

MARIE'S CHRISTMAS PIN



I decided that I would share this pin pattern in honor of my mother, Marie. A very talented creative woman who saw her role - as did so many others - as a keeper of the home and a housewife. While we had everything we needed, we didn't have much and as I got older I realized how creative she was with 'making do.' As you may well know, it used to be quite fashionable to dress up your coat or outfit with a brooch - even more so during the holidays. Sometime in the late 70's or so, she created these pins, giving them to friends and donating them for sale to the church bazaar. They were inexpensive to make and she enjoyed the easy handwork they provided. Everyone loved them - I still have the ones she made for me; they have been well worn and are now a bit fragile. So I have 'updated' the pattern a bit, adding some firm interfacing and using wool blend felts. The actual tree pattern is traced from her original chip board template!

Anyway, Mom's been gone since 1999, and I hope she would be happy and honored to see her creation being shared!

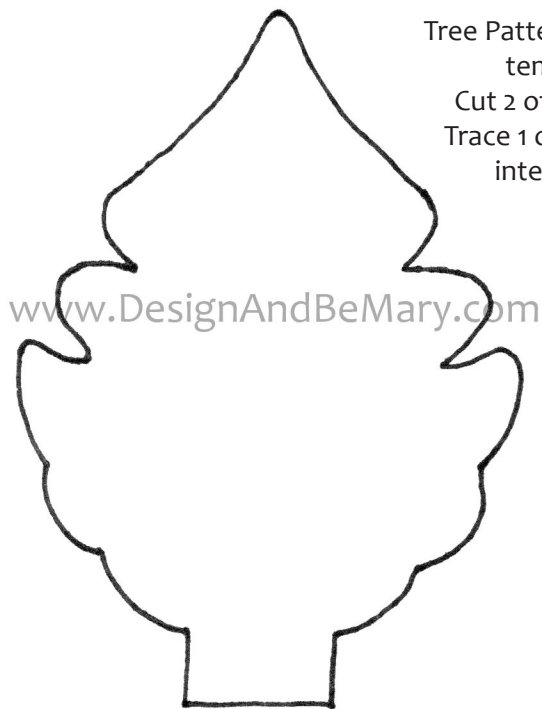
SUPPLIES

- Well felted wool or wool blend felt - I use green. You need 2 pieces, each measuring a generous 3" x 4"
- 1 package of 'regular' sized sequins with a single center hole
- Depending on your choice of colors, you will need seed beads (preferably Japanese seed beads which have a larger hole) in about a size 10 (Czech beads are size 10, Japanese seed beads are typically size 11). I use a crystal silver lined color to secure the sequins - you may choose to use another color for the 'trim'. A five to six inch tube will make several pins.
- You will need about a dozen 'bugle' beads in about a size 3 (size 2 in a pinch!) - these are for the 'trunk.'
- optional beads to add for color as desired - could be size 8 seed beads.
- I prefer Silamide thread in a neutral light color. This thread is veryyyy strong and is available through bead shops and online. You could use a very strong thin synthetic sewing thread if Silamide is not available.
- I like to use a size 10 long beading needle; depending on your thread/beads, you may be able to use a regular thin sewing needle.
- material on which to trace the pattern - can be a thin cardboard or template plastic.
- 1 pin back about 1" long and a glue like E 6000
- 1 piece of Peltex extra firm 1 sided fusible, about 3" x 4"
- 1 crystal or decorative button/sequin/bead, etc for the top of the tree - can be glued or sewn on.
- a small amount of batting material with which you will stuff your pin.
- miscellaneous supplies - scissors, pencils/pen, sewing needle and matching green thread to sew the pin and pin back together.

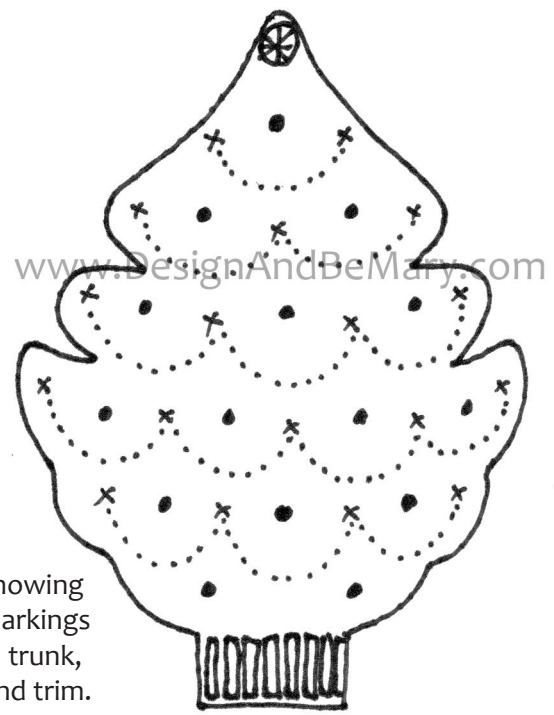


INSTRUCTIONS

1. Using the pattern on the next page, trace and cut out a tree template. Then lay this template on top of your green felt and trace **2 pieces** with a fine line marker. Cut out the trees. (I've shown this tracing against a white background above - but you are doing this on the green felt!!!) Then trace one tree template on the Peltex extra firm one sided fusible - as shown in the 3rd photo above. Cut out the inside of the tree shape in a rough teardrop shape staying about a scant 1/4" away from the edge of the tree. Set aside one of the green felt trees and the teardrop interfacing piece.



Tree Pattern - Trace for template.
Cut 2 of green felt
Trace 1 on ultra firm interfacing.



