Hand Dyed Yarn with CBTV Live

Chapter 1 - Chapter 1
Hand Dyed Yarn
(upbeat music) - Hi everybody, this is Faith from Creativebug, coming at you live like we do every Tuesday and Thursday at 7:00 p.m. And I'm about to show you a craft that I have done a ton of times, both in my personal life and my professional life. I actually worked for a year hand dyeing fine handpaint yarns with Freia Fibers, which is an amazing yarn company, and their yarn is absolutely stunning. So I'm gonna share with you some of the tips and tricks I learned there, how to make yarn in your own home. Now the most important thing you'll need is the yarn, of course. It should be natural fibers. Wool, silk, not cotton. Acid dyes will not work with cotton. And Jacquard acid dyes, which are fairly inexpensive. I think they're like 2.50 a piece, and there's tons of colors. And the acid in this refers to you need to either use vinegar or citric acid when you mix the actual dye, or the way I'm gonna be doing it is in a presoak. I have a couple skeins of yarn soaking in 1/2 a cup of vinegar, and the rest of it is water. You'll need some gloves for handling the acid dyes, and also a respirator or a face mask. I won't be using one 'cause then you can't hear me talk, but this is a good instance of do as I say, not as I do. It's harmful if inhaled. And your wool is going to be in skeins. Now I wanted to show you how I can turn a ball of yarn into a skein of yarn using a yarn swift. It's one of my favorite tools, and it's big and bulky, and every time I move into a teenier apartment, it still comes with me 'cause it's very handy. So you'll want to pop it up. And if you're trying to keep it a very specific width, like if you're measuring it out to, this is approximately two yards, but if you're being specific, you'll wanna wrap some washi tape around it to make sure it stays consistent, and if it drops, you'll be able to tell. And here we are just tying the yarn around one of the intersections, and we're just going to spin it. Now if you don't have a swift, you can use a really nice roommate or a partner or a friend to hold their hands out, or a back of a chair. You can use a niddy noddy, which is another super fun tool, and when you wrap it around, you get to feel like a very expressive performer, 'cause you have to do a lot of waving your arms around. But this is, I've found, (yarn swift popping) the most simple version. So see, the bottom popped down. Gonna wanna screw it back in or else this whole thing will collapse. And the reason why we want this in skein, which rhymes with rain, even though it looks like skein, I think it takes very new knitter a few years to feel fully comfortable pronouncing that word. The reason why we're doing it in a skein instead of a ball is it gives a lot more area around the fibers for the yarn to flow. We're intentionally going for a spotted look, but if you were doing a solid, the last thing you want is white spots. And I'm just gonna finish up this ball. I already wound 1/2 of it. And then after we wind it all the way, we're going to separate it using some cotton yarn. Thank you for your patience. We're almost there. And I'm gonna tie the end of the yarn to the very beginning of the yarn. This helps to keep it uncluttered. As you can imagine, this is a very tangly process. I just tie the ends together as so. And this next part, I've precut a couple of pieces of cotton yarn. Definitely wanna use cotton and not the same yarn as the yarn you're dyeing, or else it'll felt together. You want about eight inches, and we're going to wrap this in a figure eight. So just approximately separate with your fingers into three sections. And the bottom one goes under, over, under. And the top one goes over, under, over. And this'll help, after we've done the dyeing, to pull it out and get it sorted. And I like to use a contrasting color. Also, if you're gonna be dyeing a lot of these, you can cut them even longer, so at the very end, you'll just be snipping off the knots and you can reuse the thread. And also, many thanks to Tina

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Whitmore, who is the brilliant dyer of Knitwhits, who taught me all these inside tips and tricks. 