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**04/21/2021**

**One of Mother Nature's Most  
Beautiful Natural Dye's: Turmeric**

**Dye Research Project: Lab**

**I used this tutorial on YouTube to dye my Cotton T-Shirt with Turmeric**

**<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ac40h4c7m4A&t=42s>**



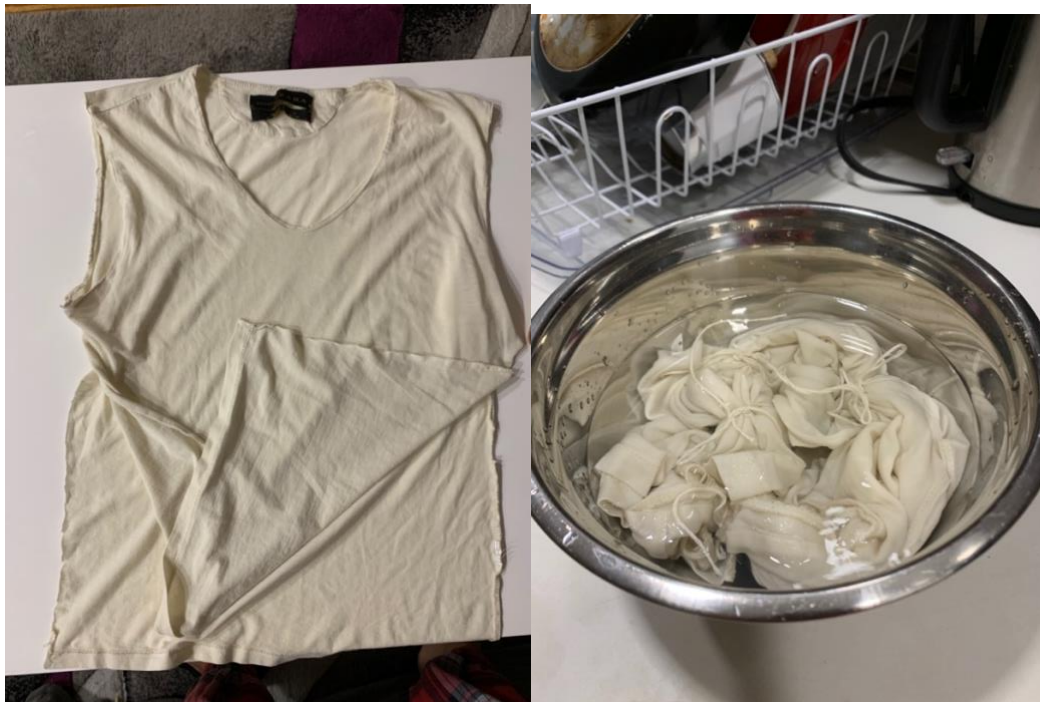
(STEP 1: I poured 2 Tbsp of Turmeric to 2 Cups of Water)



(STEP 2: Mixed it well, and then I boiled the contents for about a 1 hour)



(STEP 3: When the solution boiled, I turned it off; so that it could cool down. As I waited for it to cool, I proceeded to make the Vinegar & Water Bath. 4:1, I poured 4 cups of water and 1 cup of Vinegar in the Bowl)



(STEP 4: My Cotton T-Shirt/ I prepped the shirt with strings and dipped the shirt in the Vinegar for 30 mins)



(STEP 5: After the 30 mins were up, I ran the shirt under some tap water)



(STEP 6: I ringed the excess water out and then I dipped the shirt into the Turmeric dye; Then I covered the pot and left it overnight)



(STEP 7: after I cut the strings and washed the shirt with very mild detergent; this the final result)

Turmeric happens to be one of many spices that we have in our pantries that has amazing properties; most of them we either overlook it or we simply just don't know them. This very special spice doesn't just have health benefits but more importantly its capability of being able to naturally dye fabric. It's fascinating to learn that many other spices that we have in our homes could make many more beautiful shades with different kinds of fabric. We could go on and on about what other things Turmeric has to offer but for this paper, I'll be focusing on the history, process, and my personal experience on my findings of my project. Being able to have this affordable natural dye is very convenient to own because imagine the endless types of apparel that you could do in your spare time; it would be an instant stress reliever.

