

# WQG RUSTic Fabric Instructions

This is our first surface design challenge. The challenge is to rust dye fabric. You don't need to complete a project, but there will be extra prizes for those who do. (Challenge due Aug. 28<sup>th</sup>.)

## ***Step 1: Dyeing - What You Need***

- Salt
- A spray bottle
- White vinegar
- Fabric (natural fabrics made from cotton or linen work the best)
- Rusty objects (or steel wool or iron shavings)
- Water

## ***Step 2: Spray It***

The first step is to spray a combination of water and white vinegar (50/50) on the fabric with the spray bottle. It's important that the fabric is all wet. The white vinegar will speed up the process of the rust coming of the metal and going into the fabric.

## ***Step 3: Create Pattern***

To rust the fabric, you can use a variety of objects and methods. If using rusty baking sheets, fold the fabric over the rusty baking sheets and put weights on top of the fabric. If using loose rusted items like bolts or washers, lay the rusted objects on a bottom fabric and drape another piece of vinegar soaked fabric over the top. You can use stencils to make designs with irons shavings or steel wool. Make sure the fabric stays wet by spraying water and vinegar on the fabric and rusty objects. You can sprinkle some salt over the metal and fabric, salt has the similar effect on rust as the white vinegar. Make sure the rusty metal is pressing on the fabric by putting some heavy weight objects on top of the metal.

## ***Step 4: Sneak Preview***

After a couple of minutes the textile is already absorbing the rust. Try to be patient and wait at least 24 hours before you remove all the rusty objects from the fabric. Keep the fabric moist during the curing process by placing your creation inside a large plastic trash bag or covering your vinegar laced fabric with plastic wrap. If you leave the rust over 24 hours, make sure the fabric remains moist and respray with the vinegar/water mixture if it seems dry.

## ***Step 5: Remove Rusty Objects***

After a day or night of absorbing, you can see a pattern of brown, orange and even green colors. Remove all the rusty objects and see the result!

## ***Step 6: Fixing - What You Need***

To fix the pattern on the fabric and stop the rusting process, you need:

- Container or bucket filled with hot water
- Salt
- Spoon

### **Step 7: Fix It**

Create a fixing bath by dissolving 2 Tablespoons of salt in the bucket with hot water. Use this bath to rinse the fabric and to fix the rusty pattern. I used two fixing baths and also rinsed the fabric twice with clean water, without salt.

### **Step 8: Let It Dry**

Let your dyed fabric dry. Let the rusty objects also dry, so you can reuse them. If your fabric seem stiff, run them through your washing machine without any laundry soap.

The fabric is now ready to use! (Note: when sewing rusted fabrics, use a new, sharp Microtex needle. Rusted fabric can be difficult to sew through.)

>EBAY is a great source of rusty objects. I found horseshoe nails, horseshoes, and steel cutouts.

>The dollar store is a good source for stencils. I found sink liner grids that work great and leave an interesting pattern.

>You can make shavings with steel wool (available from most hardware stores). Just use an old pair of scissors and snip the steel wool in confetti like pieces. Use the shavings with a stencil the same as you would the iron shavings available at education stores. You can buy iron shavings at education stores in the science section.

Other Methods:

**Pole Wrapping** - fabric is wrapped around a rusty pole to create a zebra stripe effect. By scrunching the fabric as you wrap it around the pole, you can make a more complex pattern.

**Bound Resisting** - various rusty objects are tied to the fabric using strings and left to rust. The pattern is visible when the knots are taken out.

**Iron Fillings** is another technique that can be really effective is using iron fillings and a stencil. This allows the creation of intentional patterns rather than leaving it to chance with found items.



This piece by Jean Judd was made using metal shavings and a cutout paper snowflake as a stencil.  
(<http://www.jeanjudd.com/19701/125601.html>)



Wherever the Wind Blows by Kim Frisk  
(<http://chrisquilts.net/blog/?p=7578>)