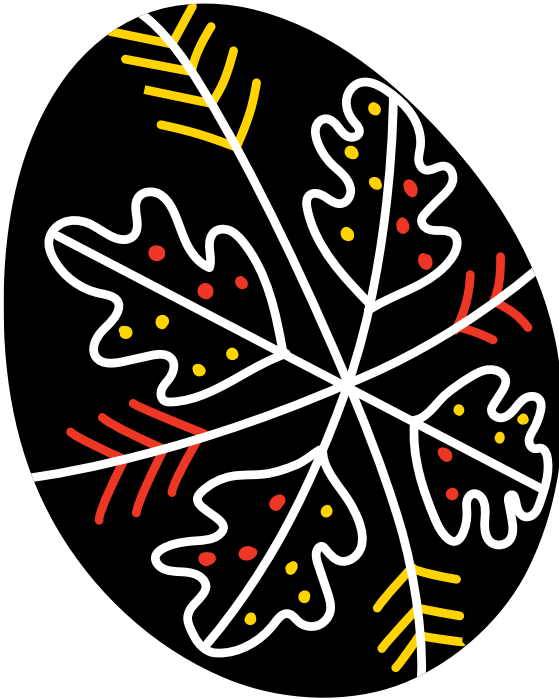
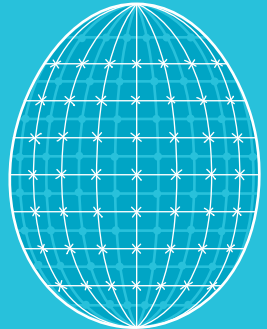
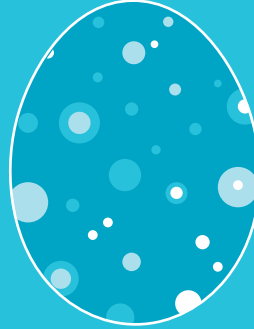
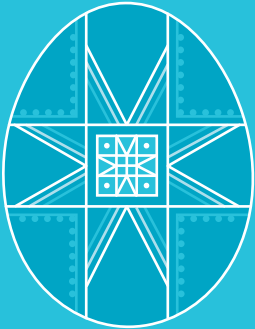
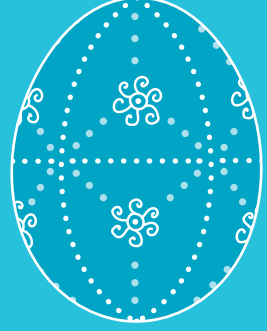
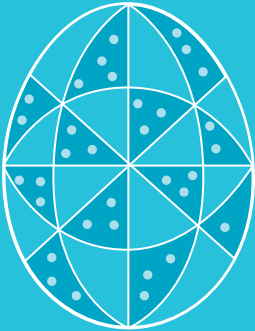
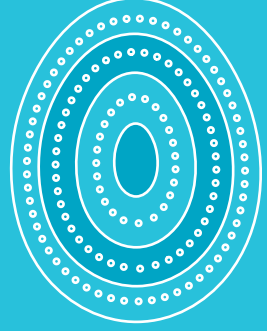
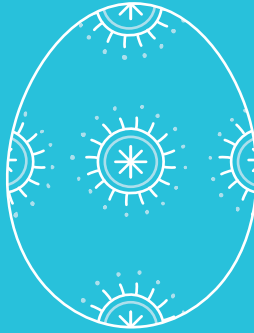


# LET'S WRITE A PYSANKA!

A step-by-step guide to  
creating your first Ukrainian egg





At Ukrainian Eggcessories, it's our hope that you, your family, and friends will discover the pleasure of "egging" and help keep this age-old art form alive.

