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Jennifer Ackerman-Haywood | jennifer@craftsanity.com

Set of four Christmas Tree Cloth Napkins

I was inspired by Sue Elenbaas, 50, of Borculo, to go green this Christmas and skip the paper napkins. You can too. Just whip up some simple circular cloth napkins, then wow your guests by folding them into Christmas trees and drape them across each plate. (Warning: Don't get intimidated about the folding part. It's confusing at first, but you'll be very impressed with yourself once you master this fold. Stick with it and you'll be glad you did.)

Supplies:

- 1 yard green fabric
- 1 yard red fabric
- Matching thread
- 18" wide freezer paper*
- pins
- paper scissors
- fabric scissors, or rotary cutter and mat
- sewing machine
- iron
- pencil
- string
- scotch tape

*The freezer paper is an optional supply that will make your life easier. Trust me.



Step 1: Make a 17" circle template. Tie a piece of string to a pencil then cut the string 8.5 inches from the pencil. Place the freezer paper wax side down. Tape the end of the string 8.5 inches from the edge of a piece of freezer paper and draw a circle. Cut out the circle. (If you don't have freezer paper, make your circle template out of newspaper or cardboard.)

Step 2: Fold each one-yard piece of fabric in half, then in half again. (You will be cutting through four layers at one time.) Center the circle template wax side down on the folded fabric. Iron the freezer paper to the fabric. (If you're using a newspaper or cardboard template, skip the ironing.) Cut around the circle using a rotary cutter and cutting mat. (If you're planning to cut out the circles with scissors, pin the template to the fabric before you start cutting to make sure it doesn't slip out of place.)

Step 3: Pin a circle cut from each print together, right sides facing. Stitch around the edge with a 1/4-inch seam allowance, leaving about a 2 1/2 -inch gap for turning the napkin right side out. Make tiny cuts in the seam allowance about every inch, cutting vertically and stopping short of the seam. Turn right side out. Press with iron.

Step 4: Top stitch all the way around the very edge of each napkin, stitching the opening closed.

The easy part is over, now it's time to fold the napkins into Christmas trees.

Step 1: With the red side facing, fold the left edge of the circle toward the right edge, leaving about 1 1/2 inches of red fabric showing along the edge.

Step 2: Grab the left folded edge of the napkin about two-thirds the way up from the bottom and the right side about a quarter of the way up. (Grab at points marked by clothes pins in fig 2.) and fold the fabric above your hands under this tree shape. (See fig. 3)

Step 3: Flip napkin over. (fig. 4) and fold fabric back across tree shape as shown in fig. 5.

Step 4: Fold remaining fabric back across the tree to complete the fold as in fig. 6.

Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3



Figure 4



Figure 5



Figure 6