Tree pattern showing approximate markings for bugle bead trunk, accent beads and trim.

2. Taking one of the green felt tree cutouts, use your beading needle, beading thread, and whatever beads and sequins you have chosen, and begin to cover the tree cutout with sequins and beads as shown in the photos below. Knot your thread securely and come up from the back of the felt. Pick up a sequin (the dipped 'cup' side is right side up!) and pick up a bead pulling your needle and thread through them. Then go back down through the sequin BUT DO NOT GO THROUGH THE SEED BEAD A SECOND TIME. Pull your needle and thread through to the backside of the felt, gently snugging the seed bead into place in the center of the sequin and holding it in place. Repeat this process until you have the entire tree felt covered. **Leave a small space at the tip of the tree for 'the tree top.'** Also, you will need to leave about 1/8" clearance all around the tree edge as this is area that you will use to whip stitch the back to the front.

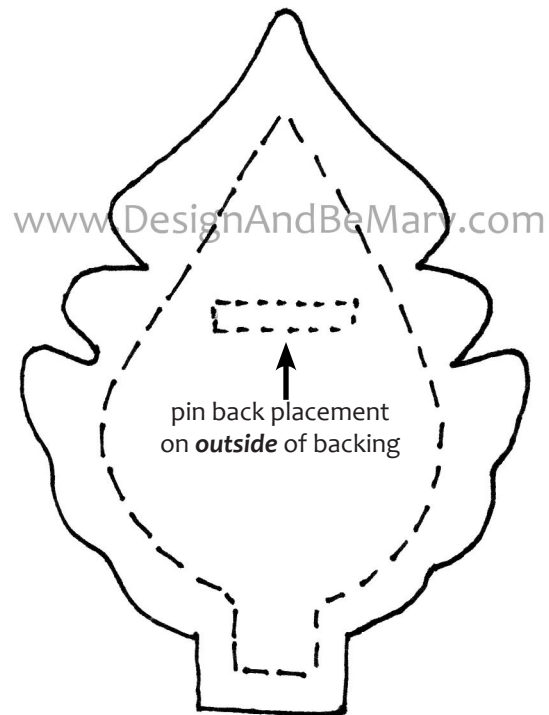


3. Using the bugle beads and your beading needle and thread, carefully sew on the bugle beads vertically across the bottom trunk area - use enough beads to cover the trunk area. Also be careful of the sharp end edges on the bugles - tighten them gently and you may also consider going through each bugle twice to reinforce the sewing without cutting the thread!
4. If you want to add the swag trim you can refer to the **approximate** markings as shown on the pattern above. Knot the thread in the back and come up, fiddling your way through the sewn sequins. Pick up several beads (10-15 depending on the size of your beads and how much 'swag' you like - then go back down through the felt tree to the back. Don't pull too hard or your bead trim will get too stiff - not hard enough and you'll end up with thread showing and saggy swag! The first time doing this is a bit of fiddling, but it won't take long for you to get it right. Continue in this manner until you have all your trim on. Oh - it does help to occasionally knot your trim thread on the back - that way if it should ever get caught and break, you won't lose all your trim!
5. If you want to add a few colorful beads to your tree (notice the red beads on the green pin), use the same sewing techniques and simply add the beads in among the sequins. I used a size 8 seed bead. Approximate placements are on the pattern above.

6. If you are sewing a button, sequin, etc to the top of your tree, you can also do that at this time. I choose to glue a crystal on **after** I've sewn the two sides of the tree together. Your choice! Set aside the completed sequined top.
7. Remember the second green felt tree - for the back? And the extra heavy firm fusible interfacing? Now is the time to use a lot of steam and heat and fuse the interfacing to the felt. I fuse with the felt side up; the photo shows what it will look like from the 'wrong' or inside! This interfacing will add structure to the pin and keep it in wearable shape for a long time! It also helps to give some strength to the pin back.
8. Using the pattern below, place your pin back on the outside of the tree backing according to the placement marking. Notice that the pin back is located a bit above the half way point of the pin - this will keep it hanging nicely and not flopping over! With matching green sewing thread, securely sew the pin back to the OUTSIDE of the green felt tree back, making sure your thread and stitching go through the heavy interfacing; this will re-inforce the stability of the pin back.



extra firm interfacing
fused to inside of green felt tree back



9. Once you have your pin back sewn to the green felt tree backing, you are now ready to sew the two parts of the tree pin together. Simply place the sequined front of the tree pin (face up) on top of the back of the tree pin (with the fusible facing up). Use a matching sewing thread and regular needle to whip stitch the outside edges together. Use small stitches. Start at one side of the tree trunk and stitch all around, leaving the very bottom open. Use this bottom opening to stuff a small amount of leftover batting inside the tree. I fill my trees so that they are a bit over 1/2" thick in the middle. I also find it helpful to use a pencil or 'that purple thang' to help distribute the stuffing inside the pin. Once it is stuffed to your liking finish whip stitching the bottom trunk edges closed. Tie a knot and hide it in the inside of the pin.
10. If you had sewed a 'top' on your tree pin, you are done! However, I prefer to glue a crystal to the very top of my tree pins. so I use E6000 glue and place a crystal of choice on my tree top. I use a tiny office clip to provide some good contact pressure let it dry for the day. NOW it's done!!

Enjoy wearing your pin!

I think my mom would be so honored.

Most of my sewing skills and craftsmanship I learned from her.

I miss her dearly, but delight in knowing I can see her 'live on' by sharing her creativity.