

# Natural Dyeing: Tannin and Iron Rust

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## Mordants.

A mordant is “a substance, typically an inorganic oxide, that combines with a dye or stain and thereby fixes it in a material.” (Oxford Dictionary)

Mordants also shift the color when used in conjunction with natural dyes such as cochineal, marigold, madder, onion, logwood, dandelion, etc. Both tannin and iron rust are used as mordants. We can use them separately or together to create different results.

Mordants also help with color or lightfastness. They tend to not fade, or fade less than simply using natural dyes.

## Tannin.

We are using steeped black tea as it contains tannin. Tannin is also found in oak galls, cutch, and walnuts.

## Iron oxide or iron rust.

To create iron rust, we must first locate iron. Sometimes iron is mixed with other metals and it's best to use 100% iron. Iron is magnetic, so we can use a magnet to help us decipher which type of metal we have found.

Soak the pieces of iron in vinegar, then sprinkle with salt, and spray with hydrogen peroxide. It will begin to bubble and eventually create rust.

We can create iron water by leaving pieces of iron in a jar of water for a while. I keep a jar constantly 'brewing' so that I can use it when I need it.

## Fabric.

Tannin and iron rust will stain/dye natural fabrics. Use cotton, hemp, wool, linen, silk, etc.

## Questions?

If you have any questions at all (or want to show me your finished products!) please feel welcome to contact me. [Teresa@TextureClothing.com](mailto:Teresa@TextureClothing.com)

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## Coaching.

I started my first business in 1992 and continue to create clothing (my brand is Texture Clothing) and I also coach makers who are starting or growing their business.

I offer a free chat to anyone who is interested in being coached. It's my heart-work. I love seeing my fellow maker-friends succeed.

Email me to schedule a chat: [Teresa@CraftALifeYouLove.com](mailto:Teresa@CraftALifeYouLove.com)