



## Instructions

Batik Wax

# Batik: A History

Although its exact origin is uncertain, the earliest known batiks were discovered in Egyptian tombs dating back to the 4th century BCE. Wax-resist techniques were probably developed independently by disparate cultures throughout the ancient world.

By the seventh century AD, patterning fabric using resists such as wax was a widespread practice throughout Asia and Africa and was perhaps most fully developed as an artform in Indonesia, where batik predates written records.

By the thirteenth century, it became a highly respected art form and pastime for the women of Java and Bali, as recognizable motifs, patterns and colors became signifiers of one's family and geographical area. Distinct styles and traditions proliferated and spread with the exchange of cultures through trade and exploration (see the "inland" and "coastal" batiks of Java, for instance — the two traditions couldn't be more different).

In the seventeenth century, as the world grew smaller, batik was introduced in Holland and other parts of Europe, where it became increasingly fashionable. Europeans and Americans traveling and living in the East encountered the ancient process and brought it back to their homelands — and spread it to colonies far away — where new traditions of batik branched out.

Today, art schools across the United States and Europe offer batik courses as an essential part of their textile curricula.

***For more tips and techniques see [www.jacquardproducts.com](http://www.jacquardproducts.com)***

# Batik Instructions

## Preparing and designing your fabric

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All new fabrics must be washed with hot soapy water, rinsed and dried to remove factory-applied sizings which may inhibit color penetration. Draw the design on the fabric with a pencil, ballpoint pen, or charcoal, but keep in mind that lines covered with wax may be preserved as they will not be covered with dye.

## Waxing

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1. Stretch the fabric fairly taut over an old picture frame, a cardboard box, or a special batik frame to assure more complete wax penetration.
2. Melt wax using the double boiler method, heating the wax tin indirectly with hot water in large pan or electric skillet.  
**Do not melt wax directly on stove element.**

NOTE: Wax at the proper temperature will penetrate the fabric and have a translucent appearance. If it is too cool, it will be white and opaque and not penetrate the fabric resulting in only partial resist. If this occurs, re-wax the fabric from the other side.

**Never leave hot wax unattended. Keep baking soda handy and, in case of an emergency, douse the flames with dry soda. Never use water.**

3. Apply the wax with soft inexpensive, natural-bristle paintbrushes of different widths, artist brushes, or paste brushes. Once brushes are used for wax, they aren't good for anything else. Place brush in the melted wax and allow it to get hot with each dip.

NOTE: Eliminate excess wax from the brush by touching the brush to the side of the pan. To prevent accidental drippings, hold a folded newspaper, jar lid or plastic cup underneath brush.

Traditionally, line work is applied with a Tjanting Tool, which Jacquard offers in a variety of sizes. Printing with wax is also common using a wooden or metal Tjap or a stamp made from mounted cotton string or rope.

Cracks may be introduced as a design element by folding waxed fabric as desired.

4. Wax about 1/8" / 0.3 cm from the line so that the line will be in darker colors. (Try not to cover your design outlines with wax or they will appear in the white areas.) Hot wax may migrate on sheer fabric; place a loaded wax brush on the fabric and allow the wax to spread until you get a feel of it. You may brush water on the line to repel the wax.

NOTE: In the batik process, retain light colors with wax and add the dark areas by dyeing or painting the exposed fabric. Multi-colored batiks are achieved by coloring the fabric with progressively darker colors and preserving the previous color with wax, layer by layer.

## Applying Color

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Always follow manufacturer's instructions before applying color. Dye pots should be stainless steel, enamel, plastic or glass and large enough to cover the fabric and move the material about freely. If hand painting, apply color with stiff brushes, rollers or sponge.

First, place waxed fabric in cool water for a few minutes to moisten the fibers uniformly, preparing the fabric for dyeing or painting while hardening the wax. During soaking, try not to bend the waxed areas so they will remain white, as cracks in the wax permit color to penetrate.

Next, paint or move fabric into the dye bath. The longer the cloth stays in the dye bath, the stronger the color will become. Colors will always look darker when wet than when they are dry.

Remove fabric from the dye bath. Spread the fabric out on wax paper or plastic to dry. To avoid streaking and running color, do not hang to dry. Allow to completely dry before adding more wax.

## Removing the Wax

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Use a large work area to minimize moving of the fabric. Pad the surface with newspaper, then sandwich the fabric between paper towels.

1. Pull the wax out of the fabric by ironing over the top layer of paper. Change the top and bottom papers frequently while ironing.

NOTE: Wax can also be removed by submerging the fabric in hot water (must be above 145°F / 62.77°C). The wax will float to the top of the water where it can be poured or decanted off and reused. Absorbent fabric or paper may also be used to skim the wax off the water.

2. Follow heat-setting instructions recommended by manufacturer of paints and dyes to set colors.

NOTE: When using a fabric paint such as Jacquard's Dye-Na-Flow, you can dilute down paint with 25% water if you are submerging the fabric.

**Always work in well-ventilated areas.**

*Closely woven, thinned fabrics work best.*

*Sheer cottons and silks are excellent. Avoid treated fabrics.*