

Corn and potato dextrin have various uses in the food industry, such as thickening and sweetening. They are powders that when prepared as I describe, dissolve in water, and after being applied to fabric and dried, they resist the penetration of dyes and wash out in water.

They work very differently. Corn Dextrin can create a complete block-out of thickened dye. In a thin layer, it blocks out less. Potato Dextrin, spread thickly on the fabric, cracks as it dries. While damp, it can be scraped away in patterns. There are many grades of corn and potato dextrin, changing constantly, so the recipes we use in the studio need to adapt as well. Many things influence how they work, including the humidity and temperature of the work area, the temperature of the resist, the thickness of application, the speed of drying, and also the weight and weave of the fabric.

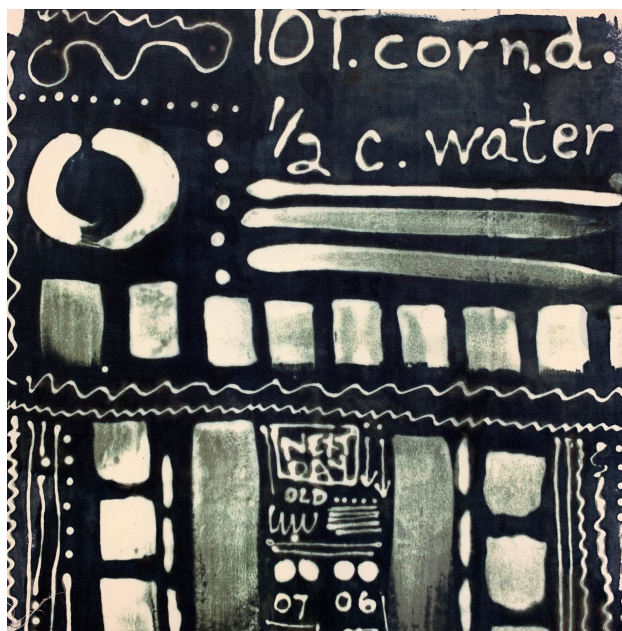
Start by mixing a small amount. All recipes should be used as guides to experiment. Try variations like adding more or less powdered dextrin. You may want to combine these recipes with any directions provided with the product. Keep an open mind about your results - they will all be unique!

The powdered products may change after long storage. The mixed resists can grow mold; so refrigeration helps.

Recipe for Corn Dextrin

12 TBS (140-150 ml) powdered
corn dextrin
½ cup (120 ml) boiling water

- Mix with fork or whisk to dissolve. A few dots of powder may remain.
- Strain while warm if it will be applied with a fine tip.
- Use warm or cool, which is slightly thicker.
- Apply with pointed bottle, paint brush, sponge, or blocks. Thinly applied resists less.
- Allow fabric to dry completely.
- Paint on thickened dye, cure the dye, and wash as you would to remove excess dye.



Recipe for Potato Dextrin

for the **new** product 2026

I previously used boiling water, but this now results in solid mass that is very hard to spread.

10 TBS (140-150 ml) powdered potato dextrin

2 tsp. (7.5 ml) soda ash powder

½ cup (120 ml) HOT water (140°F works)

- Mix with a fork or whisk.
- Pin or tape the SODA-SOAKED fabric down firmly so it won't curl too much as it dries.
- Can be used warm or room temp or cold.
- Spread with a firm tool. Thicker applications result in a larger cracks.
- After it is completely dry, paint thickened dye (medium consistency) carefully into the cracks without lifting off too much of the resist or pushing dye under the print paste.
- After the dye has cured, when you wet with water it starts to fall off immediately. Collect any undissolved and discard away from the sink drain.

Notes:

I apply potato dextrin to dry soda-soaked fabric, but I also add soda ash to the dextrin mix to make sure that there is enough soda to completely fix the dye. Moving the potato dextrin across the fabric sometimes carries away and dilutes the soda concentration in some areas and often results in areas of lighter colors and less distinct resist patterning.

