
Winter Garland with Studio Choo

Chapter 1 - Introduction

Overview

(upbeat jingle) - I'm Alethea Harnampolis. - And I'm Jill Rizzo. - [Alethea] And we're Studio Choo. - [Jill] Alethea and I have been doing flowers together for almost 10 years now. - We've written a book together called The Flower Recipe Book, and we've also been in several publications, Martha Stewart Weddings, Oprah, Real Simple, Food & Wine. - We also used to write a flower and gardening column for Design Sponge. We've developed sort of a formula for creating our natural wild looking arrangement. - I'm gonna show you how to make a garland using seasonal greenery with a branch as the base. This technique will ensure that the garland will remain securely and will give a more wild and unusual look. (upbeat jingle)

Chapter 2 - Materials

Materials

- This guideline is a little bit more unusual as we're using a branch as the base. I have chosen this branch here for its shape and different kinds of liken that go along the stick. I'm gonna be using a few different types of seasonal greenery. This is Wax Flower which has pretty little white flowers on it and it dries pretty much exactly the same as it looks now. And Seedy Eucalyptus. We've taken off all the leaves from the stems and we're just using the seeds. And then we're going to be using some Gardenias. I have chosen this flower because they smell really amazing and it's a non traditional flower to put on a winter garland. And over here, we have some boxwood which has really beautiful variegated leaves. And cedar which has long fronds. These items can be purchased from a flower market or farmer's market or you can harvest them from the side of the road or from your garden. For our tools, we're gonna be using some heavy gauge cutters, small floral snips, 26 gauge paddle wire which is my favorite, and some medium gauge long floral wire.

Chapter 3 - Create Garland

Prep greenery

- When I'm making garlands, I like to have all of my materials prepared so I'm gonna start by cutting apart some of the branches from this bigger branch so that I can wind the greenery all the way down the branch and have a nice, clean surface for it to be on. Next, I'm going to cut apart some of my greenery so that it's really easy to use while I'm making the garland. Using our sectional cutting technique, I'm gonna be cutting apart some of these smaller fronds from this bigger branch. So you can just cut these little twigs off and put them in a little pile next to you so that you can pull from those piles when you're making. I cut a few different lengths so that when you're making it you have a few different things to choose from. Now I'm going to be cutting apart that seeded eucalyptus, which often gets really tangled. So using the same process, I'm gonna cut these little pieces off this bigger branch. And as you can see that I'm cutting, I'm leaving a few long and a few short. (scissors snipping) Now I'm gonna cut apart some of the cedar, and I'm gonna cut off this shorter piece and leave this long piece. And I'll probably cut two pieces of cedar apart. You can also cut apart one branch by using the tip and then the base as two separate pieces, so I'm gonna make a cut here and use this one branch as two parts. And the last greenery I'm going to be using is the boxwood. And you can see that on this branch some of the greenery has already dried, so I probably won't be

using a lot of this actual branch. I might just take this front little tip here, and throw away the rest, and grab another piece to cut from. So I'm still using that same technique and I'm gonna cut off this bottom piece and maybe some shorter pieces from the middle. (plants snapping) This is the last piece of boxwood that I'll cut apart and now I have all the parts that I need to make my garland so I'm going to start.

