

# The Synthetic Ombré:

Creating ombré effects with synthetic hair

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## The Hair

Various colors of synthetic hair weft—focusing on the palest available.

We found a variety of colors to try in the iDye Poly: white, various shades of pale blonde, baby pink, auburns, and a couple greens (options for the design we were working on).



## The Shop Equipment

Hot Plate or Stove Top

Large stainless steel/Enamel Pot

\*We use a 16 qt. Stock Pot

Stirring Device

Buckets/Large Measuring Cups

Useful Item:

Carousel Dryer



Synthetic wigs are available in a wide range of styles. The available colors of the styles are limited to mainly natural colors and a few trendy colors. The plastic fibers that create the synthetic hair also are not easy to change since they do not accept most normal dyes.

Recently, a design called for hair extensions to be added into the synthetic wigs. What was the twist? The extensions needed to have an avant-garde ombré effect. We needed to find a way to easily change the color of the synthetic hair.

We decided to experiment with the relatively new iDye Poly from Jacquard—which is available at JoAnns and online at DharmaTrading. This dye is very user friendly and requires only a few basic supplies.

The use of synthetic hair was decided upon for two reasons: cost and consistency with the base wig. The synthetic hair wefts, purchased from local and internet sources, were “heat-resistant,” to prevent changing the fibers texture in the hot dye bath. We also had to find the hair wefts in the lightest colors possible (ex. 613 Blonde).

We then tested the synthetic hair wefts and different colors of the iDye Poly.

## The iDye Poly

“Jacquard iDye Poly with Color Intensifier  
Vibrant color for all 100% polyester and nylon.  
“NO MESS dye packet that DISSOLVES in water!”

Caution:

Keep out of reach of children.

Avoid inhalation and contact with eyes.”\*\*

MSDS available at:

<http://www.jacquardproducts.com/msds-sheets.html>



## iDye Poly available in:

RED	CRIMSON	ORANGE	YELLOW
GOLDEN YELLOW	GREEN	KELLY GREEN	BLUE
TURQUOISE	LILAC	VIOLET	PINK
BROWN	BLACK	GUN METAL	SILVER GREY

## Step One: Prepare the Hair

Piece out the hair into extensions or groups that will be dyed—too much hair runs the chance of tangling and becoming knotted. Bunches that are too compact will not dye evenly. You need to be able to handle the hair easily without the fear of unexpectedly dropping parts.

Determine the height of the ombré on the hair. The possibilities are endless but will be determined by the look that you are trying to achieve.

## Step Two: Prepare the Dye

One packet of iDye Poly  
One packet of Color intensifier  
Water

Heat the water in a pot that is large enough to move the hair around without the hair sitting on the bottom of the pot or touching the sides.

When the water is HOT—as close to a boil as you can get—dissolve the packet of iDye Poly. Stir to distribute the dye evenly into the water and remove clumps from the dissolving packet.

Once the dye is stirred in, open the Color Intensifier and pour into the dye mixture. Stir to make sure everything is evenly distributed throughout the pot.

## Step Three: Dye the Hair

Arrange a few buckets/bowls with cool water around your dye pot.

Dip your prepared hair into the cool water to dampen the synthetic fibers.

Create the ombré effect by dipping the hair into the dye bath at the height determined in step one.

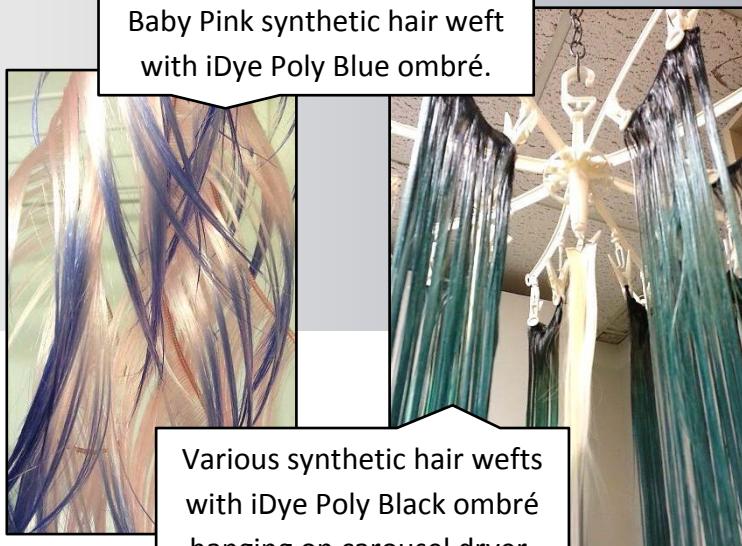
Continue dipping the hair in and out of the dye concentrating on the ends and quick dips up to the top of the ombré.

