

Arashi Shibori

by Cindy Lohbeck

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Cindy Lohbeck with host Susan Brubaker Knapp

Materials

- Prepared for dyeing (PFD) fabric, 2 pieces 14" x 36" and 2 pieces 16" x 36"
- 1" masking tape (not blue tape)
- 4" diameter pole for wrapping
- Fiber reactive dye
- Dust mask
- Gloves
- Squeeze bottle
- Paintbrush
- Sodium alginate (dye thickener)
- Soda ash solution
- Gloves and dust mask
- Plastic bin, about 17" x 27" x 6"
- Lawn-size trash bag

Optional

- Tyvek for tags
- Permanent marker

Arashi is a style of Japanese *shibori*. Translating to "storm," arashi will give you beautiful organic patterns that resemble water, lightning, and trees. In arashi, we wrap the fabric around a pole before dyeing to help us create pattern. The way we scrunch, squeeze, and slide the fabric onto the pole can dictate the kind of pattern we unfold.

The easiest example is what I like to call the Water Fold. Here are the basic instructions and a few simple variations for you to enjoy.

INSTRUCTIONS

Prepare the fabric

1. Begin by building a dam at 1 end of the tube by wrapping and stacking several layers of tape. This will prevent the fabric from sliding off the end of the tube.
2. Start with the first 14"-wide piece of fabric. Fold it in half lengthwise and stitch a ½" seam along the cut edge.
3. With the seam on the outside, slide the fabric tube onto the untaped

end of the pole and scrunch tightly, gathering toward the taped end of the pole.

4. As you gather, keep the seam as straight as possible, compacting the 36" tube down to 6" or less. Secure with tape or continue stacking additional pieces of fabric onto the same tube. (figure 1)



Figure 1

Figures 1-5: Photos courtesy of Cindy Lohbeck

- For a simple variation, on the next 14" piece of fabric, use a ¼" seam allowance when making the tube. This gives a little more ease and allow you to twist the fabric as you push it down, wrapping the seam around the pole. Stack it right on top of the first piece of fabric. (figure 2)

Tip: After dyeing this pole, it may be difficult to distinguish the different techniques. I pin a small piece of Tyvek waterproof paper to the seam of each piece of fabric with an instruction note written in permanent marker on it. For example, the first piece of fabric would be labeled, "Tight seam, straight push," and the next would be "Looser seam, twisted push."

- Repeating the first two exercises with the wider, 16" cuts of fabric will create baggy tubes that will get pushed and twisted right onto the same pole. These baggy pieces will have to be taped in place on the pole to keep them from sliding down on top of the other two pieces of fabric. These will be labeled, "Loose seam, straight push" and "Loose seam, twisted push." Secure final piece on the pole with tape. (figure 3)
- Soak the fabric-covered tube in soda ash for 30–60 minutes. Squeeze out excess soda ash solution and place the tube in a plastic bin.

CAUTION: Always wear a dust mask and gloves while working with powdered dyes and chemicals. All measuring and mixing tools used in this process should be dedicated to nonfood use.

Prepare dye + dye paint

- When dyeing, using a thin, watery solution of dye first will create a soft blue background. (figure 4) Make the thin solution by mixing 1 cup water and ¼–½ teaspoon of dye. This is best applied with a squeeze bottle.
- Using a thick dye paint only give crisp, white backgrounds. (figure 5) Mix dye paint using sodium alginate as a thickener. Mix a solution of 1 cup water and add up to a teaspoon of sodium alginate thickener. This takes time to develop fully (up to a few hours) so mix the dye paint early, and watch it as it thickens. Mix

this solution into 2–3 tablespoons of dye powder that have been dissolved in a small amount of water. This is best applied with a paintbrush.

- Apply the dye to achieve the look you desire. Allow the dyed fabric to batch inside a lawn-size plastic bag for up to 24 hours.
- Rinse well to remove the dye before removing the fabric from the tube; this will protect the beautiful patterns you have created. ■

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Figure 2



Figure 3

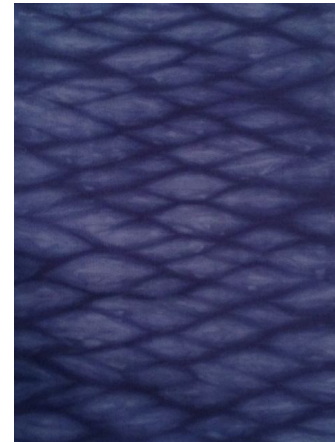


Figure 4

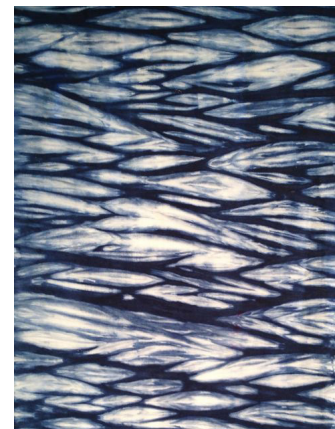


Figure 5