

A free project, compliments of...

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Faux Batik Fabric

Have you always loved the look of traditional batik fabric but thought it was too complex and messy to do? Well I'm going to show you a technique that will let you create a unique piece of fabric that looks like real batik.

Let's begin!

If the fabric you are using is prepared for dyeing (PFD), you are ready to begin. If your fabric is not PFD, you need to wash it first. Once washed, the fabric will be ready to accept the resist and paints.

Lay down the plastic sheeting to protect your work surface. Place your white fabric on the plastic. The piece of fabric I am working on measures 22" x 36". To begin, you may want to start with a fat quarter-sized (18" x 22") piece of fabric or perhaps even a 12" square. If you like, you can tape the corners of your fabric to the plastic sheet, so your fabric doesn't slip around while working with it.

You'll notice in the photos that I have my fabric stretched out in a frame. This is completely optional, but very handy. You can make your own frame by either purchasing an inexpensive wood frame for displaying pictures, or build your own with some wood. When stretching your fabric onto the frame, be sure the fabric is dry.

Supplies

- White fabric (cotton, silk)
- Resist (gel glue, water-based resists)
- Squeeze bottle
- Plastic sheeting
- Textile paint (Dye-Na-Flow, Jacquard Textile Colors)
- Paintbrushes
- Water-filled spray bottle
- Water-filled container
- Extra cups for mixing paint
- Parchment paper



The next photo shows the types of resists that I use for this technique. Each of these works the same, in that once applied to the fabric it will create a resist line. In my experience I have found that the blue gel glue needs just a little more drying time and also soaking time at the end to remove the glue from the fabric. All of these products shown wash out in warm to hot water.



I like to put my resist into a squeeze bottle. The bottles I purchase (below) also come with metal tips that are different sizes so that you can have thin, medium, or thick lines. You can also use the plastic tip without the metal tip for an even thicker line.



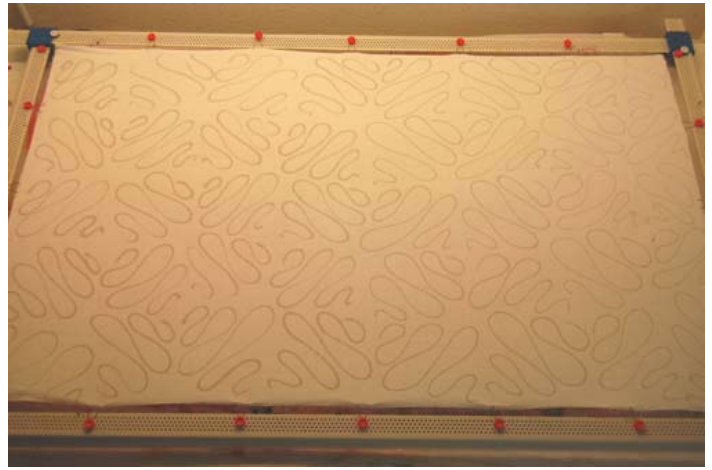
One thing to keep in mind; the thicker the line, the better it will contain the painted color. This is good if you want certain colors within certain shapes that you've drawn onto your fabric with the resist.

When I use these squeeze bottles, I usually use them with the metal tip with the largest hole. Some of these resists are thick, and the thicker they are, the harder it is to squeeze them out. Your hand will get mighty tired if trying to squeeze a thick resist through a tiny opening.

One bonus about using the blue gel glue as your resist—it has a built-in squeeze tip right on the bottle it comes in.

Once you have your resist in a squeeze bottle, it's time to start applying it to the fabric. I tend to start in the upper left corner and work my way across the fabric. Simply start squeezing and doodling or drawing your design. You'll find that if you move your hand slowly you'll get a nice resist line. If you move your hand faster while squeezing, the line will become thinner.

The following photo shows my fabric with the resist lines.



Once you have all your resist lines drawn onto your fabric, let it dry completely. Drying time will vary depending on your climate.

Once your resist is completely dry, it is time to add color. There are several products on the market that you can use for this. Jacquard products include Dye-Na-Flow, Textile Colors (these are transparent paints), and Neopaque (these are opaque paints). In the Pebeo product line there is Setasilk (comparable to Dye-Na-Flow), and Setacolor, which is available in both transparent or opaque versions. All of these products will work with this technique.

