

Natural Easter Egg Dyes

Forget store-bought, artificial dyes this Easter: everything you need to color your Easter eggs is right in your own kitchen! Not only are all-natural dyes inexpensive, they're good for the environment, too.

Want to sneak in a little more learning? You can turn this activity into a simple science experiment by inviting your child to make a hypothesis, or educated guess, about what color he thinks each ingredient will dye the eggs. The results might surprise you!

The ingredients listed below are just the tip of the iceberg when it comes to natural dyes. See the end of this activity for more ingredient ideas.

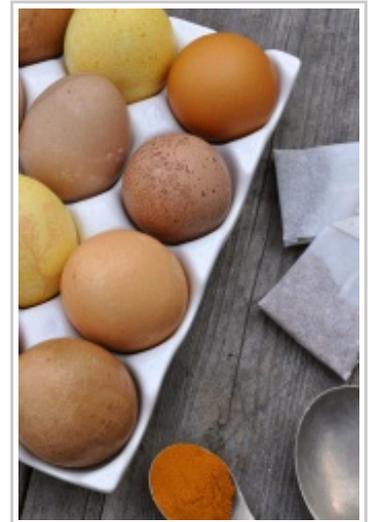
What You Need:

- 3 or more raw white or brown eggs (brown eggs come out a darker shade)
- 1 teaspoon turmeric
- 2 bags passion tea (containing hibiscus flowers), paper tabs removed
- 2 bags rooibos tea (African red bush tea), paper tabs removed
- 3 teaspoons white vinegar
- Slotted spoon
- 3 small pots
- Ice cubes (optional)

What You Do:

1. Start by deciding how many eggs you want to make in each color. Because natural dyes are less predictable than store-bought ones, it's good to experiment with a few eggs first to see how they turn out.
2. Begin with the turmeric dye. Unlike in regular egg dyeing, you'll cook the eggs and dye them at the same time. Have your child place the raw eggs in a single layer in one of the pots and add enough water to cover the eggs. Add the turmeric and 1 teaspoon white vinegar and stir gently.
3. Repeat step 2 for the other two dyes. Since the tea bags will steep while the eggs are cooking, you don't have to prepare the tea ahead of time; simply add the dry tea bags to the pot.
4. Heat the eggs over medium heat, covered. Once the water begins to boil, remove from the heat and let stand for 15 minutes, still covered.
5. While the eggs cook, ask your child to make a hypothesis about what colors he thinks the eggs will turn out, and why he thinks this. What color will the turmeric-dyed eggs be? How about the passion and rooibos tea eggs?
6. After 15 minutes, carefully remove one egg from each of the pots with the slotted spoon and check the color. Is it dark enough? If not, place them back in their pots along with a handful of ice cubes. The ice cubes will bring the water temperature down and stop the eggs from cooking any longer. Let the eggs sit in the dye until you're satisfied with the color. You can even place them in the refrigerator and let them sit overnight.
7. Once you're happy with the color, remove the eggs from the dye and let them dry. Make a note of which ingredient was used to dye each egg.
8. To complete the experiment, look over the dyed eggs with your child and talk about the colors each ingredient made. Is he surprised by some of the colors? Was his hypothesis correct?

Experiment with other ingredients such as beets, red cabbage, canned blueberries, or onion skins and



create a whole rainbow of naturally-dyed Easter eggs.

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