



Anthotype Guide

Make your own light sensitive paper from plant extracts, and create images using sunlight



Materials:

- Drawing paper or inkjet paper
- Soft paint brush
- Vegetables, eg. beetroot, spinach, chard, kale/broccoli and wild garlic used raw, or onion skins cooked. You can also try ground turmeric and coloured fruit such as blackberries and strawberries.
- You may need a small amount of alcohol, use surgical spirit, distilled witch-hazel, or try gin, ouzo or vodka if you have some spare!
- Clip frame or piece of glass / Perspex
- Leaves, flowers, and/or lace, feathers, stencils etc. to create an image
- Borax substitute diluted in water can be used to tone turmeric anthotypes
- Digital (mobile phone) camera / scanner to capture the finished image.

Method:

To make anthotype paper:

1. Select your plant material – leaves or vegetables, and chop finely. Use a blender or liquidiser to make a juice or paste, or crush in a pestle and mortar to release the plant juices.
2. You may try adding a small amount of alcohol such as surgical spirit, witch hazel, gin vodka etc. to help extract the juice.
3. You can try cooking onion skins to make a coloured liquid, and cooked beetroot works well, but most leafy plants will lose their colour and sensitivity to light when cooked.
4. Sieve the plant juice or squeeze through a jelly bag / old pair of tights, into a bowl.
5. Using a soft paint brush coat your paper with coloured plant extract. You will probably need more than one coat to create a deep colour.
6. If you're using ground turmeric mix to a thin paste with water and/or egg white and coat onto paper. Try to ensure the coating doesn't look grainy.
7. Let the paper dry before use, and do not expose to sunlight.
8. The coloured plant extracts can be kept in the fridge and used to coat more paper within a month.



To make anatype exposures:

1. You will need some sun; the exposure can take several hours to days, depending on the time of year. Bear in mind the sun is highest and strongest in the middle of the day.
2. Choose your items to create images such as flowers, leaves, feathers, lace, ferns, etc.
3. Arrange these on the coloured anatype paper to create your design, and place in a clip frame or under a sheet of glass or Perspex in a sunny position outdoors.
4. This needs to be secure so you may need to weigh it down with stones.
5. Wait to see what happens in a couple of hours – the paper exposed to the sun should start to fade.
6. When you are happy with the amount of fading achieved, take off the glass covering or open the clip frame. Remove the flowers, leaves, feathers, lace, ferns, etc. you used to make the image and bring the anatype indoors.
7. Turmeric anatypes can be toned in a borax substitute solution - 1 teaspoon borax in 300mls of water. This will increase the contrast. Other anatypes don't need processing or washing.
8. The resulting images are sensitive to sunlight so you may want to photograph them in order to display them, then keep the originals in a cool dark place.



Anthotypes clockwise from top left: beetroot, wild garlic, beetroot, brassica, beetroot, chard.

Artists:

[Nettie Edwards](#) -

www.instagram.com/lumilyon/

[Christine Elfman](#) -

www.christineelfman.com/

[Francis Schanberger](#) -

<https://francisschanberger.com>

www.realphotographycompany.co.uk

facebook.com/realphotographycompany

instagram.com/realphotographycompany

realphotographycompany@gmail.com

©Ruth Jacobs
Real Photography
Company