'Kay, we're gonna do one more, approximately 1/3 of the way around. And then we'll put it in our soak. Some people are really uncomfortable with the scent of vinegar. If that is you, then I recommend going for citric acid. It sounds dramatic, but it's actually available in a lot of cosmetic stuff like bath bombs, which I definitely love a good bath bomb. A lot of that's citric acid, so it's not as harmful as you may assume. Now I'm going to soak this. Don't forget, we are live. So if you have any questions about the process, the materials, if you've done this yourself, if you want to know can I do this with Kool-Aid, or can I use wools and food dyes. You know what? I'm gonna let you ask those questions before I answer them. I'm making it easy for you. I'm giving you the questions. So in the meantime, I've had these soaking for 30 minutes at minimum, and I'm gonna pour it out. Let's see, move our bucket over here. (water pattering) And then I'm pouring it into a salad spinner to get the rest of the water out. And you want it damp, but not too runny. So if we were going ahead with the skein we just wound, we would fill this up with water and vinegar and soak it. I'll probably do that after I say goodbye to you folks. - [Woman] We have our first question. (salad spinner clacking) Abigail is asking, "Well, can I dye with Kool-Aid?" - Yes, you can. And it's a really good way to do it with kids. It's super messy. And if you ever tried to like dye your hair with Kool-Aid as a teen, I was medium rebellious teen. I went for orange, so it didn't show up at all in my hair. (water splashing) But it, it's pretty, if you do it with the vinegar, it is pretty stay-fast, so you can actually use it for projects that you will knit with later on. And I would say the (salad spinner clacking) grape is particularly vibrant, so go for the grape. And also, the green produces some really interest effects. - [Woman] Can you use food dye? - Yes, you can use food dye. I prefer the acid dyes because they're the most vibrant and they're the most saturated. And in terms of price, they actually last a very, very long time. So my first choice would be the Jacquard acid dyes. But if you're hanging out at home, and you're poking around the craft supplies to see what you have and you don't have acid dyes on hand, yeah, definitely go for the Wilton food coloring gel colors or Kool-Aid and make sure you use vinegar. If you don't use vinegar, it'll just make a muddled mess and it'll bum you out. - [Woman] Can you use tie-dye paints? - Yes, yes you can. And a lot of tie-dye paints are made by the same brand. Our next important step is creating triple-layered, the paper here, but we're still going to need to protect our work surface. So this is just Saran Wrap, and I'm doing it the width of the table because our hank is about two meters or two yards long. I want it to be at least a yard and six inches on either side. So here is my hank, and I'm gonna squeeze it out just a little more so it's not (water splashing) dripping. - [Woman] Okay, speaking of dripping. If you don't have a salad spinner, what else can you use to remove the excess water? - You can use a colander. - [Woman] Do you recommend squeezing the water out? - Yeah. You can use a colander, drain it out, squeeze it out. This part you don't have to be too methodical about because honestly, it gets even wilder after here. So you can plan it as meticulously as possible. Once we put the yarn dyes on, we're not in control anymore. I don't know who is, but it's not you or me. - [Woman] Alright, one more question. - [Faith] Yes, please. - [Woman] Vicky wants to know are you using wool. What kinda-- - I'm using 100% merino wool. That tends to work best. I've soaked some, it's nylon-cotton blend. Cotton will not dye with acid dyes. Don't try it. It'll be very disappointing. You'll think you have like a really fabulous design, and then it'll just look like you spilled onto yourself. So acid dyes are not for cotton. Use cotton-specific dyes for cotton. Like most tie-dyes are for cotton. So when I said before, you can use tie-dye dye, yes for wool, but it doesn't work the opposite way around. You cannot use the wool dyes for cotton. Also gloves, super important. Yesterday, I casually used a spoon, and I didn't even, I didn't touch anything, I swear, and I met my boyfriend, and (grunts in disgust). "What happened to you?" 'Cause

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I had monster hands. So here is the exciting part. We are going to sprinkle on our dye. Make sure you have a paper towel to wipe off your spoon or three spoons. And I had used three, I'll show you soon, three shades, and it ended up with so many colors. It was incredibly vibrant. I'm gonna use the back. And then you just tap, tap very gently a very small amount. And I would do it no closer than six inches apart. So this is the part where you should be wearing a mask. Do as I say and not as I do type situation. Any of these dust particles should not be flying into your mouth. Sorry, cameraman, for exposing you to danger as well. (Brian coughing) That's a little overdramatic, Brian. (chuckles) We're gonna repeat it with the yellow. This is gonna look amazing with the blue, I'm telling you. - [Woman] Faith, let's take a moment to talk about our Jo-Ann offer. - Oh, absolutely. So we have, if you have been enjoying us live, but you haven't dug deeper. It's kind of the difference between seeing like a favorite author read versus reading their books themselves. So go to Creativebug.com, and