

Kool-Aid Tie-Dye

This Kool-Aid tie-dye activity may send you [back to the 60's](#). But did you know that tie-dye techniques date back to Pre-Columbian times, and [Peru](#) in 500-800 A.D.? Shibori is another form of tie-dye that originated in Japan in the 8th century. The wonderful colors and designs of this method have intrigued many generations across many cultures but can be made easily and with simple household ingredients. The finished homemade tie-dye shirts are sure to impress and make great gifts for friends and family. This kid-friendly activity never gets old (unlike your bell-bottoms)!

What You Need:

- White T-shirt (ideally a nylon or wool blend)
- Assorted Kool-Aid packages (different flavors/colors)
- White vinegar
- Small plastic bowls
- Plastic gloves
- Rubber bands

What You Do:

1. For every color you wish to use, put 1 package of Kool-Aid and 1 oz. vinegar in individual plastic bowls. Mix until dissolved.
2. Pull and twist your T-shirt into different shapes (see below) and secure with rubber bands.
3. Dip the areas gathered by the rubber bands into the bowls of color. Make sure you wear gloves so your hands don't get stained. Done dipping? Keep the rubber bands on and set t-shirts in the sun to dry. You and your child can try as many different colors as you like—just be sure to let each color dry before moving on to the next. Get creative!
4. Once you're done with your dyeing, remove all of the rubber bands and hang the shirts outside to dry.
5. To set the colors, iron your totally dry shirts on medium-high, using an ironing cloth (a cotton rag will work just as well too) between the shirt and the iron. Let the shirt set for 24 hours before washing. To be safe, add salt to the water and wash separately the first time around. Once it's washed it's ready to wear!



Note: Tie-dyeing with Kool-Aid produces more muted colors that will fade with repeated washing. If you want your T-shirt to be more vibrant, permanent dye is the best way to ensure a long-lasting tie-dye!

A few tips on patterns:

Spiral Patterns

Spiral patterns are made by pleating the fabric into a bundle around a central point. Extend the gather out from the center, using rubber bands every so often. Different wedges of the bundle are then dyed with different colors.

V Pattern

The V-shape is made by folding the shirt in half vertically, then drawing a diagonal line from the shoulder area down to the center fold of the shirt. The fabric is then accordion-folded along the line and bound into one or more areas to which the dye is applied.

Random circles

These are made by tying knots with rubber bands in different places. The more fabric that is in the bundle the larger, the circle will be.

This activity is a great way to explore a centuries-old art that has been practiced in many cultures throughout the ages. And the results are to dye for!