

# Room temperature Dyeing

With Covid, supply chain issues, and whole host of other issues, acquiring good material is extremely difficult. Even harder is to get the color you want. So I have resorted to dyeing for my fly tying needs. Well, dyeing can be a very active and time consuming process. So I was excited when I saw a new class of dyes that can be done at room temp.

To go from this;



To this was worth a try.



I typically use Jacquard Acid Dyes for 80% of my dyeing. I often choose Fire Red dye and typically have problems getting a deep rich reds. I can achieve an acceptable Fire Red; however, it takes a long time in the dyeing solution. I can get the desired color in as little as 30 minutes to 6 hours depending upon how rich the color I want and the amount of material I am dyeing.

The new room temperature dye from Jacquard is a Procion MX Dye. This article is not about how to dye but rather the results.

I made a very simple comparison between the two methods, using the same brand, i.e. Jacquard. My goal was to see how long it would take to get a close color match between the Acid Dye and the Procion MX Dye.

Basic process for the Acid Dye comparison:

- 1) Wash the material with warm soapy water and thoroughly rinse before dyeing
- 2) Make a dye solution with a couple tablespoons of white vinegar. (Please note: the amount of dye you add to water will change the dye concentration, a little experience here helps to get your desired color)
- 3) Bring dye solution to 140 degrees F. (It is best to keep below this temperature to minimize damage to the material you are dyeing)
- 4) Control the temperature between 135 and 140 degrees F
- 5) 30 minute soak/cook time
- 6) Rinse the material until all the dye has been removed
- 7) Dry material with a heat gun ( use a small amount of material)

Process with Procion MX Dye comparison:

- 1) Wash the material with warm soapy water and thoroughly rinse before dyeing
- 2) Using warm water from the tap approximately 100 degrees F, mix a dye solution such that you can not see through the glass jar.
- 3) Let the material soak for 3 hours

The materials used for this comparison were: Golden Pheasant Crest, a white inexpensive hen neck and some bleached bear hair. From my experience, these are the hardest with which to get good results.

**Results of 30 minute acid dye versus 3 hours of room temperature:**



*Figure 1 Left Side is Acid Dye and the right side is Room Temperature Dye*

The room temperature dye (3 hours) was not as saturated as the acid dye (30 minutes). I recharged the room temperature solution and returned it to the solution for an additional 6 hours. As a side note the Acid Dyed Golden Pheasant was as good as any commercially dye crest, it was just hard to show it with this picture.

**After the additional soak for 6 hours:**



*Figure 2 Left Side Acid Dye Right Room Temperature Dye*

There is still a difference but it is much closer in color/shade than what the picture shows. There is no doubt that if I extended the soak time for the room temperature process, the color would eventually be the same. (you may be wondering about the Golden Pheasant Crest, well I really, really, liked the color so I did not return it to the dye dyeing solution)

In conclusion if you want to attempt to dye some material and do not want to hassle with setting up a hot dyeing process, these new room temperature dyes will work well. Just mix the dye in a jar, put your material in the jar and check it every 3 hours to see if you obtained your desired color.