorating a lot of eggs—more than a dozen—investing in egg-blowing tools is a good idea. Egg-blowing tools and kits are sold at most craft stores. Depending on the type of tool you purchase, you either pierce one or both ends of the egg, and then squeeze a pump or blow into a pipe to force the contents out of the egg into a container.



various egg-blowing tools

How to Blow Out an Egg Without Special Tools

If you don't have tools made specifically for blowing out an egg, just use the following process:

1. Wash the egg with a very mild solution of bleach and water, and dry it well.
2. Pierce each end of the egg with a large needle. Place your lips on one end (that's why you washed the egg), covering the needle hole on that end.
3. Blow the contents gently into a bowl.

If the eggs are fresh, you can actually use the contents of the egg that you've blown into the bowl for cooking.

How to Clean an Egg After You've Blown It Out

After you've blown out an egg's contents (using either method), it's crucial that you clean out the inside of the egg as follows:

1. Fill a syringe with warm, soapy water.
2. Inject the solution into the egg and shake it gently while covering the holes with your fingers.
3. Blow or shake out the contents, then place the egg on a drying rack to drain and dry thoroughly.

How to Hard-Boil an Egg for Decorating

If you don't want to blow out your eggs' contents, you can also hard-boil the eggs and then seal them.

How to Avoid Cracks in Hard-Boiled Eggs

The most important thing when boiling an egg for decoration is not to crack the shell. To avoid producing cracks, discard any raw eggs with hairline cracks in their shells before cooking. In addition:

- If the eggs have recently been in the refrigerator, immerse them in hot tap water for about five minutes before cooking them. Extreme changes in temperature can stress the shells and make them crack.
- Some people recommend piercing the shell with a pin, since it allows air to escape and prevents pressure from building up inside and cracking the egg from the inside out. Doing so is not necessary however.

How to Cook and Seal Eggs

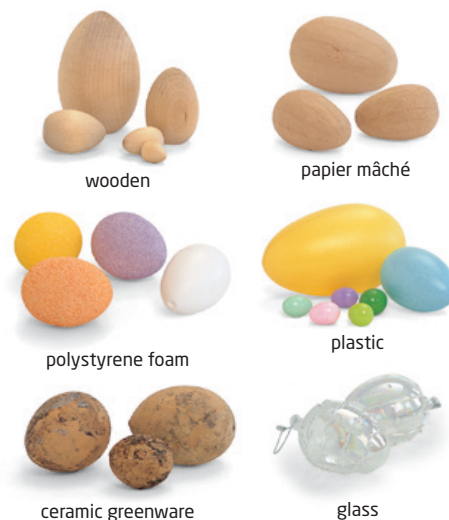
To cook and seal the eggs:

1. Place the eggs (which have been warmed in hot tap water) in a lidded, heavy saucepan that's large enough to hold them in a single layer.
2. Cover with cold tap water. Cover the pan partly with a lid and heat on high until the water comes to a full boil.
3. Turn down the heat and count slowly to 30 before taking the pot off the burner. Let the eggs stand in the hot water, tightly covered, for 15 minutes.
4. Gently pour off most of the hot water.
5. Place the eggs in a colander, and rinse them under cold running water for five minutes.
6. When the eggs have cooled, wipe them dry with a clean cloth.

7. Apply a couple of coats of acrylic varnish to seal the eggs if you want them to keep for any length of time. If you apply varnish to the eggs, though, don't eat them. (Generally, if you hide decorated hard-cooked eggs for Easter, it's best not to eat them later. Instead, decorate a set of eggs for hiding and set aside other hard-cooked eggs for eating.)
8. Once the varnish has dried, you can decorate the eggs.

If You Don't Want to Prepare Eggs

If you don't want to prepare natural eggs for decorating, you can also buy manmade "eggs" to decorate. These may be made of wood, papier mâché, polystyrene foam, plastic, ceramic greenware (which can be painted and fired), or glass.



Egg Decorating Tools

You'll need a few essential tools for egg decorating, and there are also some nonessential but handy tools that you may want to have on hand.

Essential Egg Decorating Tools

Most of the tools you need for egg decorating are basic items that you probably already have around the house.

