

# A Lollipop Tree Centerpiece



One of my favorite things to do during the holidays is snack, especially on lollipops. Maybe that's because, as someone once told me, the effort involved in finishing a lollipop burns away its calories. What ever. We all throw our calorie counters out the window during the holidays, and the best way to keep my favorite treat within reach is to build a lollipop Christmas tree.

The construction of this little tree is easy and you might even enlist the help of others in your family who will help you devour its decorations!

## Materials List:

2- ¾ inch x ¾ inch x 4ft pine lumber

1 – ½ inch wooden dowel

Miter saw

Cordless drill/ assorted bits

Awl

Sandpaper

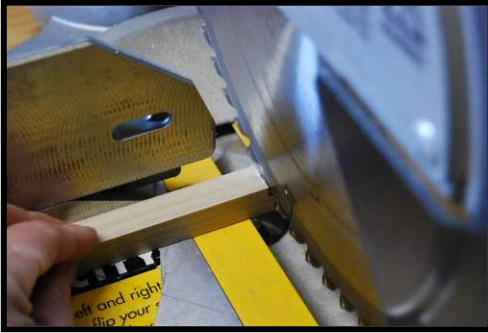
Paint/old sock/paper towel

## Tip:

The tree limbs are made out of ¾-inch-by-¾-inch pieces of pine; I bought them at a home center store. The center of the tree is a half-inch wooden dowel.



## Instructions:

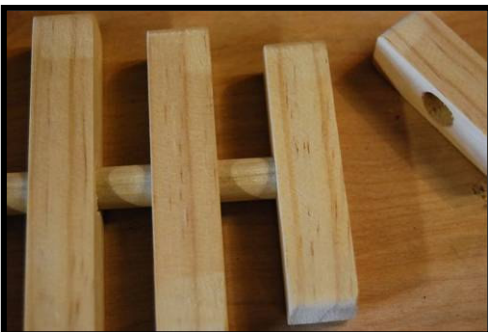


1 Using a miter saw and a miter box cut the tree limbs. Start at 12 inches, and work your way down by the half-inch, cutting the next one 11 1/2 inches, then 11.



Continue until all you have left is a 1-inch branch.

2 For the base, cut two 12-inch-long branches instead of just one.



3 The half-inch wooden dowel will be pushed through the center of the limbs, creating the trunk of the tree.

4 Find the center of each limb, and drill a hole the size of the wooden dowel, using a 1/2-inch drill bit.



Tip:

I used an awl to help make a starter point for my drill bit. This keeps the drill bit from dancing around on the lumber.



5 Do a test to make sure the dowel pushes easily through the hole. Do this to all the limbs except for the 1-inch limb. Save that for later.



6 Drill a pilot hole into each end of the limb. This hole will be where you place the lollipop. The hole should be the same size as the stick of the lollipop, so that it will stand upright. I eyeballed the hole placement at about a half-inch from each end. You don't have to be precise; just try to be consistent.

Tip:



Set a depth mark on the drill bit with a little piece of tape. You don't want to drill all the way through the wood—you just want to go about halfway.



7 After all the holes drilled, lightly sand the end of the pieces to soften the limb.

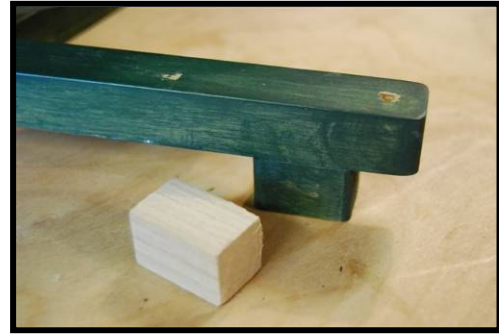


8 This is also a good time to paint the pieces. I just washed on an evergreen-colored latex paint using an old sock. The paint will have almost a stained look when applied—just a light coating to give the tree some color.

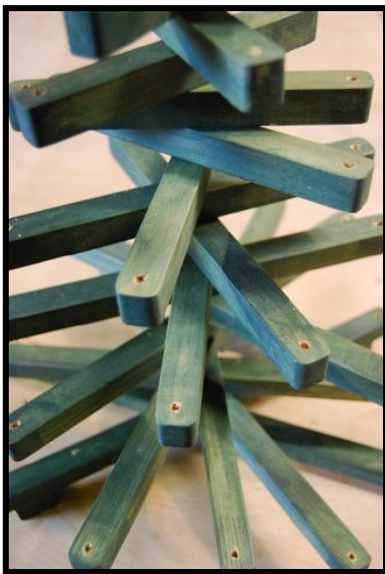
9 The next step is to build the base that will support the rest of the limbs. The bottom two branches measure 12 inches. One of the branches will rest on top of the other.



10 I added little outriggers that are about 1 inch long, using the same  $\frac{3}{4}$  by  $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch pine. Just attach the feet with wood glue and let dry.



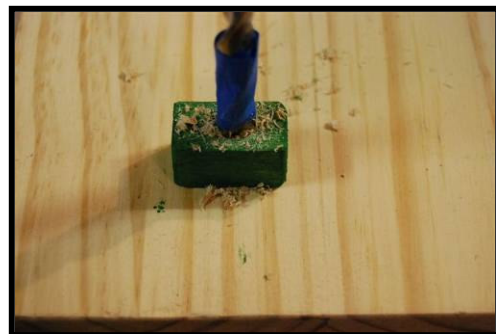
11 Put a little wood glue on the end of the wood dowel (the tree trunk) and push the dowel into the base holes and allow it to dry.



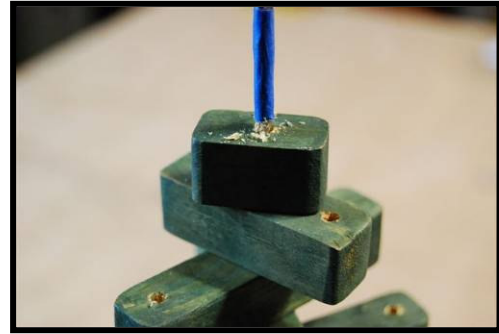
12 Start sliding the remaining tree limbs onto the trunk, working from the longest to the shortest. You want to arrange the limbs so that they alternate to fill in the tree.

13 The topper of the tree is the 1-inch limb; drill a hole the size of the wood dowel halfway into the piece.

Cut off any excess of the dowel with a little saw; glue the 1-inch piece onto the top.



14 Then drill a pilot hole the size of the lollipop straight through the top.



Once all the limbs have been placed on the trunk, start placing lollipops into the holes to fill in the tree. Place the last lollipop in the very top, and you have a wonderful centerpiece candy display. I tried using the lollipops without the wrapper at first, but it just didn't look right (non-appetizing) so I opted for leaving them wrapped. There are many different types of lollipops that you can choose, from cellophane wrapped flat ones to the round filled ones or even multicolored.



And just one more tip: Buy plenty of lollipops. For some reason, they keep disappearing!

Matt

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