

Leafy eggs for Easter

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Getting the eggs ready. To make leaf, flower, or polkadot designs, cut a 4-inch square of nylon stocking for each egg. Center the leaf or flower on the nylon, set an uncooked egg over it, gently but firmly stretch nylon around the egg, and tie tightly with string [*or secure with a small rubber band*]. Or arrange the labels on the egg and tie nylon tightly around it.

For line patterns, stretch rubber bands in place; no nylon wrapping is needed. For a fishnet pattern, wrap the egg in a 4-inch square of hairnet. [*or net bag that some vegetables come in*].

Making onion skin dye. In a large kettle, [*or soup pot*] gently boil 2 ounces onion skins in 2 quarts water, covered, about 20 minutes. Pour through wire strainer into enamel or stainless steel pan (about 3-quart size), pressing to extract all dye; discard skins. Add 1 tablespoon white or cider vinegar. Gently lower in eggs, one at a time, and simmer gently, uncovered, for 20 minutes. Lift out with slotted spoon and immerse in cool water just until cool enough to handle. Remove nylon and design material; let eggs dry. Rub with soft cloth dipped in salad oil; wipe dry and buff to bring out highlights.

Making carrot top dye. In a large kettle, gently boil tops from 4 bunches carrots in 2 quarts water, covered, for 40 minutes. Strain and add 1 tablespoon white or cider vinegar. Add eggs and cook as above, except let eggs stand in cool water until cold; also cool dye solution. Return unwrapped eggs to dye solution; let stand in refrigerator 4 hours or longer. Then unwrap and oil as above.

