

CIRCLES - YO-YO DECORATION

Here's how to make a beautiful decoration for your home.

The circles can be arranged in various ways, to make different shapes.

If you choose Christmas fabrics, it could be used at the festive season.

The decoration is made using a technique called yo-yo patchwork.

You will need

- Circle template - there are two sizes to choose from.
- Fabric.
- Hand quilting thread.
- Ribbon
- Optional: a circle of shiny fabric to show through the central hole.
- Sequins, beads or buttons to decorate with
- Sparkly thread

Equipment

- Pencil
- Chalk pencil (to use on dark fabric)
- Fabric scissors;
- Hand sewing needle
- Large eyed needle
- Card

The decoration is made in 10 steps

1. Choose which size of circle you would like to use.
2. Draw round this onto the wrong side of the fabric.
3. Cut out the circle.
4. Finger press the edge in.
5. Stitch round the folded edge by hand.
6. Pull up this gathering thread to make the yo-yo.
7. Put a small piece of shiny fabric in the centre if there is a hole.
8. Sew the yo-yos together.
9. Add a hanging loop.
10. Add sequins, buttons or a tassel.

Preparing the circles

1. Choose the size of circle that you want. Remember that the finished yo-yos will be much smaller than the circle templates.
2. Choose some fabric. Do you want all your yo-yos to be the same colour?
3. Put the template near the edge of the fabric, not right in the middle (so that you leave enough for someone else).
4. Draw round the circle template onto the fabric.
5. Use a chalk pencil if you can't see the line from an ordinary pencil.



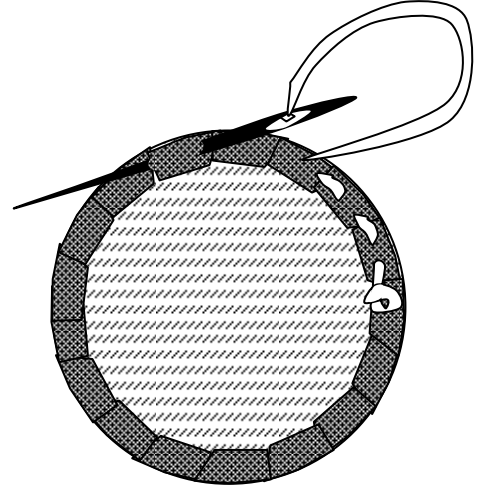
6. Cut it out using fabric scissors.

7. With your fingers, fold in the edge of the circle all round
8. Just fold in a little way - about $\frac{1}{2}$ cm.
9. Make sure you fold it in over the wrong side of the fabric.
10. Squeeze the fold between your fingers, and then move on just a little way round the circle to do the next bit.



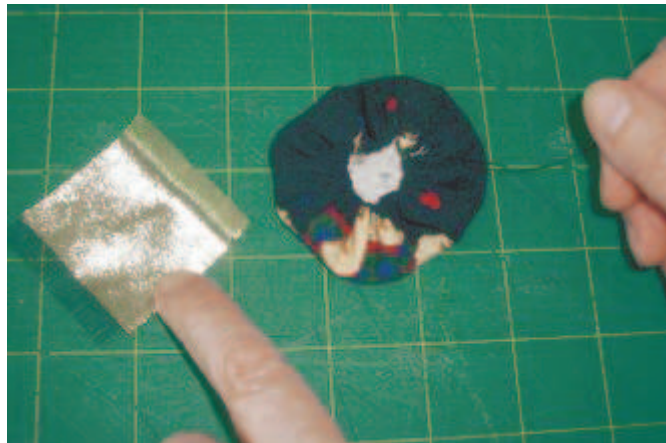
Gathering the circles

1. Thread a hand sewing needle with quilting thread.
2. Choose thread that is a similar, but dull colour to your fabric.
3. Start by making a small knot in the end of the thread.
4. Sew around the outside edge of the circles using a running stitch.
5. Start so that the knot ends up on top of the folded in edge.
6. Take stitches in and out of the fabric, making sure that you go through both layers before coming up again.
7. Pull the thread right through each time.
8. Try to make all your stitches about the same size - they don't need to be really tiny for this.
9. Stitch right round the circle. When you get back to where you started, go through to the other side.
10. *Don't* tie another knot, fasten off or unthread the needle yet!
11. Holding the fabric in one hand, pull the thread, so that the fabric starts to wrinkle up. This is called gathering.
12. Keep pulling until all the edge of the circle has come together into the middle.
13. When you can't pull it any tighter, take several small stitches, all in the same place to fasten off.
14. Try not to let the gathering slacken off while you do this!
15. Well done - you have made your first yo-yo.



