

tree & mushroom ornaments

sewing tutorial

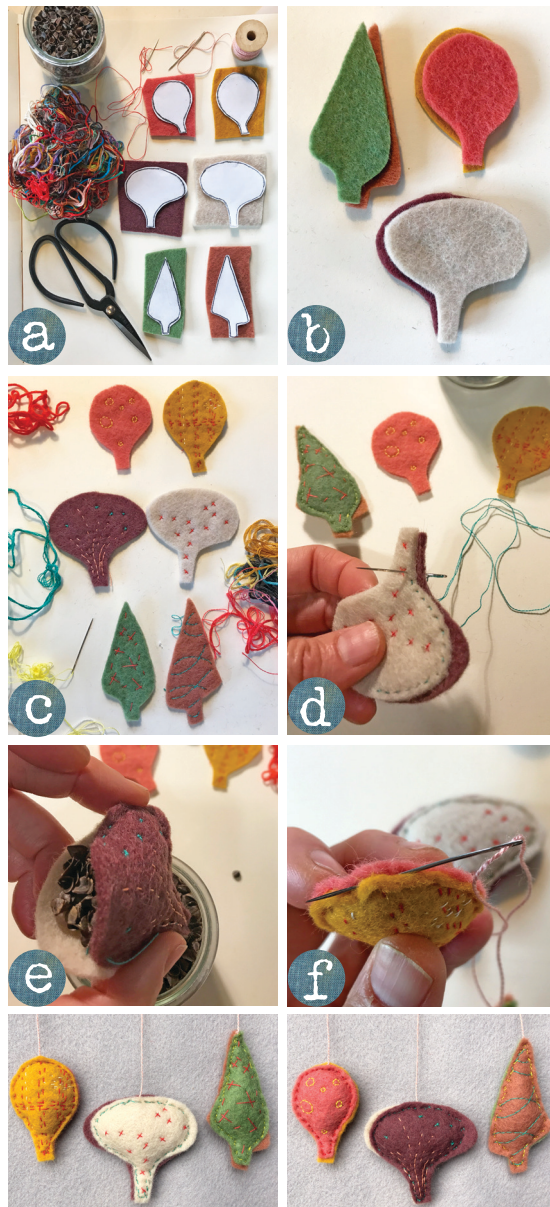


MATERIALS & TOOLS:

- Felt in a variety of colors big enough to fit the templates
- Various colors of embroidery floss
- Stuffing (I used buckwheat hulls). You can use tiny felt scraps, little bits of wool, fiber fill, cotton balls, lavender, etc.
- A piece of yarn, embroidery floss, sashiko thread, thin ribbon, or a thin ripped piece of fabric in the length you want for hanging your decoration.
- Scissors
- Straight pin
- Hand sewing needle with a small eye
- Optional: hand sewing needle with a bigger eye for attaching the string

These mismatched and abstracted tree and mushroom ornaments are a sweet decoration for any time of year. For this project, I wanted to use color that is not typical of the season and explore abstract representations of tree and mushroom shapes. I played with intentionally mismatched edges and decorated the ornaments in many ways. This is a great little scrappy project...time to dig in to your felt and thread scraps and stitch up a gift for yourself or for a friend.

1. Refer to 'Notes and Stitches' on page 2.
2. Print templates and cut out paper pieces. **(photo a)** You can play with the size by reducing or enlarging the templates when you print them. Note that the front and back sides are intentionally mismatched. The slightly different shape allows for the color of both sides to peek out a bit on each side.
3. Pin the templates to your felt and cut out pattern pieces. **(photo b)**
4. Decorate both sides, making sure that you are stitching on the side that will face out. Refer to the decoration ideas on page 3 if you need some inspiration or play around with sketching and stitching your own designs. I like to limit myself to two colors of embroidery floss per side (including the perimeter color). **(photo c)**
5. With decorated sides facing out and starting at the top of your ornament, use a single ply of contrasting color thread and the running stitch to attach the two sides together. **(photo d)** (See step 8 if you plan to hang your ornament with ribbon or torn fabric). Check both sides of your work as you stitch to make sure that you are catching both sides of the felt. It may seem arbitrary to start at the top, but since the front and back pieces don't perfectly align, I find that it helps to get the look I'm after (with the felt from the other side peeking out on the edges) when I work with the materials stitched from the top. My stitches were intentionally a little haphazard and uneven.
6. Stop when you are about an inch from finishing and stuff lightly. **(photo e)** It is helpful to only put small bits of stuffing in at a time and to use the eraser end (and sometimes a dull point) of a pencil to get the stuffing into tight spots.
7. Continue stitching to close the gap (you may decide to go around the perimeter again with another round of the running stitch) 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.
8. Thread your needle with the thread for hanging and stitch through the top point, catching the perimeter line of stitching. **(photo f)** Tie off the thread close to the decoration and hide the knot in the same way you did in step 7. If you are using something wider than thread to hang your decoration (thin ribbon or torn fabric), you would want to stitch it in between your two layers at the beginning of step 5.



