

PINE TREE PIN CUSHION

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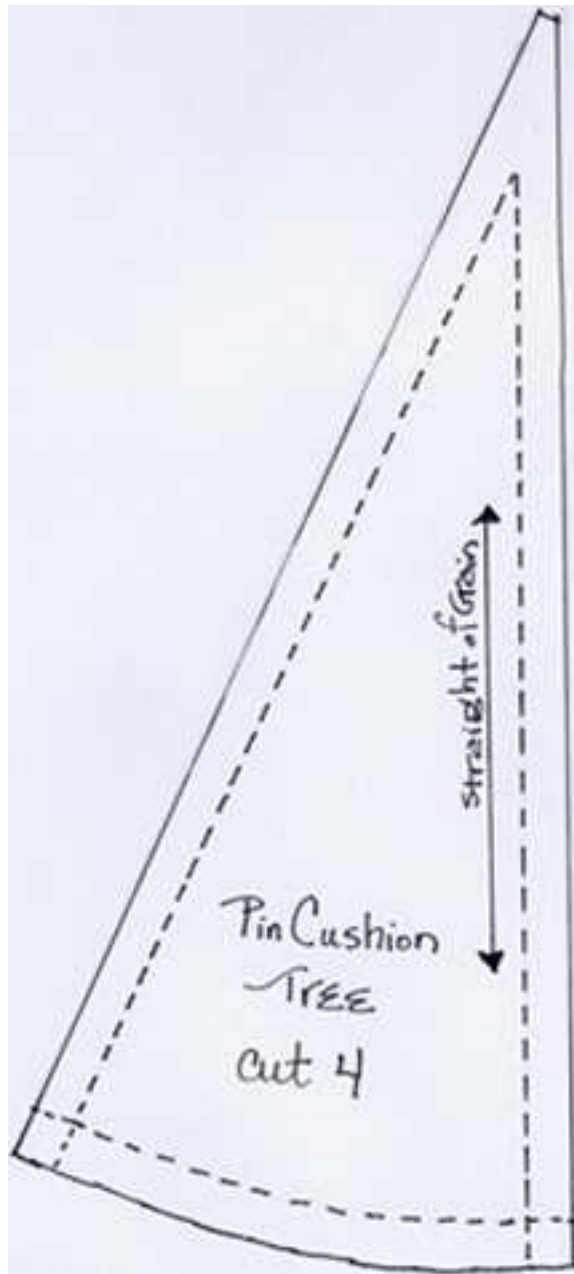


Supply List for one Pincushion

* Selection of green quilt fabric cottons, I used all cotton fabrics for the tree pictured but you can use other types of fabrics and colors. We'll discuss this later in the lesson. You'll need 8x14" for the basic shape and 1x15" bias cut strips. Wait to cut these until you read the whole pattern!

- * Fiber fill, I like Airtex best
- * Tacky Glue
- * Scrap of matt board or heavy cardboard at least 4x4"
- * Pinking shears sharp enough to cut the fabric cleanly
- * Sharp scissors
- * Transparent ruler with 1/8th inch grid, you can get these at fabric and quilting shops
- * Needle and thread to match the basic tree cone fabric
- * Sewing machine
- * Fancy head and/or plain head pins
- * Beads and glue either super glue or glue made to assemble jewelry if you want to make fancy pins
- * 2 Large metal washers approximately 2" in diameter

I'm always looking for gifts I can create for my doll making, quilting, sewing and fiber friends for birthdays and holidays! I hope you enjoy this fun and easy project. On page 2 you will find the basic pattern piece to create the stuffed cone tree form. You should be able to just print the page at 100% of size and cut and use the pattern. Check this by measuring the length of the right side of the pattern piece, it should measure 6 and 5/8th inches approximately. We'll start the lesson with designing your own pattern pieces for a cone.



Print this page at full size portrait and check
To be sure the grey area measures 6 and 5/8th
Inches along the right side.

✿ How to Design Your Own Tree Form ✿

Use a compass to draw a circle with a radius approximately as tall as you'd like your tree to be. Mine is 5 and ½ inches. You may have to tape two pieces of paper together to get a large enough piece. I work on ¼ inch grid graph paper.

Draw a line from the center of the circle to any point along the drawn edge. This is the radius. Cut out the circle and cut along the radius line from the edge to the center point.

You will need less than half of the circle for your basic pattern. Coil the circle up until the cone you form is the size you like for the bottom of the tree. Mark the point where the radius edge overlaps the larger circle. Draw a new radius line from the edge to the center point and cut the extra off.

