

Standing Wool Christmas Tree

By Jenn Kiarsis

Prerequisite: Hand-sewing and a love of playing with wool

Materials:

- Odds and Ends of braided projects, or pieces of wool that are strippable to $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ "
- *Needles – circular tapestry / 3-4" straight sharp / 7" Doll Making / sewing needles
- Button/Carpet thread – Neutral color
- Sewing thread – Neutral color
- Sharp scissors to "trim" – even out
- Hemostats or needle nosed pliers



Technique:

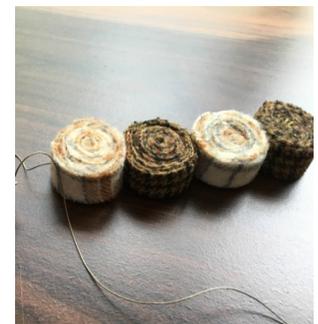
Standing Wool rugs (sometimes called Quilled, Shirret or Shirred Rugs) are created by taking thin strips of wool ($\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ ") and rolling them into circles, basting into ruffles, or creating random forms, and then sewing them together into various shapes and sizes. The technique is to baste the various elements together with button/carpet thread, and then reinforce by sewing the elements together strongly to secure them and make the rug/trivet "stand". After trimming and making the project as even as possible, it should be blocked with a damp cloth to felt it all together.

Basic Instructions for 5" Tree:

Make 11 one inch rolls: one in yellow/gold/white for the "star" on top; one in brown/tan/green for the "trunk"; nine in whatever colors you like. These nine can be all the same, have different centers, different colors. Be as creative as you like! Using regular thread and needle, tack rolls at the end with a few stitches to keep them from unrolling.

Working on a flat surface, arrange your rolls into a tree shape. Beginning with the bottom four rolls, thread the straight needle (either the longest straight needle you may have or a Doll Making needle) with carpet thread; knot the end; push the needle through top of the first small roll and out of the side close to where it is tacked. Next push the needle through the side of the each of the three small rolls like threading beads. Leave about 6-8 inch tail.

Continue with the straight needle and connect the next row of three small rolls in the same manner; then the top row of doubles. Leaving a tail on each row.



After you have the rows threaded together, place them on top of each other. Change the straight needle to a circular (upholstery) needle. Using the “tail” of the bottom row, insert the circular needle into the side, close to where the thread is coming out. Bring the needle up into the center of the roll in the row above; then continue “connecting” the row of rolls together. You may need to use hemostats or pliers to bring circular needle through. (When the carpet thread gets short, bury it into the tree, pull it through and trim. Begin with another thread, knot it, and bury into the center of a roll.)

After you have connected all of the rolls and rows together, you will add the “star” top and “trunk” bottom. Before attaching the star, fold a piece of carpet thread in half and knot it. Using your straight needle again, punch the loop through the side of the “star” roll, with the knot on one side and the looped thread on the other for a hanger.

Connect the “star” and the “trunk” in the same way you connected the other rolls.

When all rolls have been “connected” on the top, flip the tree over and do the same to the other side of the tree. This double connecting (front and back) makes the tree firm and the elements “stand” rather than “flop”. Add a shiny star – or a shiny button – to the “star” roll if you like.

This all sounds way more complicated than it truly is! The basic idea is to connect each element to each other, wherever they touch.

Below are a few examples of Christmas Trees. The one with the ruffle around the “star” is a larger one, made with 2” rolls. I use it as a trivet.

