

# Calm Country Christmas

by Fran Casselman

## Setting:

- #39011 Rustic Clapboard Siding Strips
- #7414 Cottage Plank Door
- #1073 Fred's Wood Weathering Stuff
- #71612 Decorative Strap Hinges
- #10970 Four Gunmetal Doorknobs with Escutcheons
- #7318 White Flagstone Tile Sheet

## Furnishings and décor:

- #76789 Elise Wing Chair
- #42365 Santa With Stripes Pillow
- #69231 Noel Card Holder Kit
- #5996 Cinnamon Teddy Bear
- #24061 Ishfaham Multicolor Rug
- #10294 Taylor Side Table
- #61508 White and Pink Amaryllis
- #3986 Ten Feet of Pine Roping
- #3987 Twelve Feet of Mini Holly Roping
- #16472 White Sisal Mini Wreath
- #8423 Right-Facing Lamb (Ivy)
- #49270 Country Christmas Tree With Skirt
- #78112 Galvanized Washtub
- #5546 Six Christmas Presents with Pom-Pom Bows
- #71011 Galvanized Tub
- #5385 Six Christmas Presents With Bows
- #9418 Set of Two Large Crates
- #77579 Rustic Washtub
- #5387 3-Pc. Gift Box Set



The white flagstone tile sheet was sponge painted in several mingled shades of dark gray. Once dry, white liquid shoe polish was daubed on directly from the bottle, allowed to set for a few seconds, and wiped away with a slightly damp paper towel so that the color remained in the grout lines with a light haze on some areas of the surface.

The door's custom interior framing was made from Super Jumbo Craft Sticks, cut to size. All wood elements in the scene were painted with Fred's Wood Weathering Stuff prior to assembly. (*Tip: paint both sides of the siding strips and place between paper towels, weighted with books, to dry.*) Some areas of the door and frame were sketched over with the side tip of a silver Sharpie to enhance the grain of the wood.

The gunmetal color of the door knob and escutcheon were changed with a gold Sharpie and textured with an Ultra Fine Point black Sharpie to get a better match for the hinges.

The hinges are not functional in this scene; they had to be broken apart and added separately to the door and frame for this look,

and the door no longer opens properly. (It could open if the hinges were on the other side of the door, so that it opened away from you, but they would still not be working hinges.) They would work properly on a door that is flush with its frame, not inset and not hinged by any other method.

The wreath and garland use baker's twine - a twisted red-and-white cord that is currently popular and widely available. The twine I used was very soft and easy to untwist, so I tied a knot in each end whenever I cut a length for use. I also slightly stiffened the twine with some very diluted glue so it would be easier to work with.

To make the wreath, carefully remove the red bow and gold cord that are glued on; you may have to cut them away. Any damaged area can become the back of the wreath. The sisal fibers will be crushed from packaging and shipping, but can be "fluffed" to a fuller appearance. Cut a length of twine 8"-12" or so and, leaving a "tail," wrap it around the wreath, gently fitting it between the fibers but not pulling too tightly. Make a bow, knot the ends and cut the twine to length. Add snippets from the holly and pine roping, and tiny berries or perhaps bead ornaments.

For the garland, determine the length you will need and add at least half-as-much more (making it 1 1/2 to 2 times the original measurement). Cut three lengths of roping – I used two lengths of pine and one length of holly, but you can use whichever you prefer. Twist the lengths together, not too tightly but so that they form one garland. Shape it for the place it will go, cutting to length if needed. Wrap with baker's twine (it may be easiest to start in the middle), adjusting until it looks the way you want it to. Secure the ends and trim, if necessary. My garland is hung from sequin pins stuck into the door frame.

## Treetop Star DIY

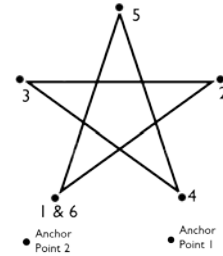
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### Items needed:

Fine hemp twine\* (about the thickness of embroidery floss, or finer)  
 Fine wire (about 32 gauge or a bit finer)  
 Utility scissors  
 Wood/bamboo skewer or dowel, a little thinner than a pencil  
 White glue or tacky glue with a fine-tip applicator (or toothpick) or gel-formula super glue  
 Strong pins, such as T-pins or quilting pins  
 Heavy-duty pinboard, such as a fairly thick piece of corkboard or acoustic ceiling tile  
 Small piece of wax paper  
 The template below

Not absolutely necessary but very helpful are: tweezers (such as #54400), needle-nose pliers, and a bit of hand lotion or similar, to help keep glue from sticking to the pins.

\*Use hemp twine for the country look seen here, or any other thread or cord that suits your décor



1. Put the template on the pinboard; put a piece of waxed paper over the template.
2. Put a pin securely into each of the star points, angled slightly outward.
3. Take a comfortable working length of twine, about 12" or so. Knot the ends to prevent unraveling and stiffen with very diluted glue if necessary.
4. Your anchor point 1 can be anywhere to the right and below star point 1; anchor point 2 can be anywhere below star point 6. Secure the twine's knot to anchor point 1.
5. Bring the twine over the point 1 pin, down and around it, then up to wrap around point 2. (After point 1, the twine is wrapped around the pins in a clockwise direction.)
6. Continue around the star, wrapping around the pins and moving to the next. Keep some tension on the twine. As you approach the last point, take the twine under the first loop you made. Anchor the twine with another knot and pin.
7. Use tweezers or a toothpick to make sure all the loops are pushed firmly down onto the pins. Apply glue to all the intersections and let dry.
8. While the glue dries, take a length of the wire and wrap it around the skewer to make a spring, about 1" long or whatever you will need for the tip of your tree. Leave another 1" or so straight at the end of the skewer. Bend a hook in the free end. "Unscrew" the wire from the skewer.
9. When the glue is dry, remove the pins and trim away the ends of the twine. Fit the hook in the wire over the lower center intersection of the star. Press with pliers and glue if necessary.
10. Twist the star's spring onto the tip of the tree.