

Rolf Dietz
CHENILLE STARS LIKE SNOW CRYSTALS

Crafting book for stars using chenille, wire, pipe cleaners, and straw using the crown mold.

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PREFACE (Page 2)

Snow flakes and ice crystals have always been symbols of winter and the Christmas season. The beauty of them can only be seen under a microscope. Snow crystals usually show a 6-pointed structure under the microscope. That structure inspired the idea of a crown mold for 6-pointed

pointed star made out of straw, or gold and silver wire. We've used the crown mold to copy nature's snow stars with straw. The 6-pointed structure usually does not give a large variety when it comes to stars. We have overcome this problem by using various sizes, additions, and embellishments with pearls for example. Just take a look at the punch out patterns at the back of our book to get some feel for what is possible.

Wire stars can be made without binding thread by just twisting the wires. Therefore it is even easier to make stars from wire than straw. We will describe in detail, step-by-step, the needed techniques in this book and starting with easy and ending with more difficult stars. This makes this craft suitable for children. You can create little artworks with a little bit of practice.

Enjoy this new hobby!

NEEDED UTENSILS (Page3)

- Original Dietz Crown molds with clamps to keep parts in place. Especially suited are the 12-segmented crown molds, but even the 8-segmented crown molds are usable. The 8-segmented crown molds have lines imbedded so you do not need the punch-out patterns. The Universal and 12-segment molds have a few imbedded lines so you do not need patterns once you are used to them.
- Punch-out patterns can be found on the end of this book.
- A short strong pair of scissors for trimming the wire on the stars, though a pair of snips may be better. Also, a pair of pliers for twisting the wires will help.

SUITABLE MATERIALS (Page 3)

- Soft wire, like for jewelry etc.
- Tinsel wire
- Chenille wire
- Pipe cleaners

Ideal is a strong wire that is still easy bendable. Craft or mail-order companies usually carry them. Look for chenille; pipe cleaners in various colors; and tinsel in gold, silver, or metallic. Even plain jewelry wire in gold or silver is usable.

Some come in various thickness, some are plushy soft, and others are metal hard. Every material has its unique character. You should use thicker material for larger stars for hanging in the window. You will need about 24 to 40 per star and more for 8-pointed and double stars.

SUGGESTIONS FOR WORKING WITH CHILDREN (Page 4)

- At the beginning use only the small crown mold.
- Soft chenille wires are best for smaller children.
- Begin with easy stars and practice the twisting. Twist the lower wire up and the upper wire down.
- Practice the trimming of the wires. Children have the tendency to use the tip of the scissors. It is easier to use the back end of the scissors to cut.
- Follow the step-by-step instructions and the tips from the first couple of pages in this book.
- The eyesight for symmetry may take some time to develop. Pay attention when it comes to length at cross sections.

USE OF THE INCLUDED PUNCH-OUT-PATTERNS (Page 4)

Remove the punch-out-patterns from the end of this book and place into the corresponding molds as needed. Removing them may be a little hard at times. Place the crown mold upside onto a table, and carefully push with the tip of your scissors.

SIMPLE TINSEL STARS AND SNOW CRYSTALS (Page 5)

6-POINTED CRYSTAL (Star 1)

Follow the pictures on page 5.

This simple star looks very close to the structure of a real snow crystal. Using longer crosspieces and adding branches can easily extend it.

Measurements in brackets are for the larger crown mold.

You will need:

- Small (or large) 12-segment crown mold.
- Punch-out-pattern 1 small (or large)
- 6 sidepieces of tinsel 2 $\frac{3}{4}$ " (4")
- 3 crosspieces of tinsel 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ " (4 $\frac{1}{2}$ ")

Instructions:

1. Place the punch-out-pattern 1 into the corresponding crown mold.
2. Place the 3 crosspieces over the lines crossing the center.
3. Add the 6 sidepieces onto the other lines.
4. Press down with your fingers and add the clamp.
5. Place the clamp loosely so you can adjust the placement of the tinsels. It is very important to perfectly adjust the tinsel ends, or the star will not turn out well.
6. Twist 3 wire ends at once. It is important to hold the clamp tightly at the twisting intersection. Twist 3 half turns to fix the pieces into place. The upper tinsel piece has to be twisted down, while the lower one has to be twisted up. Therefore you either need to twist clock or counter clockwise.
7. Perform the twisting at all 6 intersections. Now straighten all tinsel ends, by straightening and bending into equal looking angles.
8. Now remove the clamp and take the star out of the mold. Irregular lengths can be trimmed with a pair of scissors.

