

FLOWER STEM

sewing
tutorial



kata golda
handmade

Here is an everlasting flower with a hardy stem that can be shaped just how you want it. Make a single flower or a bouquet for all time.

MATERIALS & TOOLS:

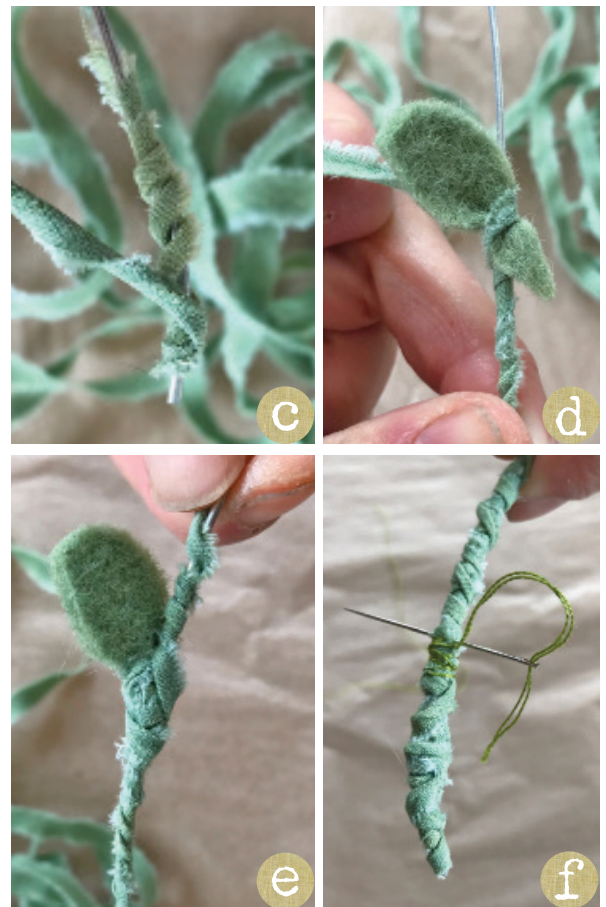
- Wool felt for flower petals, center, base, and leaves. I used soft peach, black, and moss green (*see note below*).
- 1/4-1/2" wide strips of silk, fine cotton sheeting, or poplin fabric (*see note below*).
- 12" piece of 18-gauge galvanized steel wire. While other wires can be used, I found this gauge and type of wire to be both bendable and sturdy.
- Embroidery floss that is similar colors to the stem wrap and petals.
- Wire cutter
- Scissors
- Hand sewing needle

NOTE ON WOOL FELT: *If your wool felt is thin and smooth and you want it thicker and with a little texture, I recommend washing it by hand in warm water and letting it line dry. You can also dry the felt CAREFULLY with a watchful in the dryer. Treat your felt PRIOR to cutting the shapes.*

NOTE ON FABRIC FOR STEM WRAP: *I recommend ripping your fabric into thin ribbons no longer than 48" (it is cumbersome to work with longer ribbons). If you are re-purposing a garment, your strips will be all different lengths which will work just fine. Be sure to rip and not cut the fabric. My stem is 12" and I used 48" of 1/4" wide silk. If you want to bulk up your stem, use more strips.*



1. Refer to "Notes & Tips" and the stitch guide on page 2.
2. Gather your materials. **(photo a)** Cut out paper templates on page 2 and then cut out wool felt pieces. **(photo b)** I prefer to hand hold the pieces instead of pinning as the pattern pieces are small.
3. Cut wire with wire cutter to the desired length for stem. My wire was 12" long.
4. Wrap your wire. Begin about 1" from base of the wire (the bottom of the stem). Wrap down towards the base then back up again to catch the end of the ribbon in the wrap **(photo c)** and continue wrapping towards the top. Do not try to make your wraps perfect, give them texture by letting the wraps lay flat and twist (this will happen naturally). Wrap closely, tightly, and heavily. Add your leaves on the way up the stem by catching the 1/4" pointed tip of the leaf in your wrap. **(photos d & e)** Once you reach the top, go back down towards the base again. If you need to add another fabric strip mid-stem, simply wrap it a few times over the end of your last strip and be sure to catch the end of the new strip as well (this will be enough to keep it from unwinding). When you have wrapped all the way back down to where you began (or to when you run out of fabric), use a single ply of embroidery floss in a similar color to pierce the fabric. Wrap the thread around the stem a few times, tie a knot, and then pull the needle into the stem and out again, cutting the thread ends close to the stem. **(photo f)** You can now push your wrapping up and down the stem to even things out and to cover the ends of the wire.



- Thread your needle with a single ply of embroidery floss in a complementary color to your petals. Begin the running stitch around the perimeter of the petal piece, making sure to leave a long tail. After you have completed stitching around the petal piece, pull at the thread gently to give your petals curl and dimension. **(photo g)** Tie the two ends of thread together. Thread the needle with both thread ends and pull the needle into the layer of felt (this is not a stitch; you are pulling your thread through the thickness of the felt) and out again about ½" from where you began so the tails are hidden. Cut your thread close to the felt, it will sink in and disappear. Repeat on the second petal piece.
- Stack the flower pieces: center piece, two petals (crossed), and flower base. **(photo h)** With a single ply of embroidery floss knotted at one end, bring your thread up through just the top petal layer and the center piece (to hide your tail) and then whip stitch the perimeter of the round flower center through all four layers. **(photo i & j)** Place the final stitch so your needle and thread come out at the center of the base. Do not cut the thread.
- Attach the flower to the stem by stitching through the layers of fabric wrap randomly near the tip of the stem. **(photo k)** The goal is to make as many stitches as needed to attach the flower head so that your flower is securely attached and not floppy. After making several stitches, wrap the thread around the top of the stem, tie a knot, and pull the needle into the stem and out again. **(photo l)** Cut the thread ends close to the stem.
- Lastly (my favorite step), subtly bend the stem to suite the mood of your flower (droopy, twisted, upright?) and gently adjust the petals into perfect placement. **(photo m)**



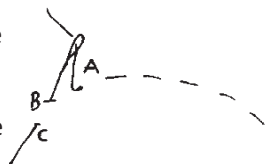
NOTES & TIPS

- Embroidery floss has 6 plies (threads) and the plies are easily separated. Most embroidery patterns use 1 to 3 plies. Long strands can get easily tangled, cutting them to 18-inch strands helps prevent this. It also helps to very gently separate the pieces from the center of the strand instead of starting at one end.
- If your thread becomes too short while you are sewing, attach a new piece of thread to the end with a knot. Tie it close to the felt and hide the knot.
- Keep stitches even and hide knots.
- Felt is very flexible to work with; it can be pulled and stretched as needed, and because it doesn't fray you can trim as you work if your pieces are not lining up.

STITCHES IN THIS PROJECT

RUNNING STITCH

- Start with the threaded needle on the back side of your felt and bring it up through the felt (A) and back down into the front side (B).
- Pull it all the way through, then bring the threaded needle back up through the felt from the back side (C).
- Try to keep the size of the stitches and the space between them consistent.



TEMPLATES

You can increase or decrease the size of the templates for different sized flowers.

