

POM-POM CHRISTMAS

designs by KIM HAMLIN AND KRISTIN NICHOLAS

IF YOU'RE LOOKING FOR A JAZZY WAY TO USE UP YARNS, want a project for the kids, or need funky decorations, pom-pom projects are the way to go.



POM-POM CHRISTMAS TREE

Kim Hamlin

Yarn Alchemy Alpaca Pure (100% alpaca; 140 yd [128 m]/100 g): #17e Tennessee green, #80e tea leaf, and #52e Boo's garden, 2 skeins each. Alchemy Lone Star (45% merino, 55% mohair; 140 yd [128 m]/100 g): #50e sour grass and #28w teal tide, 1 skein each. Alchemy

Pagoda (100% silk; 183 y [167 m]/140 g): #069F Kai's goldfish, 1 skein. Alchemy Promise (86% kid mohair, 14% nylon; 432 yd [395 m]/40 g): #50e sour green, #34w turquoise pool, and #52e Boo's garden, 1 skein each.

Notions (all available at hardware and/or craft or floral supply stores) 1" (2.5 cm) plumbing flange for tree base; 1 x 8" (2.5 x 20.5 cm) "nipple" (threaded pipe for base) with top threading removed; 40 feet (12 M) of 14-gauge wire; finer-gauge wire for holding branches in place; needle-nose pliers; wire cutters; one block of floral foam; sharp scissors; pom-pom maker; tape measure; long serrated knife to cut floral foam.

Branches

Cut wire: The branches are formed from the 14-gauge wire. Most wire comes in coils and will tend to hold that shape. Flatten it as much as possible to measure and cut. With wire cutters, cut the 14-gauge wire into the foll lengths: one 27" (68.5 cm) for center branch; six 18" pieces for bottom branches; six 22" (56 cm) pieces for middle branches; six 26" pieces for top branches.

Bend branches: Bend the branches at right angles as foll: Bend bottom branches at 7" (18 cm) from one end; bend middle branches at 14" (35.5 cm) from one end; bend top branches at 21" (53.5 cm) from one end. *Note:* The middle and bottom branches will look very similar; be sure to keep them separated and keep track of which is which.

Base

Screw the threaded end of the galvanized pipe into the flange. Cut floral foam in half and press the open end of the pipe into the foam to fill the pipe. You may need to do this more than once. Each time, use your thumb or a cork to firmly press down on the foam inside the pipe. You want a dense quality, which will keep the wires from shifting. Check the bottom to make sure the foam fills the entire pipe.

Build Tree

Place center wire into the center of base. Press it down until it hits the bottom. Insert the six top branches in a circle around cen-

ter branch. Cut a generous length of small-gauge wire and wrap it three times tightly around the group of branches, just below the bend, to help hold them together. Coming from below, tightly wrap one branch counter clockwise, bring wire under next branch and repeat counter-clockwise wrap. You will now find it easier to adjust the branches into place as you go along. Repeat this process for remaining branches and finish by tightly wrapping around base twice and tightening. Use pliers to make the wrapping extra tight and crimp the wire ends, so they don't stick out. Repeat for remaining branch levels. Insert branches, wrap below bend to hold in place, and wrap each branch to secure its placement.

Pom-Poms

Following pom-pom maker instructions or instructions on page 2, make 37 small, 30 medium, and 24 large pom-poms in assorted textures and colors. Slide pom-poms onto the wire branches, centering the wire through each pom-pom. Attach pom-poms to give a tapered look. The bottom branches each have 4 large, followed by 1 medium, followed by 1 small pom-pom. The middle branches have 4 medium followed by 1 small pom-pom. The top branches have 4 small pom-poms. The center branch has 1 small pom-pom at the top. Thread a long piece of yarn through contrasting pom-poms, for dangling ornaments.

Finishing

With wire cutters, snip off any excess wire at the end of branches. **Wrap center wires:** With remaining yarn, wrap center wires, using 6 to 10 strands and tie above bottom branches. Wrap in a spiraling motion until all wire is covered. Tie at top to finish. ∞



POM-POM GARLAND

Kim Hamlin

Finished Size About 48" (122 cm) in length.

Yarn Alchemy Alpaca Pure (100% alpaca; 140 yd [128 m]/100 g): #45c koi pond; 2 skeins, #33c red run, 1 skein.

Alchemy Lone Star (45% merino, 55% mohair; 140 yd [128 m]/100 g): #49c punky, 2 skeins; #62c resolution, 1 skein. Alchemy Pagoda (100% silk; 183 yd [167 m]/40 g): #69f Kai's goldfish, 2 skeins; #05f persimmon, 1 skein. Alchemy Promise (86% mohair, 14% nylon; 432 yd [395 m]/100 g): #44f cherry tart, 3 skeins.

