



# Turkey Red

The Turkey Red process  
A recent attempt

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This color is the goal, more or less.

Examples of Turkey red dyeing include red-colored and figured bandanas. (*This one is printed, but “bandhana” is Hindi for “tie-dye.”*)





Left to right:  
Linen  
Wool  
Silk  
Cotton

My standard dye test set. Here, the set is madder-dyed using a traditional European method for wool. Note the lighter color of the linen (first) and cotton (last) swatches. *Textile chemistry at work!*

Left to right:  
Linen  
Cotton  
*("Airplane cloth")*  
Cotton batiste  
Quilted composite  
*(Cotton muslin +  
2 polyesters)*



The Turkey red sample set before processing.





Gall nut, alum, sheep dung





The sample set after mordanting 3 times with a castor oil mordant. You can't see how stiff they are. >



Samples after the first application of tannin (gall nut).  
At right is a standard set I added for comparison.





Sample sets after the first mordanting with alum+. The image is not well lit, but the samples *are* streaky. That can mean an uneven result.







After the second application of alum+: Ready for dyeing. Still uneven, but a much darker color. >



Dried madder root. I purchased the “new” madder already ground. The ground madder from Afghanistan was given to me about 10 years ago.





**From the left: Pink X—Afghan madder; Black +—New madder;  
Traditional set, Reserve (this one won't be dyed)**

The samples are marked for identification and ready for dyeing.





**Left to right:  
New madder, Standard or traditional samples (with new madder), Afghan madder**

After dyeing—out of the vat and still wet.





**Afghan madder**

**Standard set**

**New madder**

Dyed samples after drying





After brightening





Traditional method of madder dyeing vs. Turkey red method. Both sets are L-R: linen, wool, silk cotton.



## **Books**

- » Adrosko, Rita. *Natural Dyes and Home Dyeing*. 1968. Reprint, New York, 1971.
- » Liles, James N. *The Art and Craft of Natural Dyeing*. Knoxville, TN, 1990.
- » Schweppe, Helmut. *Practical Hints on Dyeing with Natural Dyes*. Washington, D.C., 1986.

## **Suppliers**

- » *Dyes and exotic dye assistants: Kremer Pigmente*
- » *Fabrics: Testfabrics, Inc.*
- » Sheep dung: Queens County Farm Museum, NYC Parks Department
- » Miscellaneous supplies: Duane Reade Drugs (NYC), Wankel Hardware (NYC)

Thanks to M. Susan Barger for the Afghan madder.





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***Thanks!***  
***Sarah L.***

Please Note