we have a two-month free trial with promo code JOANN2. Also, you can get all this material at Jo-Ann, the Jacquard dyes, the 100% merino wool. I don't think the salad spinner, but as we said before, that's fairly arbitrary. We also have a bunch of knitting classes that you could use to go along with your hand-dyed yarns or crochet. - [Woman] Ooh, what about your scarf class? Giant tassels. - [Faith] I have, it might not be seasonally appropriate, unless you're in-- - [Woman] Southern hemisphere. - [Faith] The (chuckles) southern hemisphere, but I have a super scarf class, which would look amazing with some hand-dyed yarns. Ooh, that would be so luscious and vaguely eccentric. And if you don't even know what I'm talking about, please go to Creativebug.com and check out Faith Hale's class. Okay, so as this stands right now, it looks a little bit overwhelming or underwhelming. We don't have too many colors on there. This is where the magic happens. So you have to roll. Let's just check the other side to see if it's totally bereft of color. So it doesn't have a whole lot of dye on the other side. So I'm just gonna pat it. I'm gonna drag it through what we've already done. Yeah, so there's a little bit of disbursement, dispersement, excuse me. As we fold up the bottom edge, we make it into a little burrito. And we're sealing it down. This is where the professional dyer in me comes in, we seal it down and roll it up. And now, your best bet is to put this in a steamer in a pot of water and then simmer it for 30 minutes, but we do not have 30 minutes because this is a live shoot. There was my seam. I'm gonna put that seam-side down. You can already see how incredible it's turning. And now we're gonna put it in the microwave for one minute. (microwave door squeaking) It's a haunted microwave. (microwave beeping) - [Man] That was one second. - Gonna do it for 59 more seconds. (man chuckling) (microwave beeping) So for this, you can also use your oven. If you want it on one of the lower temperatures, like 220 degrees and have a metal sheet pan, don't use that pan for other cooking. I used a paper plate as to not taint any other plates we have here in the studio. Was there questions? - Yeah, yes. Yes, they're coming. Sandra is asking if you can use light-activated dyes for dyeing yarn. I love that idea. I wish I had an answer for you, and I hope to find out an answer for you, 'cause that seems like an amazing experiment. I think the tricky part would be, like Dye-Na-Flow, is that what you're thinking of? Those-- - [Man] Lumi. - Lumi! Lumi inks, yeah. Would you have to do it in the dark and then take it out into the sun? I don't know, great question. If anyone else knows the answer to that or if you've tried it yourself, please answer in our comments section. We're going to repeat, well, we should technically repeat this process (microwave beeping) a couple times, taking the yarn out, checking it, and then putting it back in. And this is what checking it means. We wanna make sure that the water in the yarn is clear. So when you push it down, you see that? We still have a lot of pigment in the yarn, so we're gonna put it in for one more minute. And also, wrapping it tight keeps it from burning the yarn. And if you have a microwave oven that runs really high, definitely recommend the

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stovetop version for you. Otherwise, you'll just burn up. (microwave door clicking) (microwave beeping) (microwave whirring) This is the yarn I mentioned previously that is half nylon. It's nylon, cotton, and spandex. So the nylon will dye, oh goodness gracious, well we know I have to do it pink now. But the cotton will not, so that'll produce some interesting effects. And nylon, surprisingly, is one manmade fiber that dyes like an animal fiber. I don't know why. If you're just joining us, we're waiting for the microwave to heat up the yarn. (chuckles) - [Woman] Elizabeth Hummel just joined and says, "Alabama says, 'Hey y'all.'" - Hello. (chuckles) - Hey y'all. - Good to hear from you. Our next step is to rinse out the yarn. Now you need to make sure that the yarn is the same temperature as the water. This is very essential. If there's a difference in temperature, the yarn's gonna freak out. It's very moody, especially after it's been stuck in the microwave. So if you use cold water on the hot yarn, it'll felt it, or you can let it cool and use cool water. But if you let it cool, please don't use hot water. (microwave door clicking) So it's definitely gonna be super duper hot. And like I was showing you earlier with, see, it's running. Well, I don't know if you can see that. I can tell because I was a professional, but you can see there's a little less ink in it, and we're gonna rinse it out and some ink will, or some dye will rinse out, but not most of it. And so, see this steaming, steaming