- Pencil and paper
- Scissors
- A measuring tape (or ruler and string)

- White craft glue, a hot glue gun, glue sticks, and cellophane tape
- Darning or tapestry needles (for piercing eggs)
- Paintbrushes (large and small, broad- and fine-tipped)
- Undyed wooden toothpicks (for placing dabs of glue where you want them)
- Bamboo skewers
- Plastic kitchen wrap (useful when gluing anything to an egg)

Other Handy Egg Decorating Tools

The following tools are useful for decorating eggs, as well as for other crafting projects.

- **Bone folders:** Great for burnishing glued things and smoothing out wrinkles in tape or paper. If you don't have a bone folder, a craft stick will work as well.
- **Hand-held, motorized cutting tools:** Use them to drill holes, cut things apart, and to sand.
- **Craft lathe:** Perfect if you need both hands free or want to paint a continuous line around an egg. You can find these light-duty tools in craft stores or on websites that specialize in egg craft or **pysanky** (traditional Ukrainian decorated eggs). In a pinch, you can also simply place a blown egg on a bamboo skewer. Stand the skewer in a piece of polystyrene foam if you need to use two hands, or hold the skewer in one hand as you decorate the egg with the other.



craft lathe

- **Kystka or tjanting tool:** For applying melted beeswax to a surface. Ukrainian pysanky makers use many types of kystka, electric or heated with a small flame. Traditional batik dyers use a tool called a tjanting. Each of these tools is basically a small funnel attached to a stick. Wax is placed in the funnel and heated. The tool is then drawn across the surface, creating a wax line.



kystka tool and wax

- **Drying rack:** To avoid the large, unsightly spots that develop on shells when you put wet, dyed eggs on a flat surface to dry. A blown and cleaned egg needs to drain and dry before you use it, so make a rack with a piece of hard polystyrene foam and bamboo skewers, short lengths of coat hanger wire, or even toothpicks inserted into the foam. Slip blown eggs onto skewers, or prop dyed eggs on a trio of toothpicks, and they'll dry or drain overnight. You can also use the rack to hold eggs in place if you use aerosol paint or varnish.



drying rack

- **Doll needle:** For threading ribbon through eggs. The length of the needle makes it easy to run the needle through all but the largest of eggs, and its large eye is easy to thread.
- **Rubber or latex gloves:** To protect your hands when you're dyeing eggs. If you don't want to walk around with blue or green fingers keep a stash of gloves handy.
- **Nonreactive pans:** To keep eggs from reacting and changing color when they come in contact with metal pans. Enamel-coated or glass pans are best. If you plan to do a lot of egg-dyeing, it's wise to buy a pan and reserve it solely for dyes.
- **Slotted plastic serving spoons:** For lifting eggs from a dye bath. Make sure the spoons are strong enough and big enough to securely lift the egg.
- **Syringes (without needles):** For injecting soapy water into a blown egg for a final cleaning. You can also inject dye inside a blown egg.

How to Dye and Color Eggs

Eggshells have porous surfaces with individual characteristics, just like human skin. Some are more porous than others, some lighter or darker. Dyeing an eggshell isn't an exact science and isn't totally predictable: even eggs from the same carton have different shell characteristics and will absorb dye at different rates.

However, there are a few things you can do to make your egg-dyeing more consistent:

- Mix a fresh batch of dye each time you want to color eggs (rather than use dyes you mixed some time ago).
- Use distilled water and nonreactive pans to mix and prepare the dye. Dyes subtly react to chemicals in tap water and to certain metals in cookware.

- Make sure the egg sinks in the dye. Hard-boiled eggs will sink naturally, but to get a blown egg to sink, you'll have to hold the egg under the surface until the dye bath fills the inside of the egg.
- Allow the dyed egg to dry completely on a drying rack.

Types of Dyes

There are three main types of dyes you can use to dye eggs: food coloring, natural dyes, and synthetic dyes.

Food Coloring

Food coloring comes in liquid or paste forms and is completely food-safe. Like many dye baths, food colorings are best used when hot, and usually require the addition of vinegar as a mordant (a substance that helps fix the color).

Natural Dyes

Creating your own **natural dyes** is a fun and easy experiment. Part of the charm of natural dye is the variety of tone and shade you get with each batch of dyestuff. If you're not open to chance and the subtle variety of its effects, though, stick to more consistent synthetic dyes.

There aren't many hard-and-fast rules or recipes for working with natural dyestuffs from your kitchen. But follow these general guidelines:

- Add a teaspoon of vinegar (to act as a mordant) to any concoction you create from natural materials.
- The more natural the material you use to make the dye, the more intense the resulting color will be.
- Use your dye while it's lukewarm.
- Leave your eggs in the dye bath overnight to achieve the darkest color possible.

