



## Colour triangles

I'd seen on various American lists references to a 66 step dye. This gives all the colours in the wheel, plus browns from mixing differing amounts of all three primaries. Some lists gave instructions for doing these, listing the pots numbered 1 to 66, and stating how many spoons of each primary should go in each. It didn't appeal as I could see that I would get muddled and make mistakes. Then, thinking again about it, wondering if I should take the plunge, I suddenly twigged that it would be much easier if I arranged the pots in a triangle.

### 36 pot colour triangle

Though the websites that I saw talked about a 66 step dye, I don't have that many pots so I use 36 pots. A general method for different numbers of pots follows.

In these diagrams, light grey circles represent empty pots, and more the intense the colour the more dye there is in the pot.

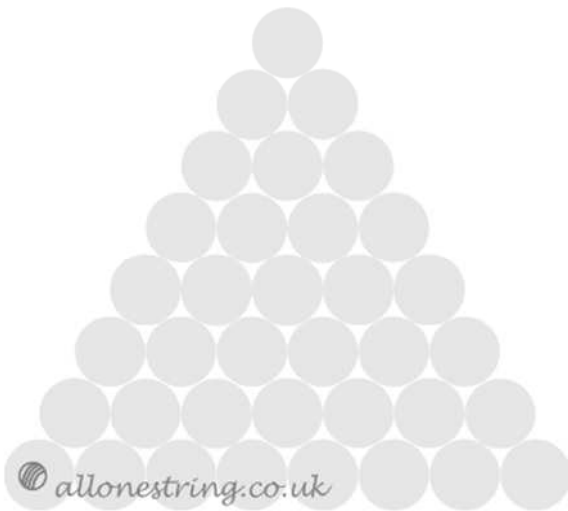
After spooning out all of the dye, swirl each pot to make sure that it's well mixed before adding the fabric.

I use teaspoons as my measure to dye 10" squares of fabric; and tablespoons to dye fat quarters.

#### collect and arrange the pots

I use plastic soup/pasta sauce pots

Put eight in the first row, seven in the second, six in the third and so on



#### spoon out the red

Ignore the first row, then put:

one spoon of red dye into the seven pots in the second row

two spoons of red dye into the six pots in the third row

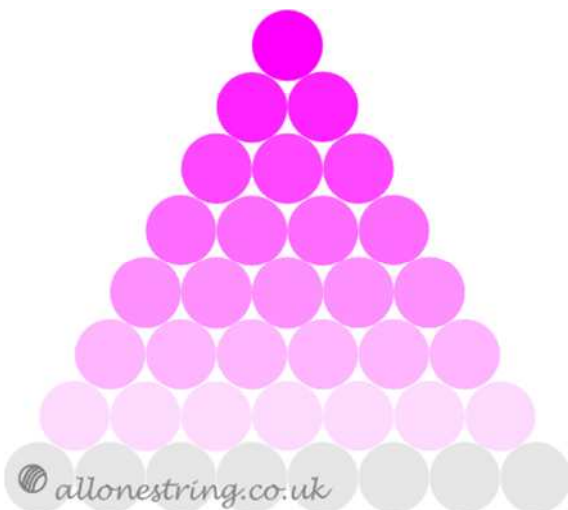
three spoons into the five pots in the fourth row

four spoons into the four pots in the fifth row

five spoons into the three pots in the sixth row

six spoons into the two pots in the seventh row

and finally seven spoons in the pot furthest away





## Colour triangles



### spoon out the yellow

Move round to another side, ignore the first row, then put:

one spoon of yellow dye into the seven pots in the second row

two spoons of yellow dye into the six pots in the third row

three spoons into the five pots in the fourth row

four spoons into the four pots in the fifth row

five spoons into the three pots in the sixth row

six spoons into the two pots in the seventh row

and finally seven spoons in the pot furthest away



### spoon out the blue

Do the blue in exactly the same way. Move round to the last side, ignore the first row, then put:

one spoon of blue dye into the seven pots in the second row

two spoons of blue dye into the six pots in the third row

three spoons into the five pots in the fourth row

four spoons into the four pots in the fifth row

five spoons into the three pots in the sixth row

six spoons into the two pots in the seventh row

and finally seven spoons in the pot furthest away

### swirl and dye

Swirl the dye in each pot before adding your fabric.

Remember that the computer colours are brighter than the dye.



## Colour triangles

### the general method

It doesn't matter how big your triangle of pots is, the general method for measuring out the dyes is the same.