6-POINTED CRYSTAL (Star 2)

Follow the pictures on page 8.

This simple star also looks similar to the structure of a real ice or snow crystal. Using longer crosspieces can also easily extend it.

You will need:

- Small (or large) 12-segment crown mold.
- Punch-out-pattern 2 small (or large)
- 6 sidepieces of tinsel 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ " (3")
- 3 crosspieces of tinsel 3 $\frac{3}{4}$ " (4 $\frac{1}{2}$ ")

Instructions:

1. Place the punch-out-pattern 2 into the corresponding crown mold.
2. Place the 3 crosspieces over the lines crossing the center.
3. Add the 6 sidepieces onto the other lines.
4. Press down with your fingers and add the clamp.
5. Place the clamp loosely so you can adjust the placement of the tinsels. It is very important to perfectly adjust the tinsel ends, or the star will not turn out well.
6. Twist 3 wire ends at once. It is important to hold the clamp tightly at the twisting intersection. Twist 3 half turns to fix the pieces into place. The upper tinsel piece has to be twisted down, while the lower one has to be twisted up. Therefore you either need to twist clockwise or counter clockwise.
7. Perform the twisting at all 6 intersections. Now straighten all tinsel ends, by straightening and bending into equal looking angles.
8. Now remove the clamp and take the star out of the mold. Irregular lengths can be trimmed with a pair of scissors.

ENHANCING THE SIMPLE STARS (Page 10)

Branching (Page 10)

We can now go ahead and enhance our simple stars after practicing to the point of perfect symmetry. One simple way is to add branches. It is still important to keep a symmetric look by keeping the distances equal. This is a fundamental rule that may need some practice.

You will need:

- Star 1 or 2 from either the small or large crown mold with longer crosspieces.
- 6 short branch pieces each about 1 ½" long.

Instructions:

1. Bend all small branch pieces in the middle to form a V.
2. Press the V to a very sharp point.
3. Now slide each branch about ¼ inch onto a cross member of the finished star. Once in place simply clamp the cross member in to the V.
4. Now flip the upstanding arms of the V to the opposite sites, so the loop will hold the branch in place. Pull tightly to make sure that the branch won't move. A flat pair of pliers may be helpful to lock the piece into place. Twisting the arms of the V may be an alternative.
5. Press the arms into the correct angle. They can later be trimmed for equal length. Note: The more precise you work the better the star will look.
6. You can add more branches to the existing branches, if you leave them long enough. This technique can also be used with the 8-pointed stars.

Closed tips (Page 12)

You will need:

- Small (or large) 12-point crown mold
- Pattern 2 small (large)
- 6 sidepieces 2 ¾" (4")
- 3 crosspieces 6"

Instructions:

1. Place the sidepieces.
2. Add the 3 crosspieces and place clamp loosely on top.
3. Important: Adjust all tinsel end to equal lengths.
4. Now twist all intersections, just like on star 2. Two half twists are enough, since there will be additional twists later on.
5. Next you have to straighten out the tinsel pieces. All crosspieces must be straight, and the sidepieces have to cross each other forming a perfect triangle.
6. Now press and twist the sidepiece end, just as shown in the picture with 3 half twists.
7. Trim and straighten all pieces.
8. Picture 8 shows three twisted crosspieces forming closed tips.

You can use the same technique with pattern 1, with the exception that the sidepieces are not crossing each other. You will have to push and twist them together.

STAR 1 USING THE 8-SEGMENTED CROWN MOLD (Page 14)

You will need:

- Small (or large) 8-segmented crown mold
- 8 sidepieces 3 1/4" (4")
- 4 crosspieces 4" (6")

Instructions:

1. Place the 8 sidepieces onto the thick lines, as shown in the picture.
2. Place the 4 crosspieces over it, and place the clamp on top.
3. Twist and adjust the star as usual.

The bottom two pictures show the star with and without branches.

STAR 2 USING THE 8-SEGMENTED CROWN MOLD (Page 15)

You will need:

- Small (or large) 8-segmented crown mold
- 8 sidepieces 3 3/4" (4")
- 4 crosspieces 6"

Instructions:

1. Place the 8 sidepieces onto the thin lines, as shown in the picture.
2. Place the 4 crosspieces over it, and place the clamp on top.
3. Twist, adjust, and trim the star as usual.
4. An additional way of enhancing the star is using loops. Bend the end over a dowel or pencil to form a small loop. Once done simply bend a little bit back to make a perfect loop.

