

HOW-TO: CREATE METALLIC PINE CONES FOR THE HOLIDAYS

By Brookelynn Morris

▶ This year I am decorating my home for the winter by adding touches of rich metallics everywhere. The gleam of gold warms my cottage and the sparkle of silver fits with my modern aesthetics. To keep things sophisticated, I chose a single motif — the humble pine cone. Each one was easily transformed into treasure with Krylon metallic spray paints.

The materials are easy enough to come by — I found the tiny pine cones in my yard, and picked up the larger ones along the river near my home. But if you don't have a supply, perfect pine cones can be found at just about every craft store. Painting them was simple, and the intense metallics are just beautiful. Best of all, these shining beauties can be used in a wide array of projects for holiday decor.

MATERIALS

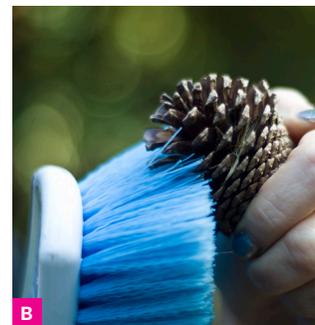
- » Pinecones
- » Krylon Indoor/Outdoor Primer
- » Krylon Metallic Spray Paint in Brilliant Gold
- » Krylon Brushed Metallic Spray Paint in Satin Nickel
- » Bristle brush
- » Gloves
- » Drop cloth
- » Undecorated wreath
- » Glue gun
- » 22-gauge wire
- » Wire cutters

Directions

Step 1: Collect the prettiest pine cones you can find (Figure A). The more the better! Use a brush with long bristles to clean in between the scales of each one (Figure B). Remove all the loose dirt and pine needles.

Step 2: Lay out the drop cloth in a dry, clean place, and put on gloves to keep paint off your hands. Rattle the can of Krylon Primer to mix it well (1–2 minutes). Hold it 6"–8" from the pinecones and start spraying, sweeping the paint across them smoothly (Figure C).

Let them dry for 10 minutes, then turn them over and cover the other side (Figure D). Allow 10 more minutes for the final coat of primer to dry.



Step 3: Select the metallic color of your choice and shake the Krylon spray paint well. To lay down your first coat, hold a pine cone in one hand and the paint in the other. This way you can rotate the pine cone to make sure that the paint reaches the inside (Figure E).

As you paint, remember to shake the can often, so that the sparkly particles don't settle to the bottom. Let the metallic paint dry 15 minutes in between coats. Two coats should be perfect. If they smell strongly of paint, you can keep the pine cones in the garage or outside overnight before bringing them in the house to craft.

Decorating with Pine Cones

Once you have transformed the ordinary pine cones into precious objects, they can be used to decorate your home for the holidays in many ways. I chose to make a pine cone wreath.

Plain wreaths are inexpensive, and golden pine cones are the perfect way to embellish them. I worked with clusters of tiny pine cones to create a sophisticated look, attaching each one with a dab of hot glue (Figures F and G). My wreath was done in 15 minutes (Figure H)!

Perhaps the easiest way to decorate with metallic pine cones is to artfully arrange them in a bowl (see opening image). I paired the Satin Nickel shade with a blue frosted pedestal and a simple votive candle.

Many types of trees produce beautiful pine cones, but a tree with golden pine cones will always stand out. Cut 1½' of wire, and thread it through the scales of the cone (Figure I). Twist the wire to secure the cone (Figure J), then add them to the branches of your tree for a gleaming surprise (Figure K).

More Ideas

- » Add painted pine cones to packages instead of bows.
- » Wire pine cones to garlands and swags.
- » Glue a few pine cones to wooden skewers and include them in flower arrangements.
- » Tuck seating cards into pine cones and place at each dinner plate.



About the Author

Brookelynn Morris lives near the coast in Northern California. Her current favorite materials include moss and lichen, mushrooms and flowers, wool, and recycled sweaters. Her first book is called *Feltique: A Guide to Feltmaking in All Its Forms*.