## GATHER MATERIALS

- eggshell (pysanky) dyes
- wide-mouthed 1-pint canning jars with lids (one for each colour, plus one for vinegar rinse)
- stainless steel tablespoons
- distilled water
- white vinegar
- table covering
- paper towels and tissues
- candles (preferably short tapers)
- matches or lighter
- sharp HB pencils
- pure beeswax
- kistka (stylus for wax application)
- chicken eggs (white or light brown), raw, at room temperature\*
- clear oil-based varnish
- nitrile (not nityl) gloves
- single-hole egg blower
- drying rack for varnished eggs

## PREPARE DYES AND VINEGAR RINSE

### Prepare dyes

Follow directions on each dye package. To make the design outlined in this booklet, you'll need Canola Yellow, Glowing Hearts, and Orca Black.

### Prepare vinegar rinse

In the extra jar, mix 125 mL (1/2 cup) white vinegar and 125 mL (1/2 cup) water.

### Important!

Cream Soda Pink, Yukon Gold, and Cleansing orange **do not** use vinegar. Cool dyes to room temperature before use.

### Tip

Use the package as labels for the jars, or download printable mini-labels from our website.

## SET UP THE WORK AREA

Protect your work surface. **Tip:** Use a puppy training pad under the dye jars to absorb accidental spills.

Arrange dye jars from lightest to darkest (vinegar rinse, yellow, orange, pink, reds, purples, blues, green, brown, black).

Remove the lids and place a tablespoon in each jar.

For each person, lay out a couple sheets of paper towel, a kistka, pencil, beeswax, and a candle.

### How do you pronounce *pysanka*?

**PIH**-sahn-kah, with the emphasis on the first syllable. The plural of *pysanka* is *pysanky*, is pronounced pih-sahn-**KIH**, with the emphasis on the last syllable.

### Why do we say "write" a *pysanka*?

The Ukrainian word *pysanka* comes from the verb *pysaty*, which means "to write".



\*Empty eggshells can be used if desired. They must be clean and *completely dry*. Plug the drain hole(s) with beeswax or a silicone plug before dyeing. The egg will float in the dye bath; use a spoon or spice jar to hold it down.