I tried just adding seam allowances to this for my first tree and it worked well but because so much of my fabric was on the bias the tree tipped to the side when I stuffed it firmly. I corrected this by folding the pattern into quarters. Cut one of these quarters off and add seam allowances and you will get a pattern very much like the one I've given you. You can make your tree taller, fatter, thinner or shorter by adjusting the size of the original circle and how large or small you make the base.

Make sure that when you cut out the 4 pieces you need to assemble the tree form that you place one edge of each piece on the **STRAIGHT of the GRAIN**. When you sew the pieces together you will sew one straight of the grain edge to a non straight of the grain edge. This will keep your tree standing straighter up when stuffed.



Once all four sections are sewn together trim the excess seam allowance in the point of the tree to $1/8^{\text{th}}$ inch and turn the tree right side out. Use a hemostat or stuffing tool to insert fiber fill into the tip of the tree. Push it in firmly adding more and more stuffing until the tree is filled up. Work to get it nice and smooth and straight. We will add more stuffing after we begin sewing on the bottom.

* Add the Tree Bottom *

Use a compass to draw a circle with a radius of 1 and $5/8^{\text{th}}$ inches on the scrap of mat board. You can get free scraps at frame shops! This needs to be heavy cardboard so you can stuff the tree firmly. Cut this out with utility scissors and test fit it into the bottom of the tree, it should be a nice snug fit with the bottom stretched just slightly and holding it in place. If too small then make a slightly larger circle, if too large trim a tiny bit.

Cut a piece of the basic tree fabric to cover the matt board with enough extra to wrap around the edge and glue in place.



It can be helpful to mark the edges at 12, 3, 6 and 9 o'clock. Use tacky glue and wrap the fabric tightly but it is important to keep the glue on the edge of the fabric **NOT THE EDGE OF THE MATT BOARD CIRCLE.**

We'll be sewing along the edge and it's much easier to do this if there is no glue! Next glue or tape the 2 heavy washers to the cardboard. They will give the tree extra weight so it stands in place as pins are inserted and removed. Let the glue dry.

Fold the seam allowance on the bottom edge of the tree cone inside and insert the cloth covered cardboard bottom. You can use straight pins at each seam to tack the bottom in place. Starting at one seam use needle and matching thread to sew the cloth covered edge of the bottom to the



folded edge of the tree cone. Use a small overcast hem stitch. After sewing to the 2nd of the 4 seams use the hemostat to insert more stuffing into the tree. Work your way around the edge adding more stuffing and smoothing the tree form as you go along. When you get to the last inch left UN sewn continue stuffing as long as the bottom of the tree remains flat and does not begin to bow out.

Close up the last inch and use your needle inserted into the tree to lever the stuffing around for a smoother form.



There are some puckers along one side of the seam and along the right edge of this picture. These can be smoothed with your fingers and the needle but will be covered by the decorative strips.

* Cutting the Decorative Strips*

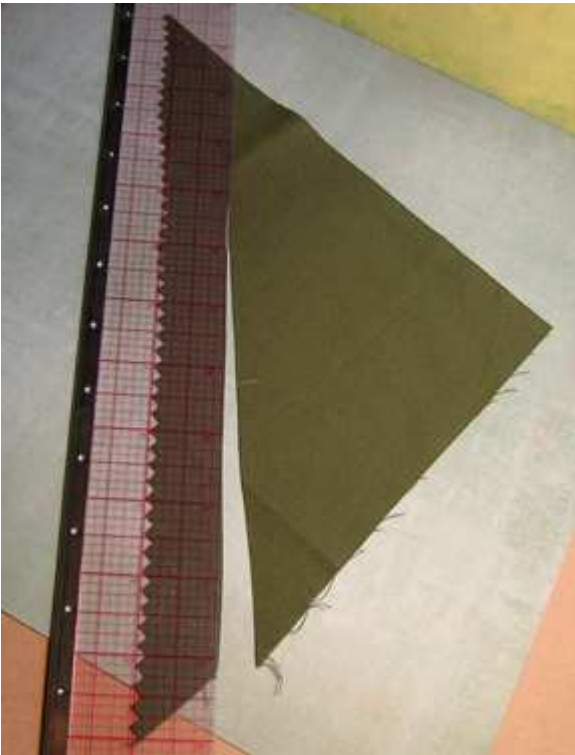
Begin by folding the fabric you plan to use for the first strip on the bias so you have a folded edge about 14 inches long and cut with scissors along the fold. The length of the strips will get shorter as you go up the tree. I had so many greens to choose from that I only repeated a couple of fabrics because I especially liked them.