Natural dyes like turmeric have a history that stretches back many years and centuries. When it comes to the spice turmeric there's a lot to learn and continuing to learn about it. According to "What is the History of Turmeric?" Avey stated "In recent years turmeric has attracted quite a bit of interest for its natural healing properties, but it has been used medicinally for over 4,500 years. Analyses of pots discovered near New Delhi uncovered residue from turmeric, ginger, and garlic that dates back as early as 2500 BCE. It was around 500 BCE that turmeric emerged as an important part of Ayurvedic medicine (Avey 2015). Since this spice was discovered in India since then its popularity spread into other countries through spiritual practices; they thought that adding turmeric to their seawater signified that the water was sacred. Turmeric has been used widely as a dye for centuries dating back thousands and thousands of years; so, it's been used in the middle east for a very long time. According to "Fashion Archives: A look at the history of spice dyeing" They stated, "In the context of Ayurveda healing, turmeric is believed to help "purify the blood" and help with several ailments in the skin, heart, liver, and

lungs. This makes it the perfect raw material for Ayurveda dyeing, combining both beauty and function (Fashion Fabric Sourcing). While this spice is commonly used for food or holistic medicine, there's also a target market for tribes who take spiritual healing as a means to continue to be connected to themselves and their people.

Turmeric natural dyes can usually range from a very pale yellow to a very deep concentrated yellow. When it comes to the color of how deep the color may or may not take on the fabric; it depends on the mordant that was used because it plays a huge role in the color that you'll get on the fabric. According to the article "Turmeric Dye with different Mordants" Burns states "In the morning, I drained the liquid and thoroughly rinsed the skeins before washing with PH neutral soap, before drying. The results were great, with a clear distinction between the different mordants. From the top to bottom in the above photos are an alum, iron, rhubarb, and copper (Burns 2017). In this case, she used different mordants alongside the turmeric so it made a significant difference in how her yarns turned out, and also the way that the process of the turmeric dye was made too can influence the pigment on your chosen fabric. Compared to its counterpart Saffron; turmeric isn't an expensive type of condiment. According to the article "The 13 Most Expensive Spices in the World (2019)" Bailey states "turmeric ranking last at number 13, priced at \$3 a pound which is pretty accessible, and cheap. It's mostly grown and exported from India, but it also grows in China, Vietnam, and Peru" (Bailey 2019). Since this spice is commonly available everywhere including your local market or supermarket it's pretty accessible to obtain compared to the other spices mentioned in the article.

Sumptuary laws were a pretty big deal back in the middle ages; wherein society established things that we do freely now compared to then where if you weren't at a certain level in society then you couldn't do or obtain. For example, spices, apparel, furniture, etc. were some examples that wealthy citizens could do that a lower-class person couldn't use. Saffron was the most valuable spice that to this day still, a few people could afford; where if we're to go back in time turmeric would fall subject to a sumptuary law because it is a spice that only rich people could afford at the time. Apart from this, there are some examples of, symbolic practices with the use of turmeric. According to the blog, "A Wandering Botanist" Feebler stated "You can read that turmeric produced the saffron-colored robes of Buddhist monks and given the importance of turmeric in India in Buddha's time and since that seems reasonable (Feebler 2020). Buddhism is believed to be one of the most sacred beliefs to follow and makes sense as to even down to their clothes its dye isn't man-made but created from mother nature herself. Also, turmeric isn't a dye that would stay on the fabric for a long time like a synthetic would do. According to the blog, "A Wandering Botanist" Feebler states "turmeric dye is famous for being very bright and then quickly fading in the sun or contact with alkaline substances (Feebler 2020). Since natural dyes are usually the most environmentally friendly kind of dyes compared to synthetic dyes there is a flaw in the dye in which a few washes the dye would, unfortunately, fade with time.

Using a natural dye with my cotton t-shirt was in itself an experience that I very much enjoyed doing; it was a lot of fun and it helped me de-stress quite a bit. It was almost a no-brainer that I wanted to try turmeric because I always wondered about the spice and I never quite understood the use for it besides for solely health benefits. But, trying a spice that I had in my cabinet was different, and cool to do that was hands-on. As I observed the tutorial that I followed



on YouTube compared to how my t-shirt came out was that it was straight-forward with little to no confusion but one thing that I would change maybe not boil the turmeric and the water too long because I found myself having to add more water to the pot. When I had let it boil for the time stamp in the video It did boil down to the point where it gave a very thick consistency. But I managed to add the 1 tbsps of water to the 2 cups of water in the pot. Other than that, a flaw I followed the video step by step and was happy with my results. I would have to say that my project did come out better than I expected it to have come out; I loved the randomness of the pattern that I created on the T-shirt.

Turmeric has shown us time and time again its value, but the average person isn't aware of its significance. It usually just sits in our cupboards for a long time before we even realize why we even bought it in the first place. Hopefully, after reading my paper you and I can understand the importance this spice has. Turmeric isn't just a spice but it's also a very effective natural dye that isn't harmful to your skin and it's free of chemicals like synthetic dyes have. I learned from this process that natural dyes are a very economically, environmentally friendly, and affordable dye to play around with. After doing this project, it had opened my curiosity of wondering if I had mixed other dyes with turmeric and which dye would have dominated the fabric.

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