

A Recipe for Ink from Pigment:

"...then take white of eggs that are well beaten, put thereto a little beaten gum Arabike, and let it stand till the gum is dissolved, then put the [powder] into it, and mingle them well together, straine it through a linnen cloath into an inkhorne and use it when you will"

~ A Booke of Secrets

Steps:

1. Separate the white of an egg into a glass or ceramic bowl. Discard yolk or save for another purpose.
2. Beat the egg white with a fork or whisk until foamy; let this sit for 5-10 minutes.
3. Skim the foam off the top and discard leaving clear liquid in the bowl.
4. Add about 1 tablespoon of powdered gum Arabic and stir. The mixture will have lumps. That's ok.
5. Cover the bowl and leave it to sit overnight or for several hours.
6. Add some powdered pigment to a jar; using a smaller dropper, slowly add egg white mixture to the powder and stir well until the right balance of liquid/color is achieved and you are satisfied with it.

Note:

You will need to stir/swirl this liquid gently before each use. Between uses the pigment will settle to the bottom of the container. Use very finely ground pigment powder of nearly any color (but not with metal flecks). You can thin this ink with water and/or use liquid gum arabic to thicken.

P., W. (translator) "A Booke of Secrets: Shewing Divers waies to make and prepare all sorts of Ink, and Colours: as Blacke, White, Blew, Grene, Red, Yellow, and other Colours, Also to write with Gold and Silver, or any kind of Mettall out of the Pen: with many other profitable secrets as to colour Quills and Parchment of any colour: and to grave with strong Water in Steele and Iron" Printed by Adam Islip for Edward White, London, 1596. *Ménagier de Paris. Traité de morale et d'économie domestique compose vers 1393 par un bourgeois parisien*, Tome Second, Paris, 1846

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A Recipe for Iron Gall Ink:

"To make 3 quarts of ink, take 2 ounces each of galls and gum arabic, and 3 ounces of copperas. Break the galls and soak them for 3 days, then boil in three half gallons of rainwater or water from a still pond. And when they have boiled long enough so that nearly half the water has boiled off – that is, there is only about 3 quarts left – take off the fire, and add the copperas and gum, and stir until cool. Store in a cold, damp place. Note that after 3 weeks, it will spoil."

~ Le Ménagier de Paris

Steps:

1. Crush the oak galls using a mortar and pestle until they resemble coarse rubble.
2. Add them to a glass jar, add water and leave the jar on a windowsill for a few days.
3. Heat the mixture in a small pot until it comes to a boil; let it simmer until the liquid is reduced.
4. Stir in powdered ferrous sulfate and powdered gum arabic until the gum arabic is dissolved.
5. Let it cool completely and then strain it into a jar using a square of fine linen cloth or coffee filter.

Note:

This stains everything it touches including but not limited to the glass jar, the pot, your skin, clothing, and countertops. Please be careful and do not use items that will come into contact with consumables.

Le Ménagier de Paris. *Traité de morale et d'économie domestique compose vers 1393 par un bourgeois parisien*, Tome Second, Paris, 1846

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