



# Inspired Indigo Shoes

by Laura Kerbyson,  
Courtesy of Jacquard Products

For nearly 5,000 years, the Indigo plant has been used as a dye source by cultures all over the world to dye natural fibers and fabrics (cotton, wool, silk, rayon, even wood).

Today, the process of dyeing with Indigo is still “magical.” Imagine dipping a white shoe into a dark dye bath only to have it come out chartreuse green. Then, it turns blue right before your eyes! Indigo dyeing provides quick, easy projects perfect for magicians of ages. The Jacquard Indigo Dye Kit dyes over 15 yards of fabric or 15 T-shirts. Since the Indigo dye bath goes a long way; you can throw in your faded blue jeans, tie up a couple of T-shirts, socks or fabric yardage and dye a number of projects at one time!



## Materials:

- Jacquard Indigo Dye Kit (includes: indigo dye, reducing agent, 1 pair gloves, wood pieces/rubber bands for creating patterns, quick start guide, instruction booklet with historical and cultural overview of indigo)
- A pair of inexpensive cotton canvas shoes or sneakers
- Large plastic bucket with lid
- Large piece of cardboard or plastic to put under the bucket
- Dowel for stirring stick
- White glue (such as Elmer's)
- Stiff plastic hand brush

1. Draw a design on the shoes (you could use any natural fabric or wood as well) with the white glue as a “resist” (areas that are covered so they resist absorbing the indigo dye liquid) and let the glue dry (at least overnight).



2. Follow the “Quick Start” instructions in the Jacquard Indigo Dye Kit, prepare the pre-reduced indigo dye bath in a 5 gallon bucket, cover and let settle for at least 15 minutes to half an hour). *Note: it doesn't matter if you let the dye bath sit longer before using, it will not lose its potency.*



3. Gently dip the shoes into the Indigo bath making sure the dye liquid saturates the fabric and has a chance to work into the areas around the resist.



4. Remove the shoes and watch the color change as the dye oxidizes; the pieces turn blue in just a few moments. Set them aside for about 20 minutes to fully oxidize.

5. Rinse the shoes in water using a stiff plastic brush to scrub off the resist and let them dry.

I get lots of compliments on my indigo shoes!



Laura Kerbyson is a Santa Rosa, CA artist and graphic designer.

Information on Jacquard products can be found at [www.jacquardproducts.com](http://www.jacquardproducts.com), 800-442-0455.