Inserting shiny fabric.

1. Does your yo-yo close right up in the middle? If so, you can use it as it is.
2. If your gathering stitches were very small, you may have a gap in the centre of your yo-yo.
3. Cut a small piece of shiny fabric, a bit bigger than your hole.



4. Tuck it in through the hole, so that the shiny side shows, filling in the space. Does that look better?

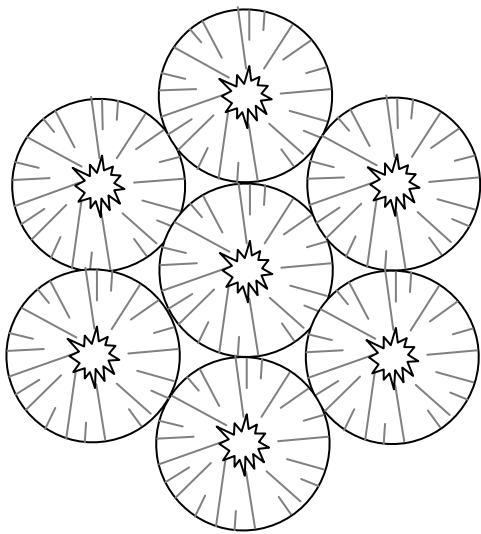


5. Now you need to make some more yo-yos.
6. When you have made a few, try arranging them together.

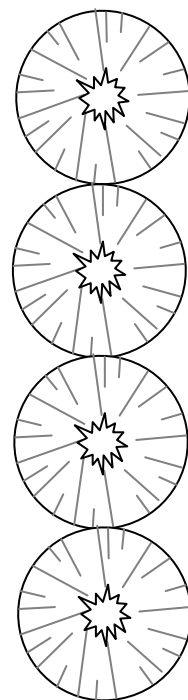
Choosing an arrangement for the yo-yos.

There are lots of different patterns that you can make with your yo-yos. Try out several different patterns, and see which you like the best.

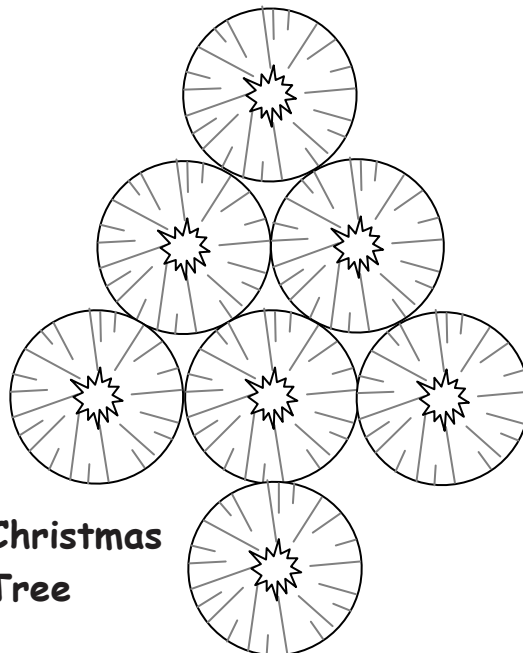
Here are a few suggestions:



Snowflake



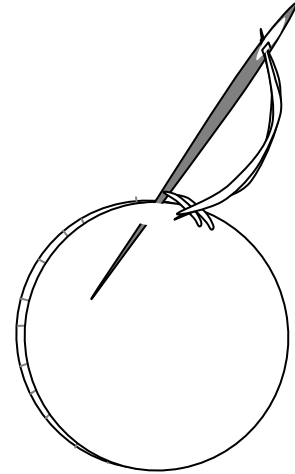
Chain



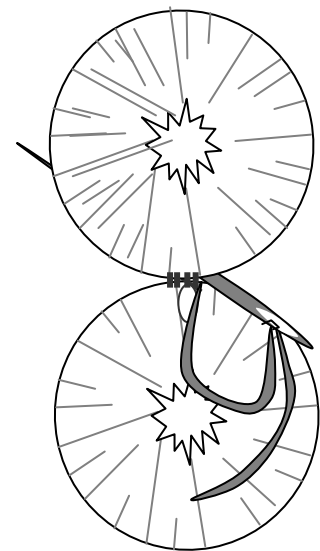
**Christmas
Tree**

Stitching the yo-yos together.

