

YOUR FIRST
STEPS IN
ECO PRINTING

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Let's BEGIN

Imagine walking through your neighborhood, the rustle of leaves underfoot, the scent of earth and greenery in the air. Each tree, each plant holds a hidden treasure - a story waiting to be printed onto fabric. Eco-printing is an art form that connects creativity with the magic of nature, transforming simple materials into stunning works of art.

This guide is your introduction to eco-printing. It's designed to be simple yet inspiring, offering a glimpse into the possibilities while leaving plenty of room for your imagination.

Let's begin!



DISCOVER THE ART OF NATURE



Botanical alchemy
RESULTS YOU CAN
ACHIEVE



WHAT YOU'LL NEED

Iron Water

A mysterious alchemy begins here.

Using Iron Sulfate: Dissolve 1–2g of iron sulfate per liter of water.

This is a great starting point to create your solution.

Using Rusty Nails: Submerge rusty nails in a mixture of **half water and half vinegar**. Let them steep for at least a week until the water turns a deep, rich brown.

Note:



The concentration of iron water can vary, and this will influence the results. This tutorial provides a simple starting point, but as you explore eco-printing further, you'll discover how different concentrations can create a variety of effects.

Fabrics

Think of fabric as your blank canvas, ready to capture the artistry of leaves.

- Use **wool, silk, cotton, linen,** or **viscose**.
- Prepare **two pieces of fabric** of **the same size**. Wash them first to remove any finishes or dirt.
- Wet the fabrics properly and dip them into the iron water:
 - Ensure all parts of the fabric come into contact with the solution.
 - Squeeze the fabric well to remove excess water and lay it flat on the table.



Note:



Different fabrics react differently, so expect unique results:

- **Wool** tends to yield more colorful results with this simple technique, but it give softer prints and may have a tendency for bleeding.
- **Cotton and linen** often produce sharper prints and are excellent for capturing fine details.

Eco-printing isn't limited to fabrics. With the right techniques, you can achieve beautiful results on surfaces like paper, leather, and even ceramics.

Leaves and Plants

Your walk begins a conversation with the world around you.

Step outside. Whether it's a bustling city street or a quiet country lane, observe the trees and plants in your surroundings. Urban areas are rich in trees, often planted along streets or in parks, offering excellent opportunities to gather leaves for eco-printing.

- **Start with medium to large leaves:** These are ideal for beginners because they often have clear veins and textures that print beautifully. Leaves like **walnut, eucalyptus, or maple** are wonderful first companions on this journey.
- **Focus on broader surfaces:** Beginners will find broader leaves the most straightforward and rewarding to start with. They provide more predictable results, making them a great starting point for exploring eco-printing.
- **Discover the richness of plants:** While trees are a fantastic starting point, remember that plants have so many fascinating parts—branches, flowers, buds, and pods. Each part reacts differently and holds its own secrets, but leaves are the simplest and most effective for beginners.



Mindful Gathering Practices

Eco-printing invites us to connect with nature, and part of that connection is gathering with sensitivity and care:

- **Fresh or fallen leaves:** While fallen leaves can work well, fresh leaves often yield more vibrant prints. If you need fresh leaves, gather them with care and ensure it's done respectfully.
- **Respect public spaces:** When gathering in the city or public areas, remember these are shared spaces. Follow local rules and customs. Some cultures may be more open to plant gathering, while others may have stricter expectations for protecting greenery.
- **Gather responsibly:** Take only what you plan to use. Avoid stripping branches or removing too many leaves from a single plant. Consider the health of the tree or plant and aim to minimize your impact.
- **Use proper tools:** Always use pruning shears or scissors to cut leaves carefully. Avoid tearing branches, which can harm the tree or plant.

This thoughtful approach ensures that the craft of eco-printing not only creates beauty but also reflects a deep respect for the natural world.

Additional Supplies

- A surface for laying out your fabrics.
- String or rubber bands for bundling.
- A pot for steaming or boiling.



Step-by-Step INSTRUCTIONS



1 Prepare Your Fabrics

1. Wash your fabrics to remove any finishes or dirt.
2. Wet the fabrics properly—first with plain water to prepare them to absorb the iron water evenly. Squeeze.
3. Dip the fabrics into the iron water, ensuring all parts come into contact with the solution.
4. Squeeze the fabric well to remove excess water and lay it flat on your worktable.