SIMPLE STARS WITH OFFSET CROSSPIECES (Page 16)

You will need:

- Small (or large) 12-segmented crown mold
- Pattern 4a (and later 4b for pictures 4 and 5)
- 8 sidepieces 4" (4 3/4")

- 4 crosspieces 4" (5 ¼")

Instructions:

1. Place the pattern into the crown mold and place all sidepieces onto the black lines.
2. Add the clamp and twist all intersections with two half turns. Remove the clamp and straighten all tinsel pieces.
3. Place the crosspiece over the red lines, add clamp, and straighten all pieces.
4. Bend all sidepieces tightly along the outside of the crown mold, until they overlap the crosspieces. Always keep one sidepiece above and one below the crosspiece for easy twisting. See picture 3.
Tip: You can also form perfect triangles for a slight different look.
5. Next twist all intersections with 3 half turns. At this point you could build additional triangles by using longer crosspieces.

Use the same technique for pattern 4B.

SIMPLE 6- AND 8-POINTED STARS WITHOUT CROSSPIECES (Page 18)

You will need:

- Small (or large) 12-segmented crown mold.
- Use Pattern 3a or 3b for small or large crown molds.
- Use 6 or 8 sidepieces 4" to 6" long.

Instructions:

1. Place the 6 or 8 sidepieces onto the black lines. Use the thick embedded lines on the 8-segmented crown mold. (Ignore the dashed lines on pattern 3b).
2. Add the clamp and adjust all pieces to equal lengths.
3. Twist all intersections with two half turns.
4. Straighten all tinsel pieces for a second twisting. Bend the sidepieces apart until they cross with another sidepiece. Cross about ½" and twist 3 half turns.
Important: Make sure to form equal triangles. All 6- or 8-pointed stars should have perfect looking triangles. This may take some practice.

Tip: Twist one or two more turns on triangles that are too large. The excess can be trimmed off.

Tip: More triangles can be added with longer tinsel stems. You can make larger or smaller triangles as an alternative.

DOUBLE STARS WITH OFFSET (Page 20)

You will need:

- Small (or large) 12-segmented crown mold.
- Pattern 5 for small or large crown molds.
- 6 sidepieces 2 ¾" (4")
- 6 sidepieces 3 ¼" (4 ½")
- 3 cross pieces 5 ¼" (6")

Instructions:

1. Place the first set of sidepieces onto the thick black lines.
2. Add the crosspieces over the center.
3. Place the second set of sidepiece over the red lines.

4. Add clamp and straighten as usual.
5. Twist the intersection 3 half turns.
6. Straighten all pieces, build tips, and twist.
7. Add branches as you like, and trim everything equally.
8. Add pearls for decoration.

You can make the same stars in the 8-segmented or universal crown mold. You can create wonderful crystal stars as long as you keep the symmetry.

DOUBLE PARALLEL STARS (Page 22)

You will need:

- Small (or large) 12-segmented crown mold.
- Pattern 6 for small or large crown molds.
- 6 sidepieces 3 1/4"(4")
- 6 sidepieces 4" (5 1/2")
- 3 cross pieces 4" (6-6 1/4")

Instructions:

1. Place the first set of sidepieces onto the thin black lines.
2. Add the crosspieces over the center.
3. Add clamp, adjust, and twist.
4. Remove clamp, but leave star in crown mold.
5. Place the second set of sidepiece over the red lines. Photo shows the second set of sidepieces in blue.
6. Add clamp, straighten, and twist further out.
7. Straighten and trim.
8. Add branches or pearls for decoration.

This star looks even good in the small 8-segment crown mold. You can use longer pieces to build tips.

Use longer crosspieces (8") and build a star large enough for the window.

12-POINTED STAR WITH CROSSPIECES AND WRAPPED WITH WIRE (Page 24)

You will need:

- Large 12-segmented crown mold.
- Pattern 7.
- 12 sidepieces 2 3/4"
- 6 crosspieces 4 3/4"

Instructions:

1. Place all sidepieces onto the black lines, and keep a finger on top.
2. Add the crosspieces over the center, and add clamp.
3. Straighten out.
4. Wrap each intersection 3 times with wire.
5. Remove star from crown mold and trim.
6. Decorate for cute looks.