It does not take long for the dye to take—our sample colors were achieved within 5 minutes.

To check the color, dip into one of the cool buckets of water. If the color is even and intense enough continue to the next step. If not continue dipping into the dye bath.

\*If you are dyeing very long hair or an entire wig, be careful to keep the hair away from the bottom of the pot. The metal of the pot is very hot and the intense heat can alter the texture of the synthetic hair fibers.\*

Baby Pink synthetic hair weft with iDye Poly Blue ombré.



Various synthetic hair wefts with iDye Poly Black ombré hanging on carousel dryer.



Costume Shop workers, Laura Moser and Jess Minor dipping green synthetic hair weft into iDye Poly Black.

## Step Four: Rinse and Wash

After you have reached the desired color it is time to rinse... and rinse some more. The iDye Poly is odoriferous and requires lots of rinsing to remove most of the smell.

We rinsed the hair extensions in the sink under cool water.

We then washed the hair with shampoo and rinsed some more.

## Step Five: Dry and Fabreze

After we washed away most of the smell we let the hair dry clipped from our carousel dryer. We then sprayed the extensions with odor remover to again help remove more of the smell. We use the new Fabreze Free® that leaves no smell behind to mix unpleasantly with the dye smell.

## iDye Poly

The best source I have found for the iDye Poly is online at:

Dharma Trading Co.

<http://www.dharmaTrading.com/dyes/idye-for-natural-and-poly-fabrics.html?lnav=dyes.html>

iDye Poly:

1/2oz packet

\$2.99/ \$2.72 10+

1lb Container (Special Order Item)

\$19.00-\$70.00 (Price Determined by Color)

iDye Poly Color Intensifier:

1/2oz packets

Free (Comes prepackaged)

16oz Bottle

\$14.59

\*I have also seen a selection of the iDye Poly at my local JoAnns, but not all JoAnns carry the product, check with your local store. It is more expensive and available only in a selection of colors. JoAnn.com carries iDye Poly in yellow, orange, red, violet, blue, green, brown, and black.

Traditional iDye Poly Instructions:

*"Three Simple Steps For Perfect Results:*

1. Fill a stainless steel or enamel pot with just enough water for the fabric to move freely.
2. Add the iDye Poly soluble packet and Color Intensifier to the water and stir.
3. Add garments and boil for  $\frac{1}{2}$  to 1 hour.”\*\*

All photographs were personally taken in the Cedar Crest Costume Shop.

Performing Arts @Cedar Crest College Logo used with permission.

\*\* Jacquard Products. *iDye Poly [package]*.

Healdsburg, CA: Rupert, Gibbon & Spider, Inc.

## The Hair

A variety of different wefted synthetic hair in a various colors was sourced from many different locations.

All of the hair that we have tested in the iDye Poly took the color.

Blooms Beauty Supply, Allentown PA (Local Beauty Supply)

While a convenient and economical store, they carry a limited supply of the lighter colors.

Colors we obtained from Blooms:

Outre Batik® (100% Kanekalon Fiber)

F27 and F27/30 (Auburns)

Harlem125™ Better 3pcs Layer (Kanekalon, Toyokalon Mixed Fiber)

Baby Pink

613 (Pale Blonde)

EpicCosplay.com

This website has large variety of colors for the cosplay world. They advertise that their hair fiber is heat resistant up to 410°F and therefore heat style-able. The prices are higher than my local beauty supply store.

Colors obtained from EpicCosplay:

Natural Blonde (comparable to 613)

Classic White

Classic Green

Emerald Green

Aliexpress.com (Direct Wholesalers in China)

Experimenting, I decided to order some bulk synthetic hair wefts from China. Through Aliexpress, a trading marketplace, I was able to order a large quantity of blonde hair. I was curious to see what I would get and what the quality was. The description of the synthetic hair stated that it would be white. The hair that I received was a pale blonde but the quality was comparable to the other samples that I had acquired from the other sources.

Color obtained:

Pale Blonde (comparable to 613)

## Natural Hair (No Dye)

Sample 1

China Hair (Aliexpress.com)

Sample 2

Outre Batik® F27

Sample 3

Outre Batik® F27/30

Sample 4

EpicCosplay Natural Blonde

Sample 5

EpicCosplay Classic White



## iDye Color Samples

Samples arranged in Natural Hair order with colors arranged clockwise.

BLACK, PINK, CRIMSON, RED, ORANGE,  
GOLDEN YELLOW, YELLOW, GREEN, KELLY  
GREEN, TURQUOISE, BLUE, LILAC, VIOLET,  
BROWN, SILVER GREY, GUN METAL