

Victorian



Feather Tree

Christmas trees were so popular in Germany in the 19th century that a law was passed forbidding families more than one tree in an effort to save the pine forests. Ever resourceful the Germans began making artificial trees from dyed ostrich feathers which became popular through the world and original trees are of increasing value today.



Requirements: Tacky glue

Green Chenille stick/ pipe cleaner

Bead

Toothpick

Green cotton

Step 1: Cut 3 pieces of chenille stick 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches, 3 pieces 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ inches and one piece $\frac{3}{4}$ inch. Trim the fluffiness back for a sparse Victorian look. (save the flock- it looks useful for moss)

Step 2: Trim the toothpick to approximately 2 inches and glue into the bead. Mark $\frac{1}{2}$ inch intervals above the bead.



Step 3: Fold the 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ inch pieces, 2 of the 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ inch pieces and the $\frac{3}{4}$ inch piece in the middle to the angles shown in the 2nd picture. The 3rd 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ inch piece can be folded at $\frac{3}{8}$ inches- the long leg will be the top of the tree.

Step 4: Tie a length of green cotton around the bottom $\frac{1}{2}$ inch mark leaving generous tails. Taking a 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ inch chenille stick piece, dab some tacky glue onto the outside of the bend and press against the bottom $\frac{1}{2}$ inch mark. Secure to the 'trunk' with a couple of wraps of cotton. Repeat with the 2nd and 3rd 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ pieces securing to the trunk and the other branches. Tie the cotton off and trim closely, hiding ends in glue.

Leave to dry and repeat with cotton and the two 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ inch chenille stick pieces on the middle mark.

Step 5: Tie your cotton to the top mark and take the last chenille stick piece. Dabbing glue on the outside edge of the long side glue to trunk so that the long side forms the top of the tree. Secure with cotton. Add final chenille stick piece ($\frac{3}{4}$ inch) the same way as the other branches.

Leave to dry, bend to shape and trim where necessary. Embellish!

To decorate with candles, cut all the chenille sticks $\frac{1}{2}$ inch longer to allow to for a $\frac{1}{4}$ inch bend on each branch to hold candles. 'Screw' a sequin onto the bent end and top with a $\frac{3}{8}$ inch piece of plastic hollow cotton bud stem and a twist of yellow cellophane.

Christine ~ Christmas 2011