

# Mī Chīwitchiwā (มีชีวิตชีวา) 'Thai'-Dye T-shirt



We love a party at BAMBI magazine, and with Songkran to look forward to, April is one of our favorite months. Now thanks to Anelia's vibrant craft, we know we'll have just the thing to wear for all those waterfights and parties!

It's that time of the year! Songkran, or as I call it, a 'country-wide water war'. In every village, town, and city, people young and old gather to welcome the new and wave goodbye to the old. All around the Kingdom, people roam the streets and dance on pavements to music from trucks loaded with festive partygoers. Parades, entertainment, food, drinks, laughter, and little sleep are how Songkran gets celebrated.

But what would Songkran be without a colorful tie-dye T-shirt? Let's get into the groove of this year's festivities and make our very own. I named this article after my favorite Thai word, *มีชีวิตชีวา* (*Mī chīwitchiwā*), which means to be 'vibrant' or 'alive'. Happy Songkran! Make 2566 a vibrant one, and may this T-shirt be a reminder to do things that make you feel alive!

This tie-dye T-shirt is done with acrylic paint. Yes, you read that right—acrylic paint. It's super easy to make, and the colors will be bolder and more vibrant than those of textile dyes. You can try various funky designs, like the accordion, scrunch, vertical stripes, and bull's eye. The one I'm using is the swirl/spiral. Easy-peasy!

## SUPPLIES:

- White cotton T-shirt—slightly damp (the dampness allows for better color absorption)
- Squeeze bottles
- Acrylic paint—colors of your choice
- Glycerin (the acrylic paint and glycerin mix serve as the 'dye')
- Rubber bands
- Room temperature water (amount will depend on how many colors you use)
- Serving tray
- Oven rack
- Plastic bags
- Plastic gloves (optional)
- Working area





### PROCESS:

1. Mix 10 ml glycerin, 60 ml water, and 20 ml acrylic paint in a squeeze bottle. (This ratio is suitable for one adult size XS to XL shirt. For bigger pieces of fabric, you need to double the amount.) Repeat this mix for every color you want to use on the fabric.
2. Lay the damp T-shirt flat on your workspace surface.
3. Pick a spot on the T-shirt for the center of your swirl. Pinch a small section of fabric (your center), and start swirling the fabric clockwise while holding onto the center. (You can use a pair of tweezers for a continued good grip on the middle.)
4. Keep twisting clockwise until the entire T-shirt is swirled up. Make sure the swirl stays flat on the surface as you twist.
5. Tightly secure the swirled bundle with rubber bands, crossing them over the center of the swirl to create segments.
6. Apply the first color by squirting

the dye onto the shirt. Squirt different colors onto different segments of the shirt. Continue with the rest of the dye colors until the fabric is fully covered and saturated.

7. Wrap the T-shirt in a plastic bag and set it aside for 24 hours.
8. Rinse the fabric bundle under cold running water after 24 hours. Remove the rubber bands and continue rinsing to get rid of excess color. Allow the T-shirt to dry completely—you can dry it in front of a fan, in the dryer on a low heat, or in a sunny spot. Once it's dry, slip it on, get out those party shoes, and get ready for Songkran!

*Photos courtesy of the author.*



### About the Author

Anelia is a performing artist from South Africa. She has been living and working as a teacher in Thailand for eight years. She also writes educational children's books, makes music, and loves to spend time in the kitchen. Follow her adventures on IG @aneliavz