You can twist the ends instead of using wire, if you use 3 1/4" sidepieces. You can leave out the crosspieces for a different kind of look.

12-POINTED STAR WITHOUT CROSSPIECES (Page 25)

You will need:

- Small 12-segmented crown mold.
- Pattern 8.
- 12 sidepieces 4" or longer

Instructions:

1. Place all sidepieces onto the black lines.
2. Add clamp, and twist twice at each intersection.
3. Straighten out, and build 12 triangles with an overlap of 1/4".
4. Hold the cross-section tight and twist 3 half turns.
5. Remove star from crown mold and trim.

You can use the red lines for a similar star.

WINDOW STAR - WHITE (Page 26)

You will need:

- Large 12-segmented crown mold or Universal Mold.
- Chenille, white
- 6 sidepieces 8"
- 3 crosspieces 10"
- Pattern 2

Instructions:

1. Place all cross and sidepieces onto the pattern's lines.
2. Add clamp, adjust, and twist at each intersection.
3. Build tips and twist.
4. Add branches.

You can make double stars or use the 8-segmented crown mold instead.

LARGE WINDOW STAR (Page 27)

You will need:

- Universal Mold with clamp.
- 6 sidepieces 5"
- 6 sidepieces 6 1/4"
- 3 crosspieces 12"
- Parts for branches: 6 x 2 3/4", and 6 x 2 1/2"

Instructions:

1. Place all crosspieces onto universal mold for orientation.

2. Add the first set of sidepieces from crosspiece intersection to crosspiece intersection.
3. Add the second set of sidepieces from one crosspiece intersection to every other crosspiece intersection.
4. Add clamp, adjust, and twist at each intersection.
5. Straighten all pieces, add branches, and trim.

SHOOTING STAR (BETHLEHEM STAR) (Page 28)

You will need:

- 8- or 12-segment crown mold
- Long pieces of tinsel

Instructions:

1. Create Star 2 in the large 12-segment crown mold.
2. The crosspieces don't have to be perfect; they can be trimmed, bent over, or decorated with beads.
3. Draw yourself a pattern for the tail of the star.
4. Slide a long piece of tinsel into the star as shown on picture 2. Weave it into place over the crosspiece by going over and under.
5. Add another one using the crosspiece next to the first one. Twist a little to keep in place.
6. Extend a little bit over the end of the star and bend over.
7. Bend the long pieces into shape according to your pattern. Twist wire pieces across each other.
8. Add the center tailpiece, bend into shape, and twist where needed.
9. Straighten all pieces and decorate with beads.

6-POINTED STRAW STARS LIKE SNOW CRYSTALS (Page 30)

You will find detailed step-by-step instructions for straw stars in our other books. The other books will include binding instructions for straw using a special binding thread. The following 6-pointed star is made using wire or tinsel.

You will need:

- Straw; natural or colored
- 12-segment crown mold with pattern 1
- Wire or tinsel (10" for the small crown mold, and 14" for the large one)

Instructions:

1. Flatten the straw by pressing them down with your thumb. A more elegant method is to soak the straw in warm water for about 30 minutes, and then ironing them flat with a household iron. You can also use the 3-segment splitter.
2. Cut the straw into half or leave them longer.
3. Place 3 cross and 6 side pieces according to the pattern, and keep in place the clamp.
4. Wrap wire or tinsel once or twice around each cross section. Shown in picture 1.
5. Remove the clamp; take the star out of the crown mold, and trim.
6. Add a little bit of glue to the back if the straws are too loose.
7. You can enlarge the star into a double star by adding more cross pieces, as shown in picture 3.

8. Wrap these sidepieces to the existing crosspieces, keeping the wire behind the star. You can also use small wire pieces instead.
9. You will need to add more straw to create the triple star. See picture 5 for placement.

Tip: You can use the patterns 7 and 8 to create 12-segmented stars. Use the 4- or 6-segmented splitter in this case. Detailed instructions can be found in book 1.

Chenille Stars and Flowers (Page 32)

Stars made with silver tinsel and white pipe cleaners look the closest to the real snow star. Silver for ice crystals, and white for snow flakes. Gold and metallic colored tinsel produces a nice variety of stars, which can be match existing décor. The pictures on page 32 show colored chenille. The resemblance with flowers is suitable for Easter or Spring decorations. They are created just like the tinsel stars.