I tried to think about how trees really look and vary my color choices as I worked along the basic cone tree form. Once I had a bias edge on my fabric I had to choose which pinking shears to use.



I have several pairs thanks to my grandmothers. I chose the pair on the left which has the largest "pink" and also cut the cotton fabric the cleanest.

Cut along the bias edge of the fabric piece you have prepared. Make sure that the points are completely on the fabric and take care to match them up each time you must move the scissors for a new cut so all the pinked points are perfect.



Use a transparent ruler lined up with the pinked points on the 1 inch line to mark a cutting line with a pencil on the back of the fabric.

I started making my first tree with $\frac{5}{8}$ th inch wide strips made in the same way but found that I could see the non pinked edge of each strip as I overlapped the next one up. I realized that the tree looked better to me if the edge was covered by the next strip.

You can see those edges in the next picture of the first tree I made and covered.



For my next tree I made the strips 1 inch wide from tip of pinked points to the other edge. Next I clipped the pinked edge between every two points leaving about $\frac{1}{4}$ " uncut. Cut one end of the strip square and line it up with one of the seams. I made my first strip just a tiny bit long so it would be sure to touch the table top. You can start with a light or dark strip.

I used tacky glue to apply the strips. I placed just tiny thin lines of glue with a tooth pick vertically from the end of each clip to the top edge. It's harder to stick pins into glued fabric to use just enough to hold the strip on.

Start at the end of the strip and stretch it so that the top edge fits the tree snugly and the little "pine needles" flare away from the tree form. Trim the 2nd end so it butts against the first or overlaps only a little.

Prepare your next strip and apply in the same way. Line the top end of the vertical snips on the second piece up so they cover the top edge of the strip below. This will make sure you don't see the top edge of each strip through the "pine needles". You can vary the length of each row by how deeply you snip between the pinked points. I also changed how often I made the vertical snips as I went up the tree from snipping every other point to snip

between 1 and 2 and 3 and 5. Next I snipped between 1 and 2 and 3 and 4 and 5 and 7 and so on along the strip. Finally I snipped between every point for the last few rows at the top of the tree. End your rows of bias strips with the shortest one making a nice neat edge at the tip of the tree

* Other Fabric Possibilities *

Each type of fabric you might choose will cause a different result in how the "pine needle" rows lay and how easy it is to insert pins into the pin cushion. I think that silk or batik cotton would be excellent alternatives to the type of fabric I used. Anything heavier will be difficult to cut with pinking shears and harder to stick pins into. Too light a weight fabric will cause the pinked points to curl more. You might like this but test it out. No reason the tree needs to be all green when something colorful is more to your liking. I'm betting you have piles of fabric left from other projects you can use. I always lean towards natural fibers but you may want to test some synthetics for the bias strips but use sturdy cotton for the basic tree form.

Choose fabrics whose points hold together when pinked. Some synthetics may loose their points do to their tendency to ravel.



* Choosing and Making Decorative Pins *

I have lots of different straight pins at my studio. I favor extra fine and long silk pins. These are not always available at your local fabric shop but you can order them from www.clotilde.com or

www.nancysnotions.com From left to right in the picture are a 1 and 1/4th inch fine silk pin, 1 and 3/8th inch super fine steel shaft glass head silk pin which comes in either

red or white heads. Next is one of the fancy headed pins from the box on the right which I did get at Hancock's I think and which is about 1 1/2 " and then a couple of types of quilter's pins on the right. Choose the pins for the person who will use them. The flower headed pins are much too thick for me but a quilter friend might love them. They come in different colors too.

Once I started thinking about the pins I realized I could embellish them with beads from my collection.



Some beads have very small holes and some several times larger than the diameter of the pin I wanted to use. I tested lots of different beads and decided the **BEST** were the ones which fit the shaft of the pin the tightest. I used gel type super glue to fasten the beads to the pin shaft. Transfer the glue to the pin with a toothpick and then twist the bead into place. I tried to use the heads of the different pins as part of my "design".



These embellished pins seem strong but you might also want to try a type of glue used to assemble jewelry like E6000. I have tested my fancy pins but not enough to know if they will hold up to years of use.

Hope you have had fun with this little project and used up some of your bits of beautiful fabric and beads.

Happy Holidays to all,

Kathryn