

Concentrated Aluminum Acetate Mordant: A Quick Immersion Method for Cotton or Other Cellulose Fibers

The mordant is a very concentrated solution, similar in strength to those used for printing. Only a short immersion time is required. The mordant can also be applied directly to the textile with a brush. After the mordant application, it is essential that the textile be dried and neutralized in a chalk solution.

Recipe:

Alum (Potassium aluminum sulfate)	120 grams
Sodium Acetate	100 grams
Water (warm tap water)	780 ml. (grams)
Total Mordant Solution	1000 ml. (grams)

- Mix only enough mordant to immerse the textile. This recipe will make a liter of solution but a smaller or larger quantity may be required. The mordant is mixed with warm water in order to insure that the dry ingredients are dissolved.
- Prepare the textile by scouring/pre-wetting. Squeeze out as much water as possible.
- Dip the textile in the mordant until it is completely saturated. This should only take about 3-5 minutes at room temperature. Do not heat. Squeeze out excess mordant.
- Dry the mordanted fiber completely! This may be done on a clothesline or in clothes dryer.
- Make a chalk solution: 10 grams chalk (*calcium carbonate*) in 1 liter of warm water)
- Immerse the dry, mordanted textile in the chalk solution for 10 minutes. The chalk completes the fixation of the mordant on the textile. The chalk solution may be re-used for additional mordanted textiles.
- Rinse the textile well.
- Dye immediately or dry and store the textile for future dyeing.

To prevent waste of this concentrated mordant, first mordant the largest piece of fabric and continue to mordant smaller pieces of fabric until the mordant has been completely used up. Any leftover mordant may be thickened for print applications but should be used up within a day or two.