

# Tie Dye Guitar T-Shirt

## Using Procion MX Dyes

by Shar Sosh for Jacquard

This outrageously fun guitar design can be created in 1-1/2 to 2 hours from start to the end of the dyeing process. Allow 24-48 hours to pass prior to the final steps of rinsing and washing of the shirt to make it ready to wear.

Soda Ash is a mild alkali, also known as sodium carbonate or washing soda. It promotes a chemical reaction between Procion MX fiber reactive dye and cellulose fiber and is a necessity for keeping Procion Dye colors bright and intense.

**Grade Levels** 7-12

### Process

**SODA ASH SOAK:** Add 1 cup of soda ash to 1 gallon of hot or warm water to dissolve. Wait for the water to return to room temperature before you add the shirts. Allow 6 shirts per gallon of water. Soak the shirts for a minimum of 20 minutes, they can remain overnight in the soak as well. Remove shirts and wring out. This soda ash soak never goes bad and could be stored reused at a later time.



### Materials

Jacquard® Procion MX®  
Dyes:

Cobalt Blue (01302-5182)

Bright Golden Yellow  
(01302-4922)

Bright Scarlet  
(01302-3712)

This selection will make  
20-25 shirts

100% Cotton T-Shirt  
(pre-washed), white

Soda Ash (01302-1005)  
1 cup per 6-7 shirts

Trait-Tex® Cotton Warp  
(65211-1375), 1 spool

Needle for Cotton Warp  
(65101-1009), package of  
12, need 1 per student

Crayola® Washable  
Markers (21206-1509), fine  
line, need 1 marker per  
student

Boston Bottles, 8-oz  
squeeze bottles,  
(04916-1005), need 3  
(1 for each color) per 3  
students

Measuring Cups and  
Spoons (use for dyeing  
only, do not reuse for  
food items)

Disposable Plastic Gloves,  
Small (04982-1920) or  
Medium (04982-1010),  
100 per box, need 1 pair  
per student

Paper Towels

Plastic Zipper-style  
Storage Bags, gallon size,  
need 1 per student

3M Non-Toxic Particle  
Mask (34913-1050),  
box of 50, recommend 1  
per student

Kwik-Cover Table Cloth  
(04500-)

## Process, continued

### TYING THE SHIRT:

- 1. The Fold:** Decide which shoulder you would like the guitar to start at and you will fold the front side of the shirt only from the shoulder to the waist in a diagonal fold.

This can be done by holding the shirt at both the front of the shoulder and at the waist. Shake the shirt to allow the back side of the shirt to hang down and out of the way. Make the diagonal centerfold of the shirt by laying it down on the table and smooth out the wrinkles around it. This fold will be the center of the guitar.

- 2. The Design:** Draw one side of the outline of the guitar using the washable marker. Draw also one half of the center circle of the guitar. These will be the lines to follow with baste stitching - temporary "in and out" stitches spaced about 1/4" apart. Begin basting the outer edge of the center circle. (You will be basting through 2 layers of fabric and have a half circle shape - do not close off the circle at the fold). Leave about 4" of cotton warp string at each end of the half circle and smooth out the shirt again keeping the fold straight.

Leave 4" of string at the base of the guitar and baste stitch along the line you drew. You will be basting through 2 layers of fabric. Leave 4" of string at the top of the guitar as well.

- 4. Pulling the Circle:** Hold both ends of the kite string basted around the center circle (half circle) and pull up on the fabric scrunching the fabric together. Pull as much string as you can back out of the fabric without losing any stitches. Wrap the strings around the lines of stitching and tie. Lift the scrunched-up

fabric of the circle.

- 5. Pulling the Guitar:** Hold both ends of the kite string basted around the guitar. Pull up on the fabric, scrunching it as you pull the strings. Continue the same as you pulled for the circle. Be sure when you have pulled as much as you could that you are careful to follow the lines of the guitar when wrapping/tying the strings together. Make sure the fabric inside of the guitar is scrunched up above the tied off string.

**MIXING THE DYES:** This step could be done ahead of time or while waiting for the shirts to soak in the soda ash.

**CAUTION:** Wear a mask, rubber gloves and work in a well-ventilated draft free area. Do not have fans running. Powdered dye can cause a reaction if inhaled.

Mix 1 cup of water with 2 teaspoons of dye. Double the dye amount for cobalt blue or any dark color. You can mix the dye right in the squirt bottles. Add the powder dye first, add a little water, swirl and then gradually add the rest of the 1 cup once the dye is dissolved. If you have hard water, use distilled water instead to produce brighter results.

**HINT:** Label colors with a permanent marker, since it may be difficult to tell them apart in the bottle.

**DYEING THE SHIRT:** Begin applying dye with the lightest color first. Use paper towels to soak up any extra dye from the table so you don't get color where you don't want it on the shirt.

1. Generously apply the Bright Golden Yellow to the guitar area, avoiding the center circle. Be sure to push the nozzle down into the guitar area to apply the dye.
2. Generously apply Bright Scarlet along the center fold (if it still remains) and

## Process, continued

across the top fabric sticking up from the guitar. The Bright Scarlet will blend to create orange with the already dyed Bright Golden Yellow areas. Avoid the center circle.

3. Apply Cobalt Blue to the center circle and generously apply Cobalt Blue to the rest of the entire shirt.
4. Place the dyed shirt with the guitar design up in a Ziploc bag and let it sit for 24-48 hours.

### FINISHING:

1. After 24-48 hours remove the shirt from the bag and rinse in cool water.
2. Carefully cut and remove the strings and continue rinsing.
3. Increase the temperature of the water and continue rinsing until the water is almost clear.
4. Wash the shirt with liquid detergent in a washing machine with a hot wash/cold rinse setting. Place in dryer or hang to dry.

## National Standards

Content Standard #1 — Understanding and applying media, techniques, and processes

- 5-8 Students use different media, techniques, and processes to communicate ideas, experiences, and stories
- 9-12 Students conceive and create works of visual art that demonstrate an understanding of how the communication of their ideas relates to the media, techniques, and processes they use