### arrange the pots

There should be the same number on each edge of the triangle, and they should all be in nice straight off-set rows with no gaps

### spoon out the red

Stand on one side of the triangle. Ignore the row nearest you, and put one spoonful of red dye into every pot in the second row. Then put two spoons of red dye into every pot in the third row. Then put three spoons of red dye into every pot in the fourth row. Continue in this way until you have  $n$  spoons in the furthest pot, where  $n$  is one less than the number of rows.

That's the red done

### spoon out the yellow

Move round to another side. Ignore the row nearest you, and put one spoonful of yellow dye into every pot in the second row. Then put two spoons of yellow dye into every pot in the third row. Then put three spoons of yellow dye into every pot in the fourth row. Continue in this way until you have  $n$  spoons in the furthest pot, where  $n$  is one less than the number of rows.

That's the yellow done



### spoon out the blue

Do the blue in exactly the same way. Move round to the last side. Ignore the row nearest you, and put one spoonful of blue dye into every pot in the second row. Then put two spoons of blue dye

into every pot in the third row. Then put three spoons of blue dye into every pot in the fourth row. Continue in this way until you have  $n$  spoons in the furthest pot, where  $n$  is one less than the number of rows.

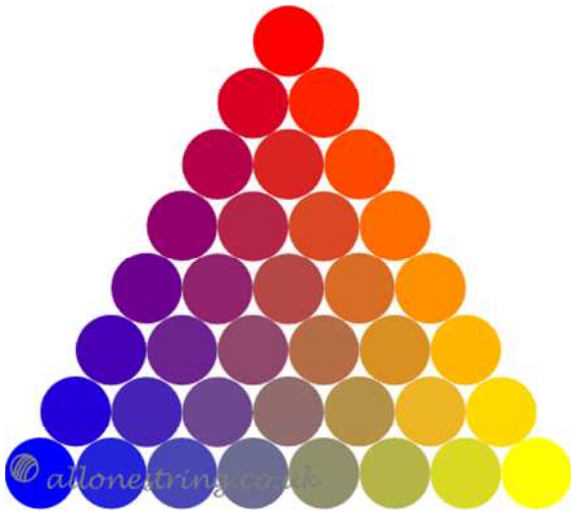
And that's the blue done

### swirl and dye

Pick up each pot in turn and swirl the dye round to mix it



## Colour triangles



### changing the primaries

Of course, if you change the primaries, you'll get different secondaries. Here's one using scarlet, lemon and medium blue as the primaries. Remember that these are computer colours, real dyes will look different.



### not just primaries

You could also use the colour triangle to dye lots of different tones of the same colour. I dyed a 15 pot triangle using medium blue, turquoise and midnight blue as the corner colours. Here's a computer version.

### how many pots?

If you want to work out how many you need for different sized triangles, here are some calculations:

in words

Number of pots: add 1 to the number of rows; multiply by the number of rows; divide the result by 2.

in algebra

$$p = \frac{1}{2} r (r + 1)$$

(where p is the number of pots and r is the number of rows)



# Colour triangles



This 36 pot colour triangle has scarlet, lemon and medium blue as the primaries.



Dappled  
2005



## Colour triangles



I dye in the garden in the summer. These pots are on the climbing frame.

Skew flowers  
2005





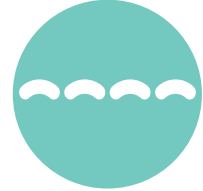
## Colour triangles



These blues are from a 15 step triangle, with turquoise, medium blue and midnight blue in the corners. I took out each piece after dyeing it, added more water to the leftover dye, and dyed a second piece in each pot.

Becoming cyclonic  
2005

For more about  
storm-at-sea  
variations follow





## Colour triangles

four co-ordinating triangles for the Virtual Studio at FoQ2007



In 2007 at the FoQ, we made a quilt top from colour triangle fabrics. Though we showed how to dye colour triangles in the Virtual Studio, we decided to Blue Peter some ready to sew with there. Liking the first triangle so much, I decided to dye some variations to go with it.



## Colour triangles

four co-ordinating triangles for the Virtual Studio at FoQ2007



The primaries in this triangle are the following mixtures:

red = burgundy and magenta

yellow = golden and lemon

blue = indigo and turquoise



The primaries in this triangle are the following mixtures:

red = burgundy and magenta

yellow = golden (no lemon this time)

blue = indigo and turquoise



The primaries in this triangle are the following mixtures:

red = burgundy (no magenta this time)

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The primaries in this triangle are the following mixtures:

red = burgundy and magenta

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blue = indigo (no turquoise this time)