How to Make Natural Dyes

Generally speaking, you can make most natural dyes using the following process:

1. Chop, grind, crumble, or otherwise break into bits the material you want to use to make the dye.
2. Add the material to a small pan of water, then add a teaspoon or so of vinegar.
3. Bring to a boil, then simmer for 10 minutes.
4. Strain out the solid materials.

The table below lists some common foods and spices and the dye colors they produce.

Color	Material
Orange	Brown or red onion skins
Red	Beet skins
Pink	Chopped cranberries
Blue	Shredded red cabbage leaves or canned blueberries
Yellow	Ground turmeric, cumin, or celery seed
Pale green	Chopped spinach leaves

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Feel free to experiment with different materials and amounts—it's the best way to get a feel for making homemade natural dye (and also half the fun).

How to Buy Natural Dyes

You can purchase other, more traditional natural dyes—such as indigo, madder, cochineal, and logwood—from stores that supply dyes to yarn spinners and weavers. The effects of these dyes are more predictable than the kitchen stove method described earlier. Use each manufacturer's recommended mordants for best results.



Synthetic Dyes

Follow the manufacturer's instructions for using **synthetic dyes**. These dyes are usually remarkably consistent, even given the natural variations among individual eggs. Since these dyes are chemically created, though, never use them to color eggs that you intend to eat.

Other Ways to Color Eggs

Dyes aren't the only way to color eggs. You can also use any of the following paints or other methods:

- **Acrylic paints:** For a really predictable color, paint your eggs with acrylic paint. It's easy to work with and dries quickly. One drawback to using an acrylic paint is that it sits on the surface and looks like a coat of paint. This may look good on wood, paper, or plastic egg shapes, but probably won't look good on real eggs.

- **Gouaches:** A mixture of matte, opaque water-color paints mixed and a gum preparation, gouaches mimic the subtle matte finish of a natural eggshell. Several of the projects in this guide are painted with gouache.



- **Colored pencils or markers:** Use these to draw simple designs or to add accent colors to dyed eggs.
- **Crayons:** Use these to color eggs and also as a simple form of wax **resist** (since wax doesn't absorb dye) Draw or write on the egg with a white crayon, slip the egg into a dye bath, and you've basically created a batik egg.

Never eat hard-cooked eggs that have been colored using any of these synthetic methods.

How-To Techniques for Decorating Eggs

Embellishing eggs with simple materials—craft foam, thread, and tissue paper—doesn't require special expertise. Even more complex techniques covered in this guide, such as batik, bead netting, or mosaic work are easy enough if you follow the step-by-step instructions provided. But there are four fundamental how-to techniques that you should know before you decorate an egg in any fashion.

How to Measure an Egg

Measuring eggs is important when figuring out how much material you'll need for egg-decorating projects that involve wrapping ribbon or string around the egg. To measure an egg, wrap a measuring tape around an egg in the same way you plan to use the ribbon. Then multiply the result by the number of eggs you want to decorate, and add a bit extra to make sure you don't run out. If you don't have a measuring tape, wrap a length of string around the egg and measure it with a ruler.

How to Cover an Egg

Some egg-decorating projects involve covering an egg with a skin of paper. To do this, cut a rectangle of paper that measures as follows:

- The long sides of the rectangle measure the same as the circumference around the widest part of the egg.
- The short sides of the rectangle measure the same as the circumference around the length of the egg divided by 2.

A rectangle with these measurements gives you more than enough paper to completely cover the egg. To use this paper to cover the egg smoothly and almost seamlessly, follow these directions:

1. On the "wrong" side of the paper rectangle (the side that won't show when the project is completed), mark the paper into thirds along the long length with a pencil.
2. Evenly divide and mark the rectangle into small vertical strips. The width of your strips will be determined by the size of the egg you're covering. The smaller the egg, the smaller the strips.
3. Cut all of the strips up to—but not through—the center section. Trim the ends of each strip into small, curved points.
4. Cut off an entire section of three strips. Glue it to your egg, easing the strips into place and overlapping them if needed. Cut off the next section and glue it into place next to the first section. Don't be tempted to cut and glue all the sections at once. Do them one at a time.

How to Divide an Egg

Certain projects may call for you to divide your egg evenly into quadrants. This division can become a design element in itself (if you color the quadrants different colors) or may help you place design elements equally around the egg.

