

Quick & Easy Christmas Makes

Tutor: Claire Salmon

Running out of time before the big day, or needing something to entertain your 'little helpers'? Relax and join Claire for this session of quick and easy Christmas makes. The session includes two styles of fabric Christmas tree, mini stockings, a Gnome, and hoop baubles.

All the makes use small pieces of coloured fabrics, so have a rummage in your scrap bag and turn them into something useful and pretty that you can use year after year.



Materials

A mixture of fabrics in suitable colours for Christmas, and some small pieces of ribbon for hanging.

- For the Christmas trees, you'll need some small buttons or other embellishments.
- If you would like to make your mini stockings into bunting, you'll need some bias binding to hang them on. To make open 'fillable' stockings, you can hem the tops more quickly with iron-on hemming web.
- For the Hoop baubles, you can use crepe paper instead of fabric, you'll also need small embroidery hoops - these are available on-line or from lots of shops now. You can add ric-rac or other trim.
- For the Gnome, you'll need a sock (a clean, old one will do), some gravel (or rice or lentils) to add weight and a bit of toy stuffing, some wool roving (or fur fabric or knitting yarn) for the beard and a wool ball (or scrap of felt, large wooden bead or mini pom-pom) for his nose.

Equipment

- Pen, pencil or biro, ruler, scissors, iron and ironing board, sewing machine or needle and thread, chopstick or similar to help with stuffing.
- A glue gun is useful for adding buttons if you don't have time to sew them on, and for making the Gnome.

Folded Square Christmas Tree

The trees can be made in different sizes, just make each of the 4 fabric squares a little larger than the last to get the finished tapered shape. **Square sizes example:** 4×4cm, 5×5cm, 6×6cm, 7×7cm.

You'll need 2 pieces of fabric cut to size to make each square, plus 2 small pieces of fabric to make the pot.

Place each pair of fabric pieces right sides together sew around with a 5mm seam allowance, leaving a gap in the centre of one side for turning. Turn right sides out, press, and either stitch the gap closed by machine or by hand (or secure with hemming web). You could also top stitch all the way around, closing the gap as you go.

Lay down the largest square on your work surface, with one corner at the top, and overlap the next size square on top, repeating with the remaining squares. Now starting with the smallest square and working down the largest, fold up the bottom point and sew or glue to secure, as in the picture.

You can stitch buttons through to help hold the pieces together, and/or add some extra decorative stitching -I've used thick green thread to stitch some little crosses.

Make a pot shape with 2 pieces right sides together as before, leaving the top edge open for turning. Turn and press. Stitch or glue to the bottom of the tree. Add a ribbon loop for hanging.

OPTION: You could use felt instead of fabric and just use one layer of felt for each square plus one small piece of felt to make the pot



Hoop Baubles

Very quick and easy! A mixture of sizes and colours looks nice hanging at different heights against a wall.



You can use a single piece of fabric with a nice pattern, embellish plainer fabric with ric-rac or other trim, or join two pieces of contrasting fabric together. The piece of fabric needs to be about 3cm larger than your hoop all the way around.

Stretch the fabric into the embroidery hoop so that it is taught and tighten up the screw. Trim excess fabric off at the back for the quickest version. If you have more time, you can use a gathering stitch around the back and pull it tight to neaten. If you need the hoop to be seen from both sides (e.g. if hanging against a window) you can cover the back with a piece of paper, card or felt.

Attach a hanging ribbon to the adjustment screw at the top to hide it. You can also add ribbon or ric-rac around the side of the hoop if you like using double sided tape or glue.

Folded Circle Christmas Tree

For each tree either cut out a full circle in one fabric, or two semi-circles in different fabrics to make a nice contrasting tree, as in the picture below. The circles can be any size, so use whatever you have to hand to draw around (e.g. a small side plate). I find a 20cm or 8" circle is about right.



If you have cut just one full circle, fold it in half with right sides together, and sew around the edge with a 5mm seam allowance, leaving a gap to turn through. If you have cut two semi-circles in different fabrics, place these right sides together and stitch around, as above, leaving a gap in the straight edge to turn through.

Turn right sides out and press. Topstitch around the semi-circle, closing the gap as you go. This looks nice in a contrasting thread, or even a gold or silver thread if you have one. I've used red thread on my tree.

The next bit will make more sense when you see the demonstration- fold the semi-circle backwards and forwards to create the tree shape shown in the picture. Press the folds in place, and add a few stitches (or glue) to secure. **Optional:** Add buttons or other decorations. Sew or glue a ribbon loop to the top for hanging.

Mini Stockings

These can be used for tree decorations, mini gift bags, cutlery and napkin holders, bunting

If you are making open fillable stockings, you'll need to hem the tops, and you can add a loop of ribbon to hang them. For stocking bunting you don't need to hem the tops, as the top edge will be enclosed in the bias binding.

Fold the fabric in half with right sides together. Using the template, mark out the stockings, leaving room between them for cutting out. Machine or hand stitch around the stockings along the lines, leaving the top edge open. Cut out the stockings close to the stitching, make a couple of small snips towards the stitch line around the ankle joint to produce a neater finish.

If you want to leave the stockings open, it's easier to turn the top edge of each stocking over **before** you turn them right sides out. Use little strips of iron-on hemming web or stitch to hold in place. Turn right sides out using a chopstick or similar to push the seam out neatly and press. For hanging stockings, add a loop of ribbon and stitch inside the top edge to secure.

To make your stockings into bunting, fold over the bias tape along the centre line and press. Measure and mark the spacing between the stockings, leaving some tape free at each end of the row for hanging. Position the stocking tops inside the folded tape and stitch along the tape, close to the open edges, to secure.



Gnome

My take on an old favourite, but they still make me laugh! Husband always wonders why he has odd socks left in his drawer at this time of year (don't tell!)



Take an old sock and cut it in half at around the ankle level.

Using the toe end of the sock, add gravel to the bottom to give the Gnome some weight and help him stand (or lentils or rice) Fill up to about 5cm of the top with toy stuffing. Tie off the top tightly with twine or use a strong elastic band.

Use the top part of the sock (or a piece of fleece or other stretchy fabric) to make a tall triangle shape for the hat. Simple sewing will be fine here so don't worry if you're not a great stitcher.

Use wool roving, or fur fabric or knitting yarn to create a beard and glue onto the front of the Gnome. You can separate out the strands to make a moustache too if you like.

Stick or stitch a nose on to the top of the beard. If you don't have a suitable wool ball or bead, you can make a nose by gathering around a circle of felt and pulling up tightly to enclose a little bit of stuffing in the middle.

Pull the hat down so that it fits snugly over the top of the nose and glue or stitch in place.

OPTIONS: Make arms using up scraps from the sock and/or felt or other fabric, tucking the tops of the arms under the edge of the hat at each side. Add embellishments to the hat, such as a pom-pom or trim around the bottom edge.

Happy Christmas Sewing!

Claire

Facebook: Cherry Orchard Crafts

Email: cherryorchardcrafts@yahoo.co.uk