

holiday stars

sewing tutorial



Fill your tree or window with stars of all sizes. I made two versions of these stars: in one I used different colors on each side. For these multi-colored stars, I used ochre, off-white, grey, butter yellow, soft pink, and mustard yellow. The second set uses white wool felt, and I embellished each side with antique sequins and tiny bits of silk. Each of the three templates is a little different and they can be reduced and enlarged. This way, if you make multiple stars, they will have a little more personality and won't be exactly the same shapes and sizes.

MATERIALS :

- wool felt in various colors
- antique sequins or beads
- tiny bits of fabric (I used silk)
- sharp scissors
- embroidery floss
- stuffing or buckwheat hulls
- pencil with eraser
- mohair & crochet hook (optional)

INSTRUCTIONS :

1. Refer to 'Notes and Stitches' on the page 2.
2. Gather your materials. **(photo a)** Print templates on page 2 and cut out the paper pieces. You can play with the size by reducing or enlarging the templates when you print them.
3. Pin the templates to your felt and cut out the pattern pieces. Cut two star pieces in each size. **(photo b)** Note that for decorated white stars, I trimmed the template to make the stars pointier. I use the paper template to cut one side and then I use the cut piece of felt for the second side. That way they are perfectly matched and they are stacked on top of each other as they should be stitched.
4. With right sides facing out, embellish your stars (optional). For the white stars, I stitched antique sequins of various sizes on one side with a single ply of red embroidery floss **(photo c)** and bits of silk on the other side with ochre embroidery floss. **(photo d)**
5. Starting at the top of one of the points, blanket stitch the perimeter of the two star pieces together with 2-ply embroidery floss. Stop at the last indent before the point where you began and lightly stuff. It is helpful to only put in small bits of stuffing at a time and to use the eraser end of a pencil to get stuffing into the points. I stuffed the white stars with buckwheat hulls.
6. Continue with the blanket stitch to close the gap and secure with a knot. To hide your knot, pull the needle between the two layers of felt into the stuffing. Trim the strand as close to the felt as you can, it will sink into the stuffing and disappear.
7. Decide which point is the top of your star and use a full strand of embroidery floss in a length that works for you to hang your star. Stick your threaded needle through the point. Make a loop and tie, or tie off a single strand close to the star and let the star hang from one strand. For the decorated white stars, I crocheted a single strand of light green mohair from one of the points.
8. Repeat for the rest of your stars. **(photo c-f)**



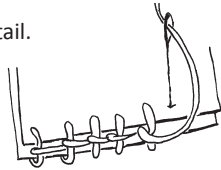
NOTES & STITCHES:

- 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 as close to the felt as possible and try to 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.