1. Draw a light pencil line vertically from the center of the top of the egg to the center of the bottom.
2. Turn the egg 180° and repeat.
3. Then draw a line horizontally around the widest part of the egg.

This will give you four quadrants. You can further divide the sections into smaller sizes, and/or draw diagonal lines starting from the point where two lines cross.

How to Glue Almost Anything to an Egg

When you glue one object to another, you often need to press the two together until the glue dries. This can be difficult when working with an object as delicate as an egg, unless you know the right technique. After you've glued on object onto an egg:

1. Tear off a square from a roll of plastic wrap.
2. Place the egg in the center of the plastic wrap.
3. Gather the corners of the wrap and twist them together, pulling the wrap and the glued embellishment tightly against the egg—but not too tightly.
4. Loosen the wrap when you think the glue has had time to dry.



How to Present and Display Eggs

Once you've blown, dyed, and decorated a dozen eggs, it's time to display them. You could take the standard approach and nestle a dozen eggs in a nice basket filled with artificial grass, but there are far more imaginative ways to display them. Whatever you choose, don't limit yourself: have as much fun choosing what to use for presentation as you did in deciding how to decorate your eggs in the first place.

How to Display Groups of Eggs

Baskets are a traditional choice for presenting eggs, but don't limit yourself to the usual styles or sizes. Miniature baskets—wire, wood, glass, or plastic—are great show-cases for single eggs. An oversized decorative basket filled with one or a dozen eggs can become a focal point in a room. Other options for presenting groups of eggs include bowls and platters, decorative bags and boxes, and even the humble egg carton.

How to Display Single Eggs

A single, artful egg should get its very own pedestal—and besides, it won't stand upright without one. Egg cups are the obvious choice for displaying single eggs. If you don't have china or glass egg cups in your kitchen cabinet, you can find them in kitchen stores, antique shops, or even in the wood products section of your local craft store.

Small plastic curtain rings are an alternative that give the rounded end of an egg just enough support to stand upright almost invisibly. If you're looking to make more of a statement, use a napkin ring.



Egg Decorating Projects

Fauxzic Eggs

Rhyming with "mosaic," this is a clever name for an elegant and easy technique.



Materials Needed

- Gouaches
- Pencil
- Clear acrylic fixative

Instructions

1. Hold an egg between your middle finger and thumb (or use a craft lathe) while decorating it.
2. Apply the gouache paints liberally to each egg as a basecoat. Let the basecoat dry.
3. When the paint is dry, hold an egg in the palm of your hand and paint each end. Allow the paint to dry.
4. Use a sharp pencil to lightly sketch mosaic designs created with small squares, triangles, or other geometric shapes onto the eggs.
5. Paint the sketched designs. After the paint dries, outline the designs with a soft pencil or colored pencil.
6. Spray the finished eggs with fixative.

Nature's Stencils Eggs

Nature's shapes and natural dyes are a great complement to the elegant natural form of the egg.



Materials Needed

- Natural dyes (dyes shown here are cochineal, brazilwood, logwood, and osage, with alum as mordant)
- Small leaves, fronds, and flowers
- Nylon stockings
- Small rubber bands

Instructions

1. Use unblown eggs for this project so that they'll sink in the dye bath and color evenly.
2. Prepare the natural dyes ahead of time, giving them time to cool before submerging the eggs.
3. Take a stroll in your yard or a park and look for small leaves or flowers. Pansies, fern fronds, and Japanese maple leaves all work well, as do four-leaf clovers if you're lucky enough to find one.
4. Place a leaf on an egg. Wrap the egg carefully inside a single layer of nylon stocking material. Pull it tight against the egg. Tie the loose ends or secure them with small rubber bands on the side opposite the leaf.
5. Submerge the egg in the dye bath until the desired color is achieved (typically 5–10 minutes is enough).
6. Remove the egg from the dye and allow it to dry before you remove the stocking. Remove the stocking and the leaf.
7. You can repeat this process to add additional designs and colors to the egg if you wish. Just remember to start with the lightest color first and follow with darker colors.
8. If desired, follow the instructions for blowing an egg to remove the egg's contents.

Blue Willow Decoupage Eggs

Prettily printed paper napkins are the perfect material to decoupage onto delicate eggshells. The hardest part is choosing which napkin pattern to use from the endless varieties of decorative napkins available.