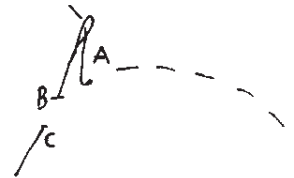
NOTES:

- 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 USED IN THIS PROJECT:

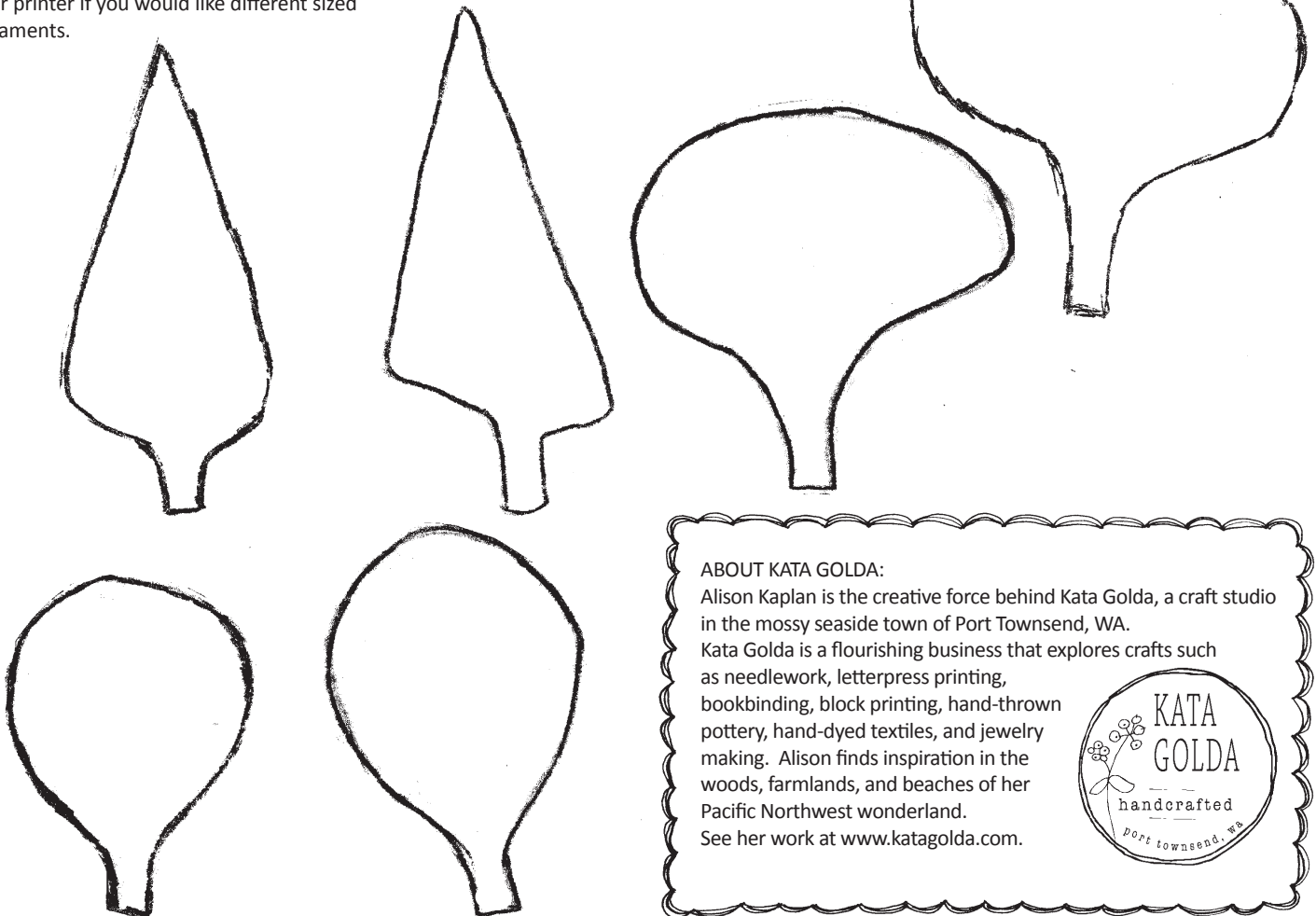
RUNNING & DOUBLE RUNNING STITCH

- 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 the whole 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.
- A double running stitch is used to make a solid line.
- Start with a running stitch. When you reach the end, reverse your direction and fill in the space between the stitches with another running stitch so you have a solid line.



TEMPLATES:

You can reduce or enlarge the templates on your printer if you would like different sized ornaments.



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, 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.