First guidelines



Guidelines and design shown in **Figure 1**

Heating the kistka



Scooping wax into heated kistka



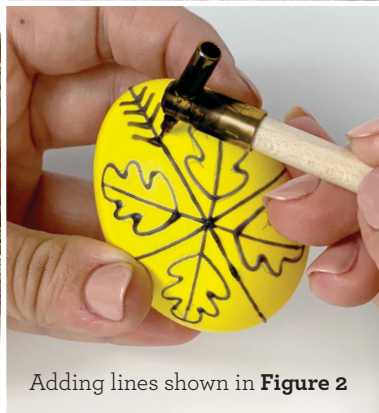
Wiping away excess wax



Applying wax to white egg



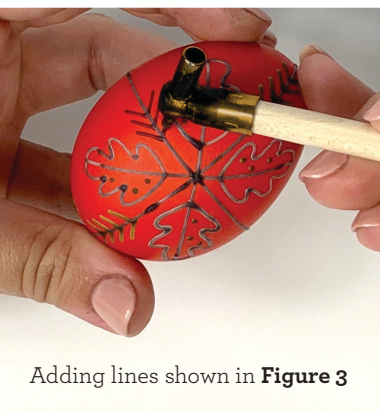
After yellow dye bath



Adding lines shown in **Figure 2**



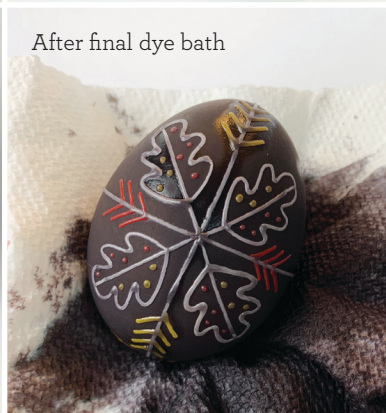
After red dye bath



Adding lines shown in **Figure 3**



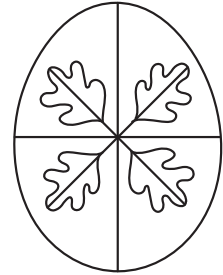
Final dye bath



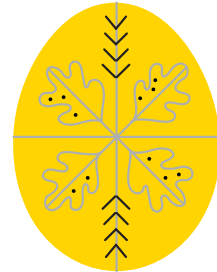
After final dye bath

## PART 1: WAXING AND DYEING

1. Wash your hands with soap and water. It's important that hands are free of oils because any oil transferred to the shell will prevent the dye from taking.
2. Lightly pencil in the design in **Figure 1**. Repeat on the back of the egg. If you need to erase pencil lines, use a white polymer eraser or a cotton swab dipped in rubbing alcohol. **Don't** use a pink eraser, as it may prevent dye from taking evenly.
3. Light the candle. Heat the tip of the kistka for about 30 seconds.
4. Fill the kistka by gently scooping beeswax into the reservoir. If the wax resists being scooped, heat the kistka further. **Don't** force the scooping as it will loosen the hardware from the handle.
5. Wipe the outside of kistka with paper towel to prevent excess wax from dripping onto your egg.
6. Test the kistka on a scrap of paper. The wax should flow out smoothly. If the kistka makes a rough line, it's not hot enough, and should be heated further. If the wax flows out of the kistka too quickly, let the kistka cool for a few seconds.
7. Once the kistka is heated to the correct temperature, wax over your pencil lines from step 2.
8. Gently lower the egg into the vinegar rinse. The rinse prepares the shell for dyeing. Make sure the egg is completely submerged and remove after about 30 seconds. Pat (don't rub) dry with a paper towel.
9. Gently lower the egg into Canola Yellow until desired colour is reached. (2-10 minutes).
10. To remove the egg, slide the egg up the side of the jar with the spoon. Tip excess dye back into the jar. With your other hand, place a doubled paper towel over the egg and pick it up. Pat dry. Let the egg rest for 5 minutes before continuing.
11. With your kistka, add the dots and lines shown in **Figure 2**.
12. Repeat dye process with Glowing Hearts (red).
13. With your kistka, add the dots and lines shown in **Figure 3**.
14. Finally, repeat the dye process with Orca Black. Black is the final colour and will dye all the remaining exposed shell (**Figure 4**). Let the egg rest for at least 5 minutes before proceeding to Part 2.



**Figure 1**



**Figure 2**



**Figure 3**



**Figure 4**



Melting off wax using the side of the candle flame. We recommend using a taper candle. Tapers have a tall flame that is easily accessed from the side.

### **Important!**

If working on an empty shell, unplug the drain hole before removing the wax!

## **PART 2: UNWAXING**

Now comes the fun part: removing the wax to reveal your design. There are several ways to do this. Use the oven method to unwax several eggs at once.

### **Candle flame**

Hold the egg close to the side of the candle flame.

**Don't** place egg over the flame, as this will cause soot stains.

Take your time. As you see the wax melt, gently wipe it away with toilet paper or tissues. Continue this process until all the wax has been removed.

### **Crafter's heat gun**

Line a small bowl with a "nest" of tissues or toilet paper. Place the egg in the nest.

Wave the heat gun over the egg. When you see the wax melt, gently wipe it away with toilet paper or tissues. Continue this process until all the wax has been removed.

### **Oven**

Preheat oven to 120°C (250°F). Place egg(s) on a foil-lined cookie sheet or varnishing rack. Place in the oven for 7-10 minutes.

When the wax is completely softened, remove eggs from the oven. Gently wipe the wax off with toilet paper or tissues.

## PART 3: FINISHING

### Varnishing

Use a clear, non-yellowing, oil-based varnish.

Wearing nitrile gloves, apply a small amount of varnish to the egg. Roll the egg in your hands until it's uniformly coated.

Set the egg on a drying rack to dry (as shown below).

