

by Sue Bleiweiss

Jacquard Color Magnet

Create your own
tone-on-tone fabrics

Everyone loves tone-on-tone fabrics, but it is hard to envision how to dye them yourself. I've recently found a product that lets me create my own hand-dyed one-of-a-kind fabrics with a two-toned effect.

MATERIALS

- Jacquard® Color Magnet™ Dye Attractant
- Rubber gloves
- Silk screens, Thermofax® screens, stamps, or stencils
- Squeegee
- Foam brush
- PFD (prepared for dyeing) cotton fabric cut into fat quarters
- Procion® MX dyes in assorted colors
- Pint-sized container with a tight fitting lid (an old pickle jar works great)
- Dust mask or respirator
- Rubber gloves
- Soda ash
- Measuring cup and spoons
- Zipper-style plastic bags

Optional

- Wool felt padding
- Old credit card
- Painter's tape
- Craft syringe
- Hair dryer
- Coffee filters

Color Magnet is a dye attractant that can be applied to fabric using a variety of techniques including screen printing, stamping, stenciling, and painting. Once the product has dried on the surface of the cloth, the fabric is immersed in a dye bath. The areas of the cloth painted with the dye attractant absorb more color and appear darker, resulting in a beautiful tone-on-tone fabric.

Color Magnet is available in two forms: a thicker product made specifically for screen printing, and a more liquid formulation available in a pen dispenser that is perfect for drawing or dabbing directly onto fabric. You'll notice that the product will look yellow on your fabric, but it does not change or alter the color of the dye used. The yellow coloring makes it easy to see the prints on the fabric as you work.

Apply Color Magnet to your fabric

The first step to creating your own tone-on-tone fabrics is to apply the dye attractant to the cloth. I applied Color Magnet to fabric using a variety



of surface design techniques, each with great results. Experiment with your own favorite technique, or try something new.

Screen printing

I like to work on a lightly padded surface of two layers of wool felt when I screen print. Place your fabric on top of the padded surface and position the silk screen on top of the fabric. I screen my images from the center of the fabric to the edges but work in whatever way is comfortable for you.

1. Spoon some Color Magnet along the top edge of the screen. (Figure 1) Using a squeegee or an old credit card held at 45°, drag the product across the screen. I usually make 2 or 3 passes back across the screen to make sure the color has permeated the screen image and the fabric. (Figure 2)



- Carefully lift the screen off the fabric and place it down in another area and repeat the process until the fabric is completely covered with the image.

TIP: If you're worried about placing the screen down on top of a wet area you can wait for the fabric to dry before screening more images.

- Hang the fabric to dry completely before adding it to a dye bath. Don't let the Color Magnet dry on the surface of your screens as it may clog the screen.



Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3



Figure 4



Figure 5

tips for stamping on fabric with Color Magnet

The best stamps to use with Color Magnet are ones that don't have a lot of detail. Choose stamps with more open designs.

Found objects such as a cork, an old potato masher, the rim of a plastic cup, Bubble Wrap®, or the edge of a credit card make great stamps.

It takes practice to work out how much product to apply to the stamp and how long to keep it in contact with the fabric to get a good result so be sure to do some testing on scrap fabric first.

CAUTION: Always wear a dust mask and gloves while working with powdered dyes and chemicals. All measuring and mixing tools used in this process should be dedicated to nonfood use.

Stamping

1. Place your fabric on a lightly padded surface and use a foam brush to paint a coat of Color Magnet on your stamp. (Figure 3) Press the stamp into the fabric, making sure the entire stamp comes in contact with the fabric.
2. Carefully lift the stamp off the fabric, brush more Color Magnet onto the stamp, and continue working in this manner until the fabric has been covered with images.
3. Hang the fabric to dry completely before adding it to a dye bath.

Stencils

1. Place your fabric on a lightly padded surface and position your stencil on top. Lightly dip a foam brush into the Color Magnet. (Do not saturate the brush with the product.)
2. Gently daub the brush over the stencil to push the Color Magnet through the stencil openings. (Figure 4) Lift the stencil off the fabric and hang the fabric to dry completely.

TIP: Make a hinge using painter's tape on your stencil to make it easier to lift the stencil off the fabric.

Syringe

You can write or scribble over your fabric with a Color Magnet Pen or a craft syringe filled with the Color Magnet for screen printing. To fill the syringe, place it in the jar and pull up on the plunger slowly. (Figure 5) The Color Magnet may drip out of the plunger so keep a paper towel under the nozzle once it is filled.

1. Working fairly quickly to avoid putting too much product in one spot on the fabric, write or scribble across the surface of the fabric. (Figure 6)
2. Hang the fabric to dry completely before adding it to a dye bath.

Dye your tone-on-tone fabric

Note: It is important to let the Color Magnet dry completely on the surface of your fabric before adding it to a dye bath. You can speed the drying process with a hair dryer.



Figure 6

The more diluted the dye, the greater the contrast you'll achieve with this product. You may have to experiment a bit to get the best ratio of dye to water for your specific needs. I found that mixing $\frac{1}{4}$ – $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. of dye in 1 cup of water was the right amount for a fat quarter of fabric.

1. Pour approximately $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of warm water in the container and add $\frac{1}{4}$ – $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. of dye powder. Screw the lid on tightly and shake it well to dissolve the dye powder. Open the container and add enough warm water to bring it to the 1 cup level and add 1 tbsp. of soda

safety *tips* for dye handling

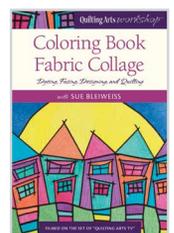
- *Always put on a dust mask or, preferably, a respirator before you open the dye powder containers.
- *Do not use powdered dyes near a fan or an open window when the wind is blowing.
- *Close the containers as soon as you finish measuring the dye.
- *Always handle dyes away from other people and pets.

ash. Shake the container again to dissolve the soda ash.

TIP: I strain my dye through a coffee filter before I add the soda ash so I don't have to worry about undissolved dye particles creating dark specks on my fabric.

2. Pour the dye solution into a plastic bag with the fabric. Squeeze the air out of the bag and zip it closed. Knead the bag to distribute the dye, and let the fabric soak in the dye for a minimum of 4 hours, kneading the bag occasionally to distribute the dye throughout the cloth.
3. After 4 hours, take the fabrics out of the bag and rinse them quickly in cold water. Wash the fabric with regular detergent and cold water in a washing machine. Toss it in the dryer and then press with a hot iron. ✨

Don't miss Sue's new Quilting Arts Workshop™ video "Coloring Book Fabric Collage: Dyeing, Fusing, Designing, and Quilting" at shop.quiltingdaily.com.



Resources

COLOR MAGNET
shop.quiltingdaily.com



"Little Pink House" • 18" x 20" • Made with Jacquard Color Magnet and Procion MX dyes.