



# Coloring Fire Hose: A Few Techniques and Tips

*Total credit to Micala Teetzen!*

## PAINTING FIREHOSE

- Spray paint is the easiest
- Roll it up and paint both edges first
- Unroll and paint both sides



## NATURAL DYES



Coffee and Tea

Spinach



Chop veggies tiny, 1:2 water



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## "FIXING" FIREHOSE FABRIC



- Before dyeing fabric must be "fixed" with a mordant or a fixative
- Helps fabric absorb dye
- Examples of fixatives:
  - Baking soda (1/2 cup: 1 gallon)
  - Vinegar (1:4)
  - Lemon juice
  - Alum
  - Salt (1:16, use if dyeing with berries)
- Soak in fixer solution for 1 hour and rinse with cold water.

First you must "fix" the fabric. Different fixers create different effects. Try small samples of hose to see what provides the effect you want.

## CONCENTRATING PIGMENTS

- Simmer for 1 hour in a non-reactive pot (stainless steel or glass).
- Strain out plant material or remove tea bags.
- Put in your firehose on a low boil for 1 hour.

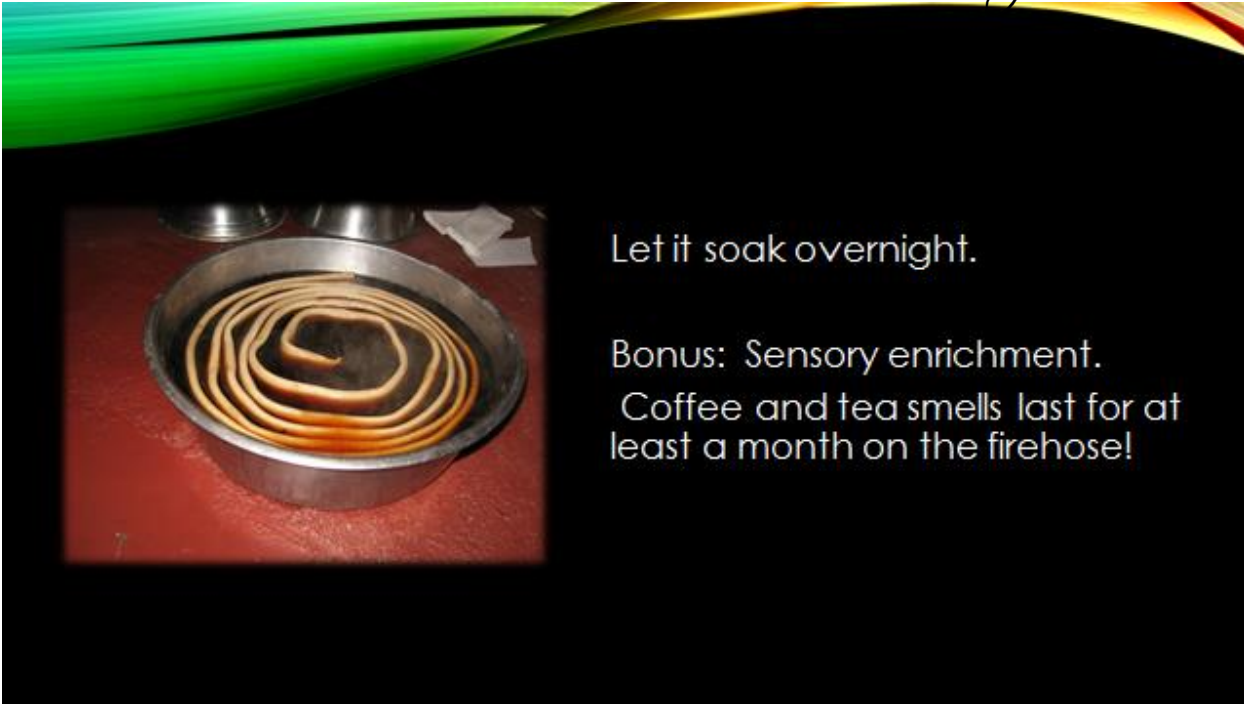


Disclaimer: I didn't want to put firehose in my own kitchen pots and pans, so I didn't boil the firehose. I just let it soak in the hot water in stainless steel feed bowls I borrowed from the zoo.



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Let it soak overnight.

Bonus: Sensory enrichment.

Coffee and tea smells last for at least a month on the firehose!

Challenges of dyeing an entire roll of firehose. Difficult to concentrate dye enough to have great effect.



Top row used vinegar as the fixative, bottom used baking soda. Coffee, spinach, and tea going across. You can see spinach didn't have much effect. I tried beets after this ppt was made. They worked better. Berries also work well.



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## PURCHASED DYES

Some firehose fabric is polyester or nylon filament

Use dyes made specifically for synthetic fabrics

ALL Rit dyes including Rit DyeMore are non-toxic

No fixative needed (salt is in dye)

Peacock Green	Graphite	Apricot Orange	Daffodil Yellow
Royal Purple	Frost Grey	Super Pink	Sapphire Blue
Chocolate Brown	Sand Stone	Racing Red	Kentucky Sky

Older firehoses were usually made of cotton, but modern hoses use synthetic fiber like polyester or nylon filament Rit DyeMore has limited availability (Hobby Lobby and Jo-Ann fabric or online at Amazon) Several natural color choices (or bright colors, if that is allowed at your facility!)

## PURCHASED DYES

11708 SES + Rit DyeMore Synthetic Fiber Dye = 11708 SES

Soaked in chocolate brown dye for 3 hours.