Materials Needed

- Decorative paper napkins
- Decoupage medium

Instructions

1. Cut out the design elements from the decorative napkin you've chosen.
2. Carefully peel apart the layers of the cut-out elements. Sometimes this process is a bit tricky, and it's likely you'll tear some of the elements. But don't worry, since you bought a whole pack of napkins anyway. Set the top, colored layer to one side. Cut out more design elements than you think you'll need for your project.
3. Brush a thin coat of decoupage glue onto the area of the egg that you want to cover. Carefully position one of the design elements onto the egg. Use your clean fingertips to pat the napkin onto the egg.
4. Continue adding design elements to the eggs. You may find it easier to allow a glued area to dry before adding more elements.
5. When you like the appearance of an egg, let it dry completely. Coat the entire egg with a final coat of decoupage medium for protection.

Fiber Eggs

This project gives you a good excuse to buy colorful and fanciful fibers. Simply wrap eggs with your favorite fibers and add the leftovers (if you end up with any) to your stash of craft supplies.



Materials Needed

- Perle cottons, embroidery floss, and decorative yarns
- Thick, white craft glue

Instructions

1. Use a small dab of glue to anchor the end of a length of yarn or thread in place.
2. Wind and wrap your thread around the egg. Use small dabs of glue to attach the thread to the shell as you go. If you don't glue as you go, you may find yourself with an unraveling egg or a stripe that won't stay neatly in place. Use plastic wrap to secure the glued fibers to the egg until they're dry.
3. Cut your thread and anchor the end with a dab of glue. If desired, wrap contrasting textures or colors around the egg. You can create interesting effects by wrapping with two or more types of thread.
4. To create a whorl or spiral, use a pin or toothpick to hold the glued end of thread in place as you wrap it round and round.

Shibori Eggs

Soft, blurry-edged patterns are characteristic of the Japanese dyeing technique known as **shibori**. This project adapts that technique for eggs.



Materials Needed

- Dyes
- Rubber bands, stickers, or tape

Instructions

1. Prepare the dye that you've chosen. If the dye needs to cool before using, prepare it ahead of time.
2. Unblown or hard-boiled eggs work best for this process. Both types of eggs sink in the dye bath, so they don't have to be held down.
3. Rubber bands wrapped around eggs yield excellent, strong-patterned linear resists. Other good resists include stickers in simple shapes, yarn or string, and freehand shapes cut from masking tape.
4. Submerge the eggs in the prepared dye for 5–10 minutes.
5. Remove the eggs from the dye solution with a slotted spoon and place them on a drying rack. Allow the eggs to dry completely before you remove the resists.
6. You can repeat the resist and dyeing process with a different dye color to create more complex patterns.
7. If desired, blow the eggs to remove their contents.

Pearl Eggs

This project lets you create the lavish illusion that you've covered an entire egg with pearls.



Materials Needed

- Prestrung craft "pearls"
- Hot glue

Instructions

1. Place a small amount of hot glue on the bottom of the egg. Immediately adhere the end of the bead string to the egg.
2. Add dots of glue in a circle around the first bead, and coil the bead string around the first bead.
3. Continue to wrap the bead string in concentric circles around the egg, adding a small amount of glue as needed. Don't attempt to glue more than a little bit at a time.
4. If you wish to use more than one color, just trim the strung beads at the place where you want the color to end and start the next color right up against the first.
5. Continue gluing and placing beads as needed until you reach the top of the egg.

Etched Eggs

Because vinegar is an acid, you can use it to etch simple designs on eggshells.

Materials Needed

- Whole eggs
- Beeswax
- Kystka or tjanting tool
- White vinegar
- Glass container
- Spoon
- Rubber gloves

Instructions

1. Use unblown or hard-boiled brown, green, or other naturally colored eggs for this project.
2. Follow the manufacturer's instructions for using a kystka or tjanting tool. Use the tool to paint designs onto an egg with hot wax. Keep in mind that the egg's

color will *not* be removed in the areas where the wax has been painted, and will be removed from spots where there is no wax.

3. Submerge the egg in a container of white vinegar. You may need to add more vinegar to the container so that the egg is completely covered. Leave the egg in the vinegar for at least 5 minutes and up to 20 minutes. The longer the egg is in the vinegar, the deeper the etched effect. Turn the egg occasionally with a spoon to ensure that the egg is evenly etched.
4. Remove the egg from the vinegar. Wearing rubber gloves, hold the egg under hot running water to rinse the egg and remove the wax.
5. If desired, blow the egg to remove its contents.



