

Alpaca Fiber Spring Easter Egg Craft Project

Are you wishing it was spring and looking for a fun project or two? This is one that really celebrates spring. Why not make some alpaca fiber felted Easter eggs?

You can make two kinds of Easter eggs.

For the first kind you need:

Carded dyed fiber
Plastic Easter eggs
Soap (Dawn dish washing liquid works well)
A large dish with warm water
An old knee high stocking
A bit of yarn or string to make a hanger.
An embroidery needle to thread the hanger through the end of the egg

My kids still love Easter egg hunts and we have dozens of those little plastic Easter eggs stored in the basement for the annual hunt. Get some of those plastic eggs and get ready to felt around them.

-Wrap the egg in a three or four layers of dyed alpaca (carded fiber works better than un-carded fiber).
-Stick the wrapped egg in the toe of an old knee-high stocking and loosely knot the stocking behind the egg.
-Dip the whole thing in warm soapy water (a large bowl with just a dash of Dawn dishwashing liquid works well). -
Squeeze and pat the egg in the stocking until the fiber seems to be felting around it. Don't squeeze and pat so much that the fiber felts right through the stocking.
- Remove the egg from the stocking and squeeze and pat it some more. If you want to felt the fiber really tightly to the egg and do it faster, when you take it out of the stocking throw it into your dryer while they are still damp. Let it bang around in there and it will felt really tightly
--You can make little hangers for them by stringing yarn through one end with an embroidery needle. Repeat with lots of colors and make a nice felted Easter Egg Tree.
-You can just leave the felted egg on the plastic eggs or you can cut them off (bandage scissors work well) and have hatching eggs! Dye some fiber yellow (I use a mix of orange and lemonade koolaid to get a brighter yellow) and needle felt a little hatching chick!

Foam felted eggs with needle felted designs

You will need:
Carded Dyed fiber
Styrofoam Craft Eggs
Soap (Dawn Dish washing liquid works well)
A large dish with warm water
An old knee high stocking
A felting needle
A bit of yarn or string to make a hanger.
An embroidery needle to string the yarn through the felted egg.

The other way to make felted eggs is to purchase some Styrofoam eggs at the local craft store. They come in a variety of sizes. Any size will work it just depends what size egg you want to make. You felt the fiber to the egg in the same way as you do with the plastic eggs. You are not going to cut the egg off of these but you can needle felt lovely designs on them since there is a foam egg inside. Some ideas are just abstract designs like spots, or rings. Alternatively, I like to do bunnies, chicks, flowers, even tiny little Easter baskets. You can then put a hanger on them and hang them up on your Easter egg tree. These make lovely presents!

I've included these instructions before but just in case. If you don't have any dyed fiber can you still do an egg project sure! You could make a lovely basket of brown or fawn eggs! That would be really pretty! Alternatively you can use Kool-Aid Drink mix to make lovely Easter egg colors.

General Dyeing with Kool Aid

You need:

Packets of unsweetened Kool-aid Drink mix

Pot

Dawn dishwashing liquid or any liquid soap

Vinegar

Water

Yarn or fiber (white or beige if you want bright colors, up to medium fawn for more “folk colors”)

Hot plate or stove

Kool-aid the drink mix of my childhood can be used as a color fast dye. Really! It will fade in the sun if its left out for days (like most acid wash dyes) but otherwise is color fast. You get really nice bright colors when dyeing white or beige. You can get some interesting “folk or country” colors over-dyeing fawns.

I use two packets of unsweetened kool-aid to 4 cups of water with a dash of vinegar. I put in about 2 generous ounces of white or beige fiber/yarn and let it heat on the stove in a pot for about 40 minutes (it should be steaming but not boiling). Let it cool then rinse the fiber in cool soapy water and then rinse the soap out in cool water. (I use Dawn dishwashing liquid). Any of the regular unsweetened kool-aid flavors work. My favorites are berry berry blue and kiwi lime watermelon (green). Avoid the invisible flavors, they are in fact invisible and useless for dyeing. The “ice” flavors are a bit chalky, which I don’t like but it can be an interesting effect. Let the fiber/yarn dry in the sun or under a fan. You will know its dry when it blows all over your yard (so be careful if its windy out). If you have any questions just call or e-mail me (amerriwe@binghamton.edu , 607-785-8226)