

SPIRIT STAINS

By Patricia Lawson

Cindy asked: *"You wrote that you added yellow spirit dye to it to brighten up the color. What is it, and where do I get it?"*

I learned about the spirit stains for wood at a Crafts Supplies USA sponsored turning demo at the last woodworking show I went to. These are from the UK and Woodturners Catalog just started carrying them about 6 months ago. The ones I have are made by Chestnut Products in the UK (<http://sss.chestnutproducts.co.uk>). So they are called "Chestnut Spirit Stains" which is a bit confusing because it sounds like a color rather than a brand.

I've used other dyes/stains such as aniline, etc. but really like these because they are ready to use, very light/fade resistant, and nice intense colors. CSUSA/Woodturners Catalog (<http://www.woodturnerscatalog.com>) has a nice sampler kit with 5 colors for \$8.99. The small bottles are perfect for penturners. If you go to the CSUSA website and type "spirit" in the search box, you'll see "Chestnut Spirit Stain Sampler Kit". Remember that Chestnut is the brand, not the color. The kit contains yellow, red, blue, green and black.

There was a mention that spirit stains are used to dye leather. Yes, I have used many leather dyes too, for gourds and I have also tried them on wood, but they are not very fade resistant, although mixing them with vinegar helps some. The Chestnut Spirit stains are wood dyes made specifically for wood and are more fade resistant.

Ron asked: *"I have not heard of this yellow spirit dye before, and was wondering if food coloring would work?"*

The biggest problem with food coloring and also with Rit dyes is what I said above - that they are not light fast. They will fade out. Mixing them with vinegar helps a little but they are still much more prone to fading than Aniline dyes and wood spirit stains, which are very fade/light-resistant.

Rich asked: *"What mood would yellow be?"*

I was going for sort of a "corny" mood with the cob pen. {;-}

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