1. Thread a needle with a new piece of thread
2. Pull the thread until both the ends are the same length.
3. Tie the ends together with a small knot.
4. Stitch the yo-yos together where they touch.
5. Take two yo-yos that are to be joined, and put them with the gathered side together.
6. Oversew the edge with two tiny stitches, close together.
7. Don't sew in and out this time. Always push the needle in from the back to the front. Then lift the needle over the top again, ready to take another stitch.
8. Just pick up a little bit of fabric on each yo-yo, right at the folded edge.

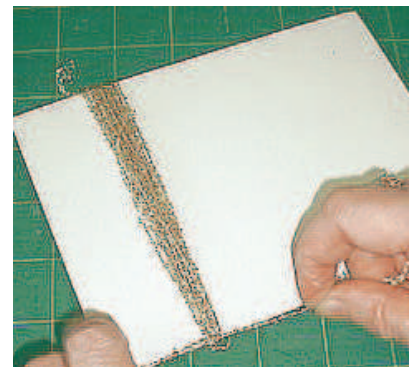


9. Now stitch the next yo-yo on in the same way. Make sure that you stitch them together in the pattern that you have chosen, with the gathered sides facing the front!
10. If you have quite a lot of thread left, you can stitch on the next yo-yo without fastening off every time - just go inside the yo-yo, between the two layers, and come up in the right place on the other side.
11. Don't pull it too tight - it mustn't spoil the shape of the yo-yo.
12. At the end, take several small stitches in the same place. This will fasten the end off securely, so that it won't come undone when you cut the thread.



Making a tassel.

1. A tassel is a nice way to finish your decoration.
2. Decide how long you would like your tassel to be.
3. Cut a square of card this size.
4. Take some sparkly thread, and wind it round and round the card about twenty times.
5. Cut off when you have enough.
6. Cut another piece of the sparkly thread about 20cm long.
7. Push one end of this underneath the bunch of thread on the card.
8. Move it up to the top of the card, and tie it tightly.
9. Leave this thread for now - it will be used later to attach the tassel to your decoration.



10. Put some scissors between the bunch of threads and the card, down at the other end, and cut all the threads.

11. Now wind the middle of another thread round and round the tassel, about 2cm down from the top.



12. Tie the two ends together tightly, and cut off.

13. Now thread a large eyed needle with the thread left at the top of the tassel.
14. Use this to oversew the tassel to the bottom of your decoration.



15. If some of the tassel ends are too long, cut them all together to make it neat.

Decorating the yo-yos

1. Stitch a loop of ribbon to the top of your decoration to hang it up.
2. If you have time, you can add sequins, beads or buttons to your decoration.

Well done! You've finished! Now you can choose where you are going to hang your decoration. Would it make a good present for someone special?



A few useful hints!!!

- Paper can blunt scissors so please encourage children to use the right scissors for the job.
- Iron fabrics first, if creased.
- Younger children may find it easier to use thread doubled when hand sewing, as the needle cannot then become unthreaded.
- Encourage older children to use thread that is only singly threaded. The needle will need to be moved along the thread gradually when the doubled part is in danger of being caught in the stitches.
- It is important to start and fasten off threads securely, otherwise the stitching will come undone.
- A good way to tie a knot in the end of a threaded needle is as follows:
 1. Hold the needle in your right hand, and hold near the "tail" of the thread in your left hand (reverse for left handers).
 2. Bring your hands together, and without letting go of anything, grasp the very end of the thread with the finger and thumb of the right hand, so that it is held against the needle.
 3. With the left hand, wind the thread several times around the needle.
 4. Slide this coil of thread down the needle until it also can be grasped by the right finger and thumb.
 5. Holding this coil against the needle with the right hand, pull the needle through using the left hand.
 6. You will find that the coil forms a neat but substantial knot at the end of the thread.