Pop Art Eggs

These dramatic sculptural eggs are worth the time and effort it takes to create them.



Materials Needed

- Blown eggs with a single hole
- Small syringe
- Dye
- Modeling clay
- Circle templates
- Hand-held, motorized cutting tool
- Conical burr
- Dust mask
- Safety glasses

Note: Goose eggs and ostrich eggs are easiest to use for this project because they have hard, sturdy shells. You can try regular hen's eggs if you want, but be careful, because their delicate shells require a deft touch.

Instructions

1. Fill the syringe with dye and inject it into the egg's single hole. Repeat this process several times to ensure you have enough dye to color the inside of the egg.

2. Pinch off a piece of modeling clay and plug the hole.
3. Shake and rotate the egg gently to make sure that you've dyed the interior as evenly as possible.
4. Remove the clay and allow the dye to drip out. Set the egg on a drying rack at least overnight.
5. Use the templates and a pencil to draw different-sized holes on the egg.
6. Fit a conical burr in the cutting tool.
7. Wear a dust mask and safety glasses as you drill a small hole in the center of each drawn circle. Enlarge each circle further with the burr.

Bas Relief Eggs

With this project, you'll be surprised at what elegant results you can get from a material as plain as spackling paste.



Materials Needed

- Acrylic paints
- Spackling paste
- Small-scale plastic stencils
- Craft sticks
- Plastic pastry bag and tips (optional)
- Clear matte acrylic spray

Instructions

1. Paint eggs with acrylics and let them dry.
2. Place a stencil on an egg, wrapping it carefully around the egg if needed. You can hold the stencil in place with tape if necessary.
3. Scoop up a small amount of spackling paste with a craft stick and wipe it evenly onto the stencil. Because the egg is rounded, you may have to apply the spackling paste in stages, letting each section dry before you apply more paste.
4. Remove the stencil carefully.
5. If you want to make colored spackling paste, simply mix a tiny amount of acrylic paint into the paste until you achieve the color you're looking for.
6. You can achieve a more dimensional look by filling a pastry bag fitted with a star tip with the spackling paste. Follow the manufacturer's instructions for using the pastry bag, and apply the paste to the egg, creating a small flower shape.
7. When dry, coat the eggs with the clear acrylic spray.

Batik Eggs

The sophisticated look of batik is easy to create: use hot wax to draw simple patterns right on the egg and apply the dye.

Materials Needed

- Kystka or tjanting tool
- Beeswax
- Dyes
- Paper towels
- Microwave oven



Note: This project requires dyes that are used cool rather than hot. A hot (or even lukewarm) dye bath will melt the wax resist.

Instructions

1. Start with naturally colored or lightly dyed eggs. Unblown or hard-boiled eggs will be easier to dye than blown eggs.
2. You may wish to sketch your designs onto the eggs ahead of time, but be aware that the pencil marks may not disappear as you dye the eggs. If it's your first time doing batik, you may be better off going with stripes, geometric shapes, or simple drawings rather than more complicated designs.
3. Follow the manufacturer's instructions for using your kystka or tjanting tool to draw with liquid wax on the eggshell. This is accomplished by heating small amounts of wax in the tool and drawing the tip of the tool across the surface of the shell. Practice with the tool on paper first to get a feel for the process.
4. The liquid wax hardens almost instantly, so you won't have to wait long before you can dye the eggs. Submerge the eggs in a cool dye bath and turn them carefully to ensure even coloring and to prevent your waxed design from chipping off.
5. Allow your dyed eggs to dry, then repeat the waxing and dyeing process as many times as you'd like. Just remember to begin the dyeing process with very light colors, moving to darker colors each successive time you dye. Every time you wax a design on the egg, you'll preserve the color underneath the wax.
6. Blow each egg when you are finished with your design.
7. Place an egg on a paper towel in the microwave oven and heat the egg for 5–15 seconds. Remove the egg and immediately rub off the wax with a paper towel. Repeat as many times as needed to remove the wax.

Chinoiserie Eggs

These elegant designs add a touch of Asian influence to your egg decorating.



