

Ms. Create's Sock Crock Pot Method, Tips and Tricks.....

For those of you who wanted to know, this is the way I dye my sock yarn when I need a color fix. Find yourself a cheap crock pot from a garage sale, the size that will fit about 400 yards of sock yarn in it. Probably the medium size. You won't be using it again for anything but dyeing fiber, which is why I suggest the garage sale route. Also, you'll need one of those large containers of white vinegar. I don't think you can use cider vinegar, but I haven't tested this out. Something about the acid level?

I use [Jacquard](#) dyes, but any acid dyes will work. Don't get RIT or anything like what you would use for cotton. Those won't work, or if they do, the color won't hold fast and will fade away quickly. I also use [Knitpicks Bare Superwash Merino/Nylon Sock Yarn](#) or their [Superwash Merino/Nylon/Donegal Sock Yarn](#) (the one with the tweedy bits of blue, yellow, red and green) By the way, those tweedy bits don't dye and will stay the color they are even if you dye the yarn black. Really cool! Other than that, you need some utensils for lifting, a plastic cup and a spoon.

You need to pick two colors, one dark and one light. I picked Burgundy and Golden Ochre this time. The trick to getting the color all the way around and throughout the yarn, is twist! If you have a hank, you need to twist it really tight, and then keep twisting until it turns back on itself. Then, twist it more and secure it. Do this while the yarn is dry. Don't wet it yet. It should look something like this:



Now turn the crock pot on high and add hot water and a cup of vinegar to it. Fill it three quarters of the way full. Push the dry hank down in there. You'll have air bubbles coming up. That's okay. Push it down until it stays down there. Let it heat up for about 20 minutes.



Take the dark color of your dye and add a little bit (1/2 tsp. to the plastic cup). Do this in the sink and don't inhale it. Bad fumies. You should be wearing gloves (latex or equivalent) too. Add about 2 tbsps. of vinegar and hot water and mix it really good with the plastic spoon.



(Okay, I may be going a little far with this picture. Obviously you would know what that looks like, but.... I took the picture so look at it! :) he he he

Add the cup to the crock pot and push the wool around a little bit so the dye gets everywhere.



Let it cook/sit for awhile until the water runs clear. The dye will soak into the wool and the water will become clear. The dye may not become clear, though, if you have too much dye in there. Sometimes you have to wait until it gets almost to boiling before the dye takes. Sometimes it takes right away. Just keep an eye on it. You'll know when.

Use tongs or utensils for lifting, and lift the skein out, into the sink would be best. I use a plastic bowl to transfer it from the crock pot to the sink. Let it cool a little bit and then rinse it good to get any excess dye out.



See! Because you had the twist in there, a lot of the skein did not dye. Now, pour the excess water out of the crock pot and start again with your vinegar water mixture in it. Don't fill it as much as you did the first time because you are now going to be putting in a wet skein. Let it start warming up while you get your light dye ready in the plastic cup with hot water and vinegar. Add the light dye mixture to the crock pot, mix it up, and then slowly add your wet skein to it, making sure all parts of it are getting the dye mixture in it. Note - you may want to use a little more dye for the second step as you will be dyeing a lot more of the skein.



Let it cook/sit until the water runs clear, take it out, let it cool, rinse it off and Voila! You are now a Sock Crock Pot Champion!!!



The one on the right is the one we just did. You can experiment with different ways of twisting your skein to come up with different combinations of the light and dark. You can twirl it in a circle for a more self-striping kind of skein, or tie it in knots. In any event, if you come up with something good let me know!!! I want to try it too!

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