Notions Strong piece of yarn in length desired for stringing pom-poms; pom-pom maker; tapestry needle; sharp scissors.

Garland

Make about 40 pom-poms following the instructions on the pom-pom maker, or following the instructions shown below.

String pom-poms: Thread stringing yarn on a tapestry needle yarn. Place first pom-pom 10" (25.5 cm) from beg of stringing yarn and secure by sewing through center of pom-pom, then up and back through the same spot again to make a loop that wraps around the center tie of pom-pom. Pull tightly to hide loop inside pom-pom. Thread through centers of 3 more pom-poms, then secure the next pom-pom with a back loop as before. Cont in this manner, securing every 4th pom-pom with a backward loop, and ending by securing the last pom-pom, and leaving 10" (25.5 cm) length of stringing yarn free to use for hanging. Rep for as many strands as desired. Tie strands tog to create longer garlands. ∞

KIM HAMLIN loves the holidays and the comfort of fun projects.



POM-POM PEN HOLDER AND BOOKMARK

Kristin Nicholas

Finished Size Pencil holder: 3½" (9 cm) diameter and 5" (12.5 cm) tall. Bookmark: 11" (28 cm) long and 1¼" (3.2 cm) wide.

Yarn Nashua Handknits Julia (50% wool, 25% kid mohair, 25% alpaca; 93 yd [85 m]/50 g): Pencil holder: #3961 lady's mantle (A) and #2983 magenta (B), 1 skein each; scraps of different colors for pom-poms. Bookmark: #3961 lady's mantle (A) and #6396 deep blue sea (B), 1 skein each; scraps of different colors for pom-poms. Yarn distributed by Westminster Fibers.

Needles Size 8 (5 mm). Adjust needle size if necessary to obtain the correct gauge.

Notions Tapestry needle; pom-pom maker (optional; available from Clover); 15-ounce tin can (emptied and washed) for pencil holder; glue gun and white craft glue for pencil holder.

Gauge 6 sts and 14 rows = 2" (5 cm) in garter st.

Pencil Holder

With A, CO 16 sts. Knit 1 row. Work stripe pattern as foll: Knit 2 rows with B, knit 2 rows with A. Rep these 4 rows until a total of 38 stripes have been worked, ending with 1 row of B. *Next row:* (second row of B) BO all sts.

Finishing

Weave in loose ends. With B threaded on a tapestry needle, sew CO edge to BO edge to form a tube. Using your finger, smear some white glue over the surface of the can. Slip the tube over the can, neaten around upper and lower edges, and work the stripes into straight vertical lines. **Pom-poms:** Make ten 1½" (3.8 cm) multicolored pom-poms (see below, or use the second-to-the-smallest pom-pom maker in the Clover set). Make some pom-poms with five colors and some with two colors. Using a glue gun, attach the pom-poms to the open edge of the can.

Bookmark

With A, CO 32 sts. Knit 1 row. Knit 2 rows with B, knit 2 rows with A, knit 2 rows with B, knit 1 row with A. *Next row:* With A, BO all sts—5 stripes total.

Finishing

Weave in loose ends. **Pom-poms:** Make three 1½" (3.8 cm) multicolored pom-poms. Using the ends of yarn used to tie the pom-poms, loosely tie the pom-poms through one end of the bookmark. Tie the pom-pom ties tog and trim the tails to your liking. ∞

KRISTIN NICHOLAS is a knitwear designer and author. Visit her website at www.kristinnicholas.com.

Pom-Pom Hints:

- * Make both solid and multi-colored pom-poms.
- * Use mohair to add structure.
- * Tie centers tightly.
- * Use yarns with different textures.
- * Mix full pom-poms with thin ones.
- * To save time, wrap with more than one strand of each color at a time.
- * Wrap finished strands around cardboard to store; it will help prevent them from tangling.

Making Your Pom-Pom

Cut two circles of cardboard, each ½" (1.3 cm) larger than desired finished pom-pom width. Cut a small circle out of the center and a small edge out of the side of each circle (Figure 1). Tie a strand of yarn between the circles, hold circles together and wrap with yarn—the more wraps, the thicker the pom-pom. Cut between the circles and knot the tie strand tightly (Figure 2). Place pom-pom between two smaller cardboard circles held together with a needle and trim the edges (Figure 3). This technique comes from *Nicky Epstein's Knitted Embellishments*, Interweave Press, 1999.



Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3



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