Materials Needed

- Red and black acrylic paints
- Chinese theme rubber stamps
- Gold ink pad
- Asian papers (joss paper, foreign-language newspapers)
- Decoupage medium
- Gold paint pen
- High-gloss, clear acrylic spray

Instructions

1. Paint the eggs red or black. Let them dry.
2. Stamp images onto the eggs carefully with gold ink. Let the stamped images dry.
3. Cut out small shapes from the Asian papers. Brush a thin coat of decoupage medium onto a shape and apply it to the egg. Apply additional shapes, overlapping them as desired. Set the egg aside to dry.
4. Outline the shapes with the gold paint pen. You can also paint additional shapes onto the egg. Let the paint dry.
5. Spray the egg with high-gloss clear spray and let it dry.

Polymer Clay Coiled Eggs

These eggs are adorned with mixtures of polymer clay that are used to create a faux ivory, jade, and coral look.



Materials Needed

- Blown eggs
- White, translucent, gold, green pearl, and alizarin crimson polymer clay
- Waxed paper
- Burnt umber acrylic paint
- Cotton cloth
- Water
- Cyanoacrylate glue gel
- Polymer clay compatible glaze (optional)
- Clay gun
- Craft knife
- Needle tool or awl
- Pasta machine (optional)

Note: Always abide by the following safety rules when working with polymer clay. Kitchen tools used for these projects (such as a pasta machine or rolling pin) should be solely dedicated for use with polymer clay. Protect your work surface with waxed paper. Condition clay before use by kneading and rolling it in your hands or by running it several times through a pasta machine at the thickest setting.

Mixing the Clay

- **Ivory clay:** Use conditioned white clay.
- **Jade clay:** Mix pea-sized balls of pearl green and gold together. Condition one bar of translucent clay, then mix in small amounts of the green pearl and gold mixture until you've achieved the desired color.
- **Coral clay:** Mix a very small amount of alizarin crimson clay with one bar of conditioned translucent clay. The crimson is a very strong color, so start with less than you think you'll need. You can always add more crimson if you need it.

Instructions

1. Fit a disk with a round opening in the clay gun.
2. Roll the conditioned, colored clay into a log that will fit in the clay gun.
3. Insert the plunger into the barrel of the clay gun and push. Holding the clay gun over the wax paper, direct the emerging ropes of clay back and forth so that they don't overlap.

4. Pick up one end of the extruded rope and roll the rope into a tight flat spiral. When the spiral is the size of a small coin, position it on one end of the egg. Press the spiral into place, then continue coiling the clay around the egg. Make sure each new row touches the previous and that the clay is pressed snugly against the egg.
5. When the desired amount of the egg is covered, cut the clay rope and press the end firmly on the egg.
6. To make spirals of equal size, use uniform lengths of clay.
7. Fill in spaces on the egg with short, cut lengths of rope. Fit them into open spaces on the egg. Trim as needed, then press the pieces firmly onto the egg.
8. To create dots, cut very short lengths of rope and roll each length between your fingertips to form a small ball. Position them gently on the egg and press them into place. If you like, you can press the end of a paintbrush into the balls of clay after they're in place to create a dimpled dot.
9. When the egg is covered, use a needle tool or awl to open a small hole in any piece of clay that's covering the hole in the egg. Doing so will allow any steam (resulting from moisture that's still inside the egg) to escape during baking.
10. Bake the clay-covered egg, following the manufacturer's instructions for the brand of clay that you're using.
11. When the egg is cool, apply a generous amount of the burnt umber acrylic paint to the polymer clay. Immediately begin wiping away excess with a soft cotton cloth to create an antiqued finish. Moisten the cloth with water for a lighter finish if you prefer.
12. If any portion of the clay isn't securely adhered to the egg, you may need to secure the loose part with a small dot of cyanoacrylate glue. Hold the part in place for several seconds until glue is set.
13. For a glossy finish, brush on a coat of glaze.

Wet Release Transfer Eggs

Wet release transfer paper, also called water slide decal paper, transfers images printed on the paper to another surface. Some transfer papers require color photocopying to finish the decal; others can be used with inkjet printers. You can find wet release transfer paper in most craft stores.

Materials Needed

- Clip art
- Wet release transfer paper
- Portable hair dryer

Instructions

1. Search for clip art in books and on the internet.
2. Print out the images you like, enlarging or reducing them as needed.
3. Follow the manufacturer's instructions for copying onto the transfer paper.
4. Carefully cut out the image you wish to use.
5. To adhere the transfer paper, soak the cut-out image in a container of water and then slide it onto the surface you want to place the image on. Follow manufacturer's instructions for the specific type of paper you're using.
6. Once the image is on the egg, you can ease wrinkles onto the curved surface by heating the decal gently with a hair dryer. Then let the image dry.

