

Hobbies

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24-Santa

Ideas Unlimited



By SHIRLEY CAMDEN

Batik is the ancient art of fabric design using a wax resistant method. As originally practiced by natives of the Dutch East Indies, all parts of the fabric that are to be protected from a dyestuff are given a coating of wax, which after the dipping is removed by boiling. This process is repeated as many times as there are colors in the design.

In a few hours one can create an original fabric design ready for wall hangings, scarves, pillow covers, belts. You can work from a sketch or simply splash the wax about and come up with a surprise ending.

HOW TO BEGIN

Select the fabric and rinse it to remove any sizing. Sketch the design on paper, then transfer it to the fabric using transfer paper. Or for bolder, free results work directly with the wax, making up your design as you go along. Pin the fabric taut on wax paper or any surface to which wax will not adhere. Melt the wax in a double boiler using $\frac{3}{4}$ beeswax to $\frac{1}{4}$ paraffin. Apply the wax with a brush over the traced design. The wax must stay as hot as possible. If you would prefer an abstract pattern, drip or pour the wax on. Wherever there is wax the dyes cannot penetrate. Then dye according to package instructions.

TWO OR MORE COLORS

If another color is desired more wax is applied to the areas which are to retain the first color. Then the fabric is dipped into the second dye. Don't mix the dyes together as you would paint, the result is mud. Dip each color separately. This process may be repeated to build up a variety of colors. If you would like a marbelized veining in the pattern use more paraffin than



beeswax. The veining is caused by the stiff paraffin cracking, allowing the dye to penetrate slightly into the fabric.

Do not remove the wax until your project is completely finished. This is done by ironing the fabric between blotting papers, starting with a warm iron and gradually increasing the temperature. Or the fabric can be soaked for about an hour in either gasoline or paint thinner.

The final step, simply rinse in warm water and iron one last time, on the reverse side.

MATERIALS NEEDED

Fabric — cotton, linen, or silk is best.

Wax — beeswax and paraffin.

Dyes — any fabric dyes not requiring over 90 degrees.

Brushes — sable and bristle.
Double boiler.

Iron.

Large pans for dyes, agate or enamel.