BLANKET STITCH

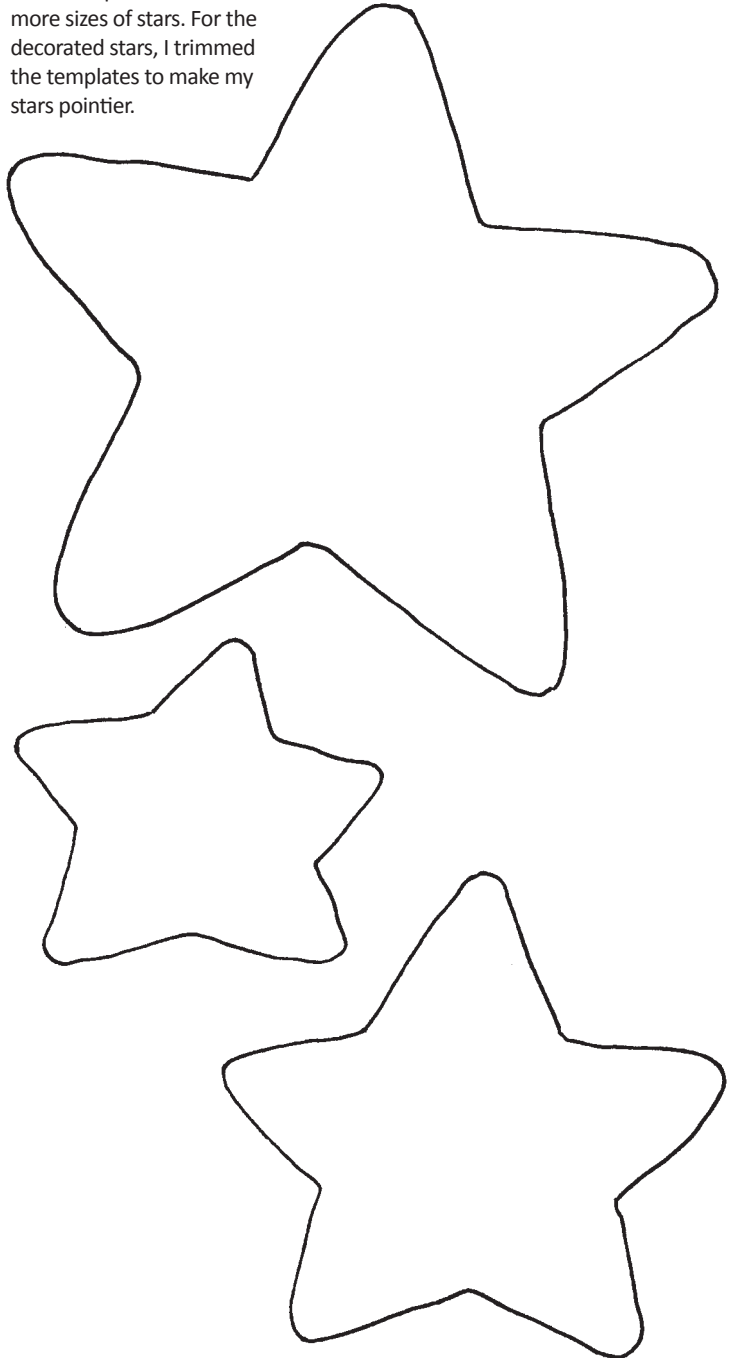
Note: these instructions are much easier to follow with your actual needle and thread in hand. The stitch is simple; the instructions sound complicated.

- Thread your needle and tie a knot at the tail.
- Starting between the sandwiched pieces, poke the needle through your top layer of felt about 1/8" from the edge. The knot will be between the two layers of felt where it will not be seen.
- Bring the thread around the edge of the two stacked pieces of the felt and poke it through the same spot as the first stitch.
- Pull your needle through the stitch you just made at the top edge. This anchors your thread but is not a true stitch.
- TO CONNECT TWO PIECES ALONG THE OUTER EDGES: Start a new stitch through the back side, 1/8" from your first stitch, and 1/8" in from the edge of the felt. Before you pull the stitch all the way, catch the loop through the top with your needle and pull tight. The thread should create a straight line that lies along the edges of your two pieces of felt. Continue your evenly spaced stitching (1/8" over, 1/8" in), pulling each stitch through from the back side and catching the loop as you go.
- TO CONNECT TWO LAYERS ALONG A SINGLE EDGE: push your needle from the top down through both layers. Dip through the back side making a small stitch and bring your needle up through the single layer, just outside where your first stitch went in. Before you pull the stitch all the way, catch the loop through the top with your needle and pull tight. The thread should create a straight line that lies along the edge of your top piece of felt. Continue your evenly spaced stitching (1/8" over, 1/8" in), pulling each stitch through from the back side and catching the loop as you go.
- To finish, connect your last stitch to your first stitch by sliding your needle underneath your first stitch and knotting it at the back. Push your needle between the layers and out through the front about 1 inch from the edge. The thread will be pulled inside, hiding the knot from view. Then cut off the excess thread very close to the top layer of the felt.



TEMPLATES:

You can reduce and enlarge these templates to have more sizes of stars. For the decorated stars, I trimmed the templates to make my stars pointier.



ABOUT KATA GOLDA:

Alison Kaplan is the creative force behind Kata Golda, a craft studio in the mossy seaside town of Port Townsend, WA.

Kata Golda is a flourishing business that explores crafts such as needlework, letterpress printing, bookbinding, block printing, hand-thrown pottery, hand-dyed textiles, and jewelry making. Alison finds inspiration in the woods, farmlands, and beaches of her Pacific Northwest wonderland. See her work at www.katagolda.com.