Although it's best to empty your egg, some prefer to let their finished eggs dry out through its pores. **Do not** varnish your egg if you plan to leave it full. If desired, buff the shell with coconut oil for a bit of shine and protection.

Be warned that unblown eggs **can explode**, causing a terrible mess, and an awful smell!

### Emptying

Your egg must be varnished or completely covered in wax before emptying. Splashes from the egg's contents will cause any unprotected dye to run.

We recommend using a single-hole blower to empty your egg.

If you don't have an egg blower, pierce both ends of the egg with a thumbtack. Use a bead reamer or drill bit to widen one of the holes to about 2mm. Break up the insides by stirring with a needle. Hold the egg over a bowl and blow through the small hole, forcing the the insides out through the larger hole.

### Displaying your work

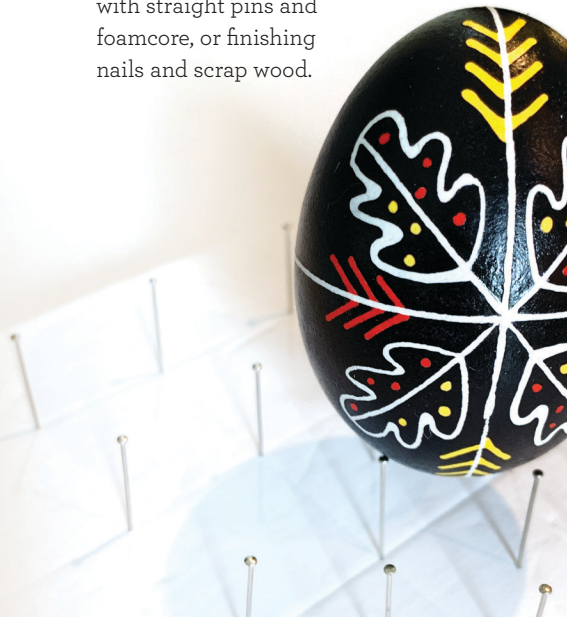
There are many ways to display your finished egg: in a bowl, a man-made bird's nest, a shot glass, an egg stand, an egg cup, a napkin ring, under a dome, or in a baseball or golf ball collector's display case.

If you prefer a hanging ornament, we carry a selection of metal findings that can be glued onto the egg.

You can also drill a second hole on the opposite end of the egg, then thread it with yarn or ribbon.

Keep your finished egg away from direct sunlight to prevent fading.

A drying rack can be made with straight pins and foamcore, or finishing nails and scrap wood.



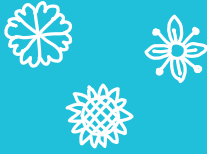
Emptying the varnished pysanka with a single hole blower

# SYMBOLS AND MOTIFS

Traditional Ukrainian eggs (*pysanky*) are decorated with symbols that carry meaning and good wishes. Because this is a folk art, some meanings have changed or become lost over time. The meanings may vary, depending on the source.



**HORSE**  
wealth and prosperity



**FLOWERS**  
wisdom, beauty, and elegance



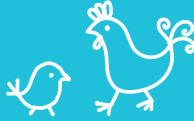
**OAK LEAF/ACORN**  
strength and resilience



**STARS AND SUN**  
growth and good fortune



**SPIRALS**  
protection



**BIRDS**  
fertility and fulfillment of wishes



**LADDER AND RAKE**  
prosperity



**ROSETTE (RUZHA)**  
love, charity, goodwill



**PINE BOUGH**  
strength, growth, and eternal life



**FISH**  
originally a symbol of health, and later, Christ



**DEER**  
masculinity, victory, and leadership



**WHEAT**  
abundance



**CROSSES**  
Christ and the four corners of the world



**DOTS**  
stars/constellations, or Mary's tears



**MEANDERS**  
eternity, protection

Find help, inspiration, and fun in our Facebook group!  
Search for group name: **Ukrainian Eggcessories' Eggers**

[ukrainianeggcessories.com](http://ukrainianeggcessories.com)