

Sun print bunting

Cyanotype is a photographic printing process using the sun. Use it to create beautiful bright blue fabric bunting or sun prints!

Introduction

The blue print fabric is light-sensitive, 100% cotton, treated for cyanotype. Cyanotype is a printing process that produces a cyan-blue print. Engineers used to use the process as a low-cost way to produce copies of drawings, referred to as blueprints. Two chemicals are used: ferric ammonium citrate and potassium ferricyanide.

What you'll need:

- Colour changing fabric
- natural materials
- cardboard
- pins
- scissors
- string/wool
- water & container
- protective waterproof gloves

Preparation

You will need a bright, sunny day for this activity and somewhere to show off the finished product! Prepare some cardboard to

pin your fabric pieces onto. Collect some natural materials (or have a collection to use if you don't have much on your doorstep). Look for interesting-shaped leaves and flowers. If you are doing this activity away from mains drainage you'll need water and a container to hold the used rinsing water, to be taken off site for disposal.

Environmental and health & safety considerations:

- Leave no trace
- Dispose of water used for rinsing in mains drainage
- Follow your usual operating procedures and carry out appropriate risk benefit assessments
- Wear protective gloves when rinsing – chemicals used are mild irritants, or when using scissors and string
- Hand wash after activity



Step 1 - prepare the fabric

Remove the blue print fabric from the packaging-though it is called blue print the un-exposed fabric is green. Cut the fabric as desired for making bunting or a picture. We cut some triangular bunting pieces and used the off-cuts for mini-bunting - waste nothing! **NB:** Exposure to indoor daylight/incandescent light will not affect the fabric so you have time to prepare indoors or in a shaded area. Fluorescent light and sunlight will affect the fabric.



Step 2 - create your image

Pin your fabric pieces onto the cardboard. Place your objects on top of the fabric and play around with your positioning and arrangements. **Tip:** Flat natural materials will give a much crisper print; non-flat materials will leave a more delicate shadow effect. **Tip:** Use pins to hold objects down. Push the pin right through the card to avoid a pin shadow print. We also experimented with a 'tie dye' style wrap-up!



Step 3 - expose the fabric

Expose the fabric to direct sunlight. The process takes 5-10 minutes on a sunny day (we left ours out for 10 minutes), and 15-30 minutes on cooler/less bright days. The fabric will change from the original green to a grey-green colour.



Step 4 - remove from sunlight

Remove the objects from the fabric. From now on keep the fabric out of direct sunlight.

Step 5 - stop the process

Wearing protective gloves, rinse the fabric under a tap until the water runs clear, or rinse it in a container (you will notice the water changing to a slight green colour). Dispose of the rinsing water into a mains drain.



Step 6 - drying Dry the fabric flat, out of direct sunlight. The images will sharpen during drying time.

Step 7 - make the bunting

Attach your bunting to string - we used a hole punch then threaded wool through to hold it all together. Now you can show off your beautiful bunting!



Take it further:

- have a go at tie dye
- use a large piece of fabric and get creative on a grander scale
- have a go at sun printing on paper (next page)

See this sun print bunting activity on the [Outdoor Hub](#)