yarn sack. So let's put it back on here so we can see how magnificent that is. So we had three colors, and now we have this full rainbow. I don't know if this is like unicorn hair, this is pride yarn, this is, I think Liana had said yesterday, like a mermaid's tail. So from three colors, you get this crazy spectrum. And also, we're keeping the white in there. So I'm gonna have this warm water. I'm gonna rinse it out. And you're not gonna be able to see the full glory. So you can see that some dye is releasing. That's mainly the blues. Blues take a lot more time to absorb into the yarn than other shades. So you gotta rinse this out. (water splashing) And then after the water runs clear, once you've rinsed it a few times, which we will do once we have access to a sink, then your yarn will be ready to dry. Also, some people like to rinse their yarn using a squirt of shampoo or conditioner to give it a pleasing scent. Here's that little nugget. And I'm gonna show you what I made yesterday. So when you buy the yarn, yes, you can buy the pens, but I would even more recommend this yarn called Heavenly. I've never knit with it before, and I'm definitely gonna knit with it a hundred billion more times 'cause it's so beautiful. 100% merino, and it's Superwash, which means that you can put it in the washing machine. It's perfect for babies, thank goodness, 'cause I'm always making useless cashmere things for babies, and they hate it. Shrink-proof. So this is the skein I made yesterday using the exact same mechanism. You can see it looks, it's like they're cousins. I love those bright fuchsias. Isn't that bonkers? It's so good. And then here is a little swatch I stitched up. It's so pretty. So it's a lot more subtle than it looks. It looks like this wild and crazy skein, but it's super subtle, and I think textural stitches, this is a seed stitch, work really well with this. And if you decide to make yarn on your own, please feel free to post it to the Creativebug galleries. My favorite thing in the whole world is seeing what you guys come up with based on what do here in the studio. We really appreciate your support. - [Woman] We got more questions. - And we have more questions! - Okay. - Good timing. - [Woman] Brie is wondering if you were to dye all of the yarn-- - Yeah. - [Woman] Would the process differ? - You'd need a bigger table and you'd need to ensure, (microphone rustling) oh, I think I stepped on my microphone. - [Man] One thing. - Can you? - Yes, technical difficulties. - Technical difficulties. - Wait, wait, we gotta put it. - At least we figured out the microwave. - You gotta go up this way. (microphone rustling) - [Faith] It's a first for Creativebug. Okay, PG-13. - [Brian] Okay. I think we're good. Sorry, guys. - Thank you, Brian. - Yeah. - Real lifesaver. This is what happens when I try to say goodbye before you're ready. The question is if you wanna make more. You wanna make sure that the skeins are exactly the same length and width. That's going to affect

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it substantially, especially when it comes to knitting, and then you will want to line them out on a table. It's probably best to do at most three at a time, because your cling wrap is as wide as it is and your arms are as long as they are. So I would say, yeah, maybe three skeins, or I suppose you could do two at a time, but you would want to overlap your cling wrap. And then that would give you the same dye lot. Also, you'll have better results if you premix a liquid dye. So you'd add this, in a certain measured amount, to water. The speckles are a lot less likely to give you consistent results. - [Woman] Okay, last question. Sarah wants to know, "I've never dyed before," she says. She wants to know if you're getting started dyeing fabric, yarn, how do you get started? - I would get started with probably the same order I made from Jo-Ann two weeks ago. Three of these, 'cause three dyes comes up with a ton of amazing colors, a couple skeins of a 100% merino yarn, or if you have yarn lying around, just make sure it's natural. And then just go to town. And also, less is more, of course. As you saw, we made a scant few sprinkles, and then we covered almost this entire skein. So start gently, but also give yourself really nice materials to work with. I know it's always tempting to use scrap yarn when you're embarking upon a new project, but I have to say, this yarn is so squishy and lovely to work with that even if it was ugly, I probably would have enjoyed the process of making it just the same, because it just, it's very luxurious. But you can still put it in the washing machine. Thank you everybody who asked questions. We always appreciate your participation. And thank you so much for tuning in. We will see you on Thursday. (upbeat music)

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