

stuffed sewing stash pumpkins



By Leighann Lott



SIMPLE SEWING PROJECT: Stuffed Pumpkins

MATERIALS

- ▶ Fabric and ribbon scraps
- ▶ Needle and heavy-duty thread
- ▶ Polyester stuffing
- ▶ Wooden spools
- ▶ Permanent marker, paint or stain
- ▶ Silk or fabric leaves
- ▶ Floral wire
- ▶ Craft glue
- ▶ Tracing pen or pencil
- ▶ Buttons (optional)
- ▶ Rice or dried beans (optional)
- ▶ Embroidery thread (optional)

Lieghann Lott, our publications director, dreamed up these gorgeous stuffed pumpkins when brainstorming cover project ideas for an upcoming *Sew Beautiful* catalog. They're impressive to look at, easy to assemble and the possibilities for embellishment are endless. Each pumpkin has been dressed in detail using wooden spools, ribbon, miniature buttons and floral wire, while the largest pumpkin is machine embroidered with a design from *Mary's Graduation Dress Designs CD* (available at www.sewbeautifulmag.com). Set them on a table alone or group them together to create a stunning, sewing-inspired centerpiece for autumn.

more great ideas

- Use unconventional colors like moss green, off-white and autumn colors.
- Add a bit of texture to enhance your pumpkin sections by adding embroidery to your fabric before cutting your circles.
- Hand embroider a Jack-o-lantern face on one side.
- Apply beads for a touch of sparkle.
- Add small buttons at the end of the tendril for a touch of whimsy.
- Add a ribbon loop to make Halloween tree ornaments or tack them to a wreath for a door.

INSTRUCTIONS

Cut

Trace a circle onto fabric and cut. Varying circle size will give you different sized finished pumpkins.



Stitch

Fold fabric edge 1/4" and sew a running stitch using heavy-duty thread (just like a large yo-yo). Gently gather fabric as you stitch. You will create a loose ball with a hole in the center.



Stuff

Fill pumpkin shell with polyester stuffing. TIP: Adding rice or beans first will add weight to the bottom. Pull thread and gather fabric until opening is approximate diameter of wooden spool. Tie off thread.



Create Pumpkin Sections

Anchor thread or embroidery floss near opening and wrap thread around entire ball of fabric to opposite side of hole. Insert needle into fabric to anchor and pull thread slightly to form a groove in pumpkin. Take a couple of stitches to secure. Stitch through gathered edge to begin next section and repeat to form another groove. Repeat steps to form six or eight puffed sections. Tie off thread.



Stem

Paint or stain wooden spool(s). Wrap spool using ribbon scraps and put a small amount of glue on end to secure. TIP: Glue buttons to spool top to decorate. Glue two spools together to make a longer stem if desired.



Ribbon Stem Cap

Cut a length of ribbon the same diameter as fabric circle used to make pumpkin body. Sew a running stitch along one long edge of ribbon. Gather gently as you stitch. When you reach opposite end of ribbon, pull thread to form a ruffled circle of ribbon that will fit closely around stem. Keeping center opening the size needed to fit over spool, put right sides of ribbon ends together

and continue running stitch along short edge to join ribbon ends together. Tie off thread.



Assemble

Position stem cap over opening in pumpkin. Insert stem through stem cap into opening. If opening is too large and loose, make a couple of stitches and pull to cinch in opening snugly to stem.



Finishing Touches

Glue silk or fabric leaves in place around spool stem. Curl varying lengths of floral wire around pencil to resemble tendrils of a pumpkin. Place in opening between leaves and spool stem. If necessary, secure with glue. —SB

