

Holiday Candle Wraps



The use of candles seems especially appropriate for the holiday season. The warm glow of candle light can welcome guests on a dark winter's night, and their scent can help to create a warm, inviting space.

Matt and I use candles all the time, and he is even more into them than I am. For years he's been surprising me with a pumpkin scented candle for fall or a vanilla scented in a pretty container just for fun. You have to admit that today, candles are so versatile. They are available in every size and shape imaginable. Colors are practically limitless, and they can enhance any décor.

But as Matt frequently reminds me, just how many candles do you really need? While it is nice to have decorative candles for every holiday and season, they can become quite costly and difficult to store. So how can you make those orange candles that decorated your Thanksgiving table create a warm Christmas glow? Candle wraps, that's how!

A candle wrap is appropriate only for a container candle, a candle that is poured into a special decorative glass container. The wrap is a piece of fabric which covers the candle's glass container. After slipping a container candle into a wrap, the only visible part of the candle is the flame. By using a candle wrap, you can extend the use of any candle.





I used wool felt to make our candle wraps. Wool felt can be found at your local fabric store. For a smooth look, just use the felt as is. If you want a more country look, wool felt can be machine washed and dried. The felt will shrink in the washing process and become more coarse and textured.

Materials Required:

You only need a few materials to create your candle wraps. Wool felt is needed in a variety of colors. You'll also need embroidery floss in matching colors. Embellishments including buttons and beads may also be used.

Candle wraps can be decorated with almost any design. For inspiration, you might use Christmas cards, cookie cutters, or even your child's coloring book. Sizes can be easily adjusted by enlarging or reducing the design on a copier.

I decided to make a small grouping with our holiday candles. Matt and I have found that groupings with odd numbers of items seem to work best, so I decided to use three candles ranging in height from three to nine inches.

I choose traditional colors for the backgrounds of our wraps. Our largest candle measured nine inches tall. Since I wanted to use it for our Christmas tree design, I decided to make the wrap out of the red wool felt.

Instructions:

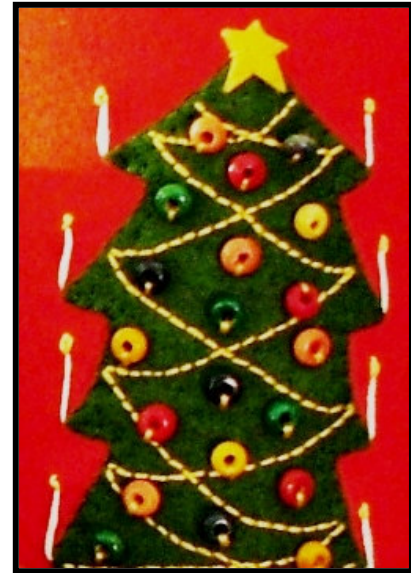
1 The first step was to measure the circumference of the container. Our candle container was 14 inches around, so I cut a piece of red wool felt 9" by 14 1/2". I added 1/2" to the circumference to allow for a 1/2" overlap.





2 Using a blanket stitch in two strands of white floss, I joined the 9” edges together. I slipped the wrap back onto the container to make sure it fit correctly before I continued the blanket stitch decorative edging all the way around both the top and bottom edges.

3 Next, I cut out the shape of a Christmas tree using green wool felt, and attached it to the front of the wrap with a blanket stitch in matching green floss. I then used yellow floss in a back stitch to create a “garland”, white floss to create candles, and yellow French knots for flames. I used beads to add “ornaments” and topped it off with a gold star.



Using the same procedure, I created a stocking. Notice I brought in some flannel fabric for the toe and heel re-enforcements. The gold star on the stocking, along with the gold star on the tree and the larger star candle wrap below all tie together because of using a small group of felt colors, a few matching embroidery flosses and like elements, such as the star.

The tiny piece of frayed edge fabric behind the button on the star ties back to the fabric on the stocking. So, when they are placed together, they create a wonderful holiday grouping which can be enjoyed lit or unlit.



If you are using lit candles, it's important to remember a few safety rules. Candles should be burned for about the same amount of time in hours as the diameter of the candle is in inches. If a candle measures two inches in diameter, it should not burn for more than two hours. After the candle has burned for the recommended time, blow out the wick and allow the wax to cool completely before using it again.

Candles should only be used on a heat resistant surface away from drafts, flammable fabrics and out of the reach of curious children. Use scissors to trim the wicks often to prevent the candles from smoking and sputtering.

Did you know that heat and light can affect a candle's quality? Store your candles in a cool place to keep them burning brightly throughout the year. Of course, I've found that I don't have quite as many candles to store now that I've started using candle wraps. The wraps take up a lot less room than the candles, too, which is a good thing since I found quite a few new holiday accessories that I just couldn't seem to live without!

Happy Holidays!

Shari

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