Assemble garland

- To make this garland, I'm going to be taking individual pieces from each of these piles to make our greenery base which we call packets. To start I'm going to be taking a few pieces of each of these different types of greenery and laying them on top of each other to create my packets. And it really doesn't matter what order you go in or what kind of ingredient is in each packet. It can be totally what you like. And I usually use about three to four pieces per packet. And I'm going to cut off this long stem at the bottom because I know that it's going to get in my way as I'm working down the garland. I'm going to take the paddle wire and wrap it around the first packet so it gets all the different layers of greenery together and scoops them all up. Then I twist the wire around the packet securely, probably two or three times. I'm going to start by laying this first packet that I have on top of the branch and I'm going to start at the top of the branch and work my way down so that each packet lays on top of the previous packet. And I'm just taking the paddle wire and going around the branch and the packet three times until it feels like it's secure on there. And then I just put my wire to the side and make sure not to cut it because you're going to keep going with the wire down the whole branch. Next I'm going to take a big piece of cedar and some seeded eucalyptus and another piece of boxwood and I'm going to cut these long ends off. And I'm going to lay this next packet on top of the previous one and I'm going to turn this one a little bit to the side to vary the direction of the greenery on the branch. And you're taking your paddle wire and you're just wrapping it around this next packet. You have to hold it on with your thumb as you wrap with your other hand. You can just keep wrapping down the length of the packet that you're working with. I'm continuing with the ingredients, just using whatever I feel like. And I'm going to keep cutting the ends off this. So I'm leaving about one or two inches at the bottom and I'm turning each packet a different direction as I add it on. And as I go I'm making sure that I'm getting the ends wired to the branch really securely. I pull the wire as I wrap so it tightens down. This piece of cedar is a little bit long so I've decided that I want to use it in a shorter way for this piece. So I'm going to cut off just this bottom piece and maybe this next piece as well. Sometimes branches have a lot of little bits on them that I don't always want to use so you can pull off smaller pieces and just leave a few little twigs on the branch to make it less bunchy. To finish making the greenery base on the garland, we make our last packet by turning it in the opposite direction of the ones that we've been previously doing. This will create a seamless look for your garland making the greenery look like it's spanning the length of the whole garland without any ends showing. So I'm just cutting a few little pieces to make that last packet. And I'm turning it in the opposite direction and I'm going to place it on. And you can pull some of the greenery from the previous packet to hide the cut ends like so. So I'm going to unwrap a little bit of the wire so that I can cut a length of it to finish, and I just take that piece and I wrap it around and I flip the garland over and just tuck it underneath. And now that the greenery layer is done, I'm going to clear off my table, and we're going to get ready to start using some of the focal flowers.

Add finishing touches

- We're going to be using some focal flowers on this branch to give it a little bit more of an unusual look. And I've chosen gardenias which have a really amazing smell and they come on these little silk leaves to protect the flower. These flowers are really delicate and when you touch them, they bruise really easily. So I'm going to take a chance and remove this silk base so we can just use the flower on its own. And you can do that by just pulling it off. It's just on there really loosely and you can see that it's just a little circle that it fits into. To wire these I'm going to be using some floral wire and I've chose a medium gauge and I'm going to be cutting down the wire because in this size, it's way too long for this size flower. So I'm going to cut it down to probably about six to eight inches, or you can just cut the wire in half which is fine too. And I'm just going to stick it through the stem of the gardenia and just be careful when you do it. Try not to touch the petals too much because they do bruise so easily. Now the stem is about halfway in between the wire and I'm going to turn the gardenia face side up and bend the wire down the stem. So it kind of forms a triangle shape. And I'm going to place this gardenia on the branch right around where I finished the two packets, one packet's facing this way and the other is facing the other way. So I'm going to put this gardenia right in between those two last packets. Pull the wires down around the bottom of the branch and I'm going to twist the bottom pieces of the wire together so that the flower stays in place. And then with my two ends, I'm just going to tuck them up and push them into the underneath. So the flower sits in that spot where I wanted it. Now I'm going to take the second gardenia and do the same thing of taking off the silk base and taking a piece of floral wire. Cut it in half again. And do the same thing that you did with the previous flower. Pushing the wire through the stem about halfway through and then bending the wire down so it forms the triangle shape. I'm going to place this flower close to the other one to form a clustered dense look. So I'm doing the same thing of wrapping the wires underneath. And I'm doing this by feel so that I don't have to turn the branch upside down again and damage these delicate flowers on top. So I'm just twisting and then tucking in and it doesn't really matter if it's perfect 'cause no one's going to see it anyway. Instead of using gardenias as focal flowers, you can also use succulents or roses or ranunculus as well. Because of the sturdy construction of this garland on the branch, you can hang it which will really showcase all the weird pieces of lichen that hang off of it. Or you can lay it on a tabletop and add an additional garland as well. And continue making them down the whole way of your table. Or you can make a smaller version for a more sweet and delicate look.