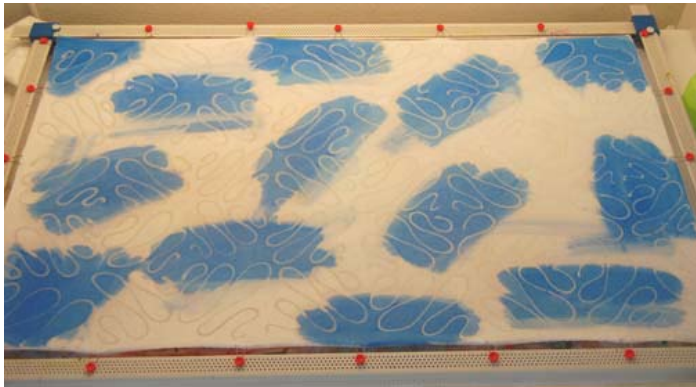


The photo above shows all the items I need for painting on my fabric. Here I am using Dye-Na-Flow that I've put into some squeeze bottles. The colors I'm using are turquoise, azure, and cerulean blue. You can use the Dye-Na-Flow right out of the bottle it comes packaged in for a deep, intense color. Or you can mix it with water for varying degrees of lighter shades, depending on the amount of water added. My preference is to mix the Dye-Na-Flow with some water to achieve a medium tone or value. Also, mixing your paint with water will give you more paint in the long

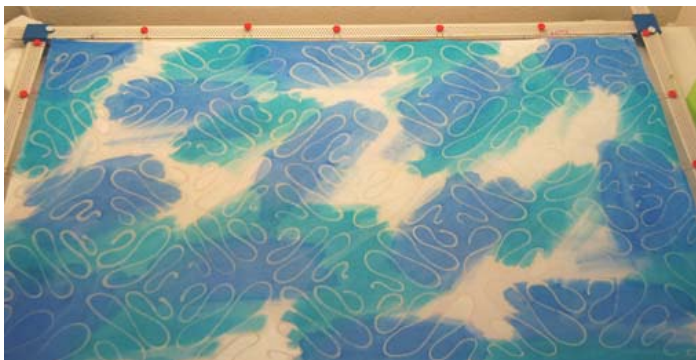
run. I don't squirt my color out of these bottles onto my fabric as I find I get squirt lines showing in the end, and I don't like this. I usually pour some of my water-mixed color into a separate container that I can dip a brush into.

Before I begin painting, I like to spritz my fabric with water, but I don't drench it. I like to do this as I find it helps my colors blend together better. I tend to use two or three colors that will blend well.

The following photo shows that I have randomly painted on my first color.



Then I add my second color.



And then the last color.



Once you are done painting, let the fabric dry completely. Be sure to wash up your brushes and any other tools you used.

Heat set your fabric once it is completely dry. I place my piece of fabric in between two sheets of parchment paper. I do this in order to protect my iron and ironing board surface from any resist that may want to come off.



Set the heat on your iron to the highest setting recommended for the type of fabric you are using. I don't use steam for this. Because of the size of my fabric piece, I have to heat set in sections. I recommend heating each section approximately four minutes.

My iron has a feature that if the sole plate of the iron is in contact with the fabric for 30 seconds without being lifted from the fabric, it will automatically turn off. A light starts blinking on my iron that it has reached 30 seconds. I use this feature to help me time my heat setting. When the light starts blinking all I do is slightly tip the iron up to stop the blinking and keep timing and ironing until I've ironed for four minutes.

Once you are done heat setting your fabric, it is time to remove the resist. I soak my fabric in warm/hot water. A mild soap can be added if you like, but it is not necessary.

I don't like to fill my sink with water as I feel I use more water this way than I need. Instead, I fill a small bucket that is large enough to hold my fabric. I keep the bucket in the sink so I don't make a mess.



I let my fabric soak for a period of time. How long this time period is will vary, as most of the time I move onto other projects and forget the fabric is soaking. I've come back to the bucket of fabric to find the water very cold. Don't worry as this won't harm your fabric. I do try to agitate the fabric two or three times during the soaking process.

You will notice your water has taken on color from the paint or dye. This, too, is nothing to be concerned about. This is normal and some colors bleed a little more than others. I find, also, that the more fluid paints like Dye-Na-Flow tend to bleed more than the thicker textile paints.

I run my fingers over the areas on the fabric where the resist was to see if it is all removed. If you feel any slick or slimy areas you should continue soaking. You may want to change the water too.

Once you determine the fabric is resist-free, rinse it well under running water, squeeze any excess water out, and hang to dry or place in your dryer.

Once dry, iron it, and now it is ready to use. Here is the finished piece.



You can use the fabric as it is above, or you can add further design to it with the help of stamps and stencils as shown in the above right photo.



You don't have to use this technique for just an overall design on a piece of yardage. You can also create a whole cloth quilt design as the following photo shows. Use your squeeze bottle filled with resist like a drawing tool and draw a specific design to color in.



I hope I've inspired you to try this fun technique. If you have ever wanted to design your own fabric, this easy and fun process will let you create an entire line of beautiful and unique fabrics.