2 Arrange Your Prints

1. Lay one piece of iron-soaked fabric flat on your worktable.

2. Arrange your leaves on the fabric:

- **Leaf sides matter:** Every leaf has two sides, and each will give a different result. You can choose to lay the side with veins in contact with the fabric, while the other side touches the fabric that will soon be placed on top.
- **Experiment with fabric types:** If you're using the same kind of fabric for both pieces, you can gather valuable information about how each side of a certain leaf reacts on this kind of fabric and creates unique prints. This experimentation will inspire future projects when you're more familiar with the plants.

3. **Decide on compositions:**

Combine leaves with contrasting shapes, sizes, and colors.

You can leave spaces between the leaves or let them overlap and touch each other.

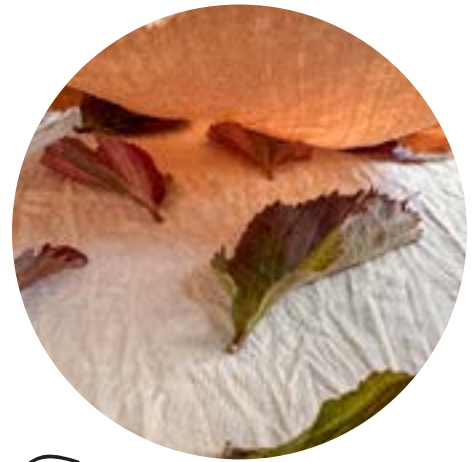




3

Place the Second Piece of Fabric

1. Carefully lay the second piece of fabric on top of the arranged leaves.
2. Ensure it aligns with the bottom fabric, sandwiching the leaves neatly in between.



4

Add a Barrier (Optional)

If you want to prevent ghost prints—marks that occur where leaves weren't placed—add a barrier as the final layer on top of everything. This could be:

- **Plastic sheeting, parchment paper, or plain paper.**
- Each option has its own advantages and disadvantages, so choose what works best for you.

5

Bundle It Up

1. Carefully roll your fabric, leaves, and any optional barriers into a tight bundle.
2. Secure it with string or rubber bands.





Let's steam it

1. Place your bundle in a steamer or pot of boiling water.
2. Let it steam or boil for **1-2 hours**.



Unwrap the Magic

1. Let your bundle cool completely.
2. Slowly unroll it to reveal your first eco-printed masterpiece.



A World of DISCOVERY

With practice and the right techniques, even the trickiest plants will reveal their secrets - not only in shapes and details but also in colors, whether vibrant or monochromatic. It's all about mastering techniques, which allow you to achieve stunning results on a wide variety of surfaces, from wool, silk, cotton, and linen to paper, leather, and even ceramics.

Each attempt teaches you something new - about the plants, the materials, and yourself.



THIS IS JUST THE
BEGINNING OF YOUR
ECO-PRINTING JOURNEY



What Comes NEXT?

Eco-printing is more than just a technique—it's a way of seeing the world differently. Each leaf, each fabric holds infinite possibilities, and the journey of discovery is yours to explore.

If you're ready to dive deeper, my online courses provide step-by-step guidance, troubleshooting tips, and advanced techniques to ensure success and eliminate frustration. They're designed to help you achieve beautiful results while avoiding wasted materials on endless experimentation. Together, we'll uncover the secrets of plants and fabrics, bringing your creative visions to life.

Your journey begins now.

What story will you tell through your prints?

Irit Dulman

THE COURSES



The Full Palette

Botanical prints on silk and cellulose fabrics – printing all kinds of plants and getting a wide palette of colors

My flagship course: the best gateway to the world of Eco printing. Regardless of your previous experience, you will reach a mastership level.



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Beginners / Advanced



English



Spanish, Italian, French, Russian and Hebrew



Colorful wool and silk

Get colorful prints on wool and silk using only home-made iron water: a simple and sustainable approach that includes a game-changing and systematic technique of the famous iron blanket.



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33 lessons



Beginners / Advanced



English



Spanish, Italian, French



Monochromatic

In the tutorials in this PDF, you already got the test of the monochromatic. Its magic and if you like to deepen in this direction - A technique especially designed for printing tannin – rich plants and eucalyptus on cellulose fabrics to create Japanese Sumi-E style with eco printing on cellulose.



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62 lessons



Beginners / Advanced



English



Spanish, Italian, French

PRINT THE FOREST'S
WHISPER
BEFORE IT FADES

