DYEING -

A. Tea/Coffee dyeing

1.Prepare the tea or coffee to the strength required in stainless steel or dye bath/pot.(Experiment with 2 cups hot water to 2/3 coffee bag or heaped tsp of instant- espresso is darker than regular roast; 2/3 teabags to 2 cups hot water. Allow to steep as long as requires for desired shade, or microwave for2-3 minutes and allow to cool)
2. Wet the fabric to be dyed and squeeze out excess moisture.
3.Pour enough hot water into the dye bath to cover the fabric, and add the solution to the bath/pot, then add the fabric .
4. Allow to cool.(or leave overnight if deeper colour desired)
5. Remove the fabric when the colour is achieved. Add 1-2 tablespoons white vinegar as a mordant, and return the fabric to the dye.
6. Leave for about 1 hour.
7. Rinse the fabric until water runs clear. Allow to dry naturally.
(Fabric will dry a shade lighter, and different teas give slightly different shades. Keep a record of quantities and times as you experiment)

B. Natural dyes from Plants, Roots, Flowers, Berries and Spices

To prepare the fabric:
Pre-soak the fabric in a fixative of salt (half cup salt to 8 cups cold water for berries) OR, 1 part white vinegar to 4 parts cold water (for plant dyes.)
Add the fabric to fixative, simmer 1 hour, rinse in cold water, squeeze out excess water.
To make the dye:
Chop the plants, roots or berries, add twice the amount of water than the chopped material. Boil in a stainless steel pot, simmer for 1 hour, then strain. Add the fabric to be dyed (- leave overnight for darker shades.)
Dyeing:
Place wet fabric in dye bath, simmer until colour required is obtained (it will dry a shade lighter.) Rinse in cold water. Wash seperately.
Colours:
Orange-turmeric, onion skins.
Brown-oak bark, walnut hulls, tea bags, coffee, juniper berries, beetroot.
Pink- strawberries, raspberries, cherries.
Purple- red cabbage, elderberries, blueberries.
Red- red leaves, madder, kool-aid, dried hibiscus flowers.