

Diwali Door Decor

Make a grand entrance with festive and traditional décor from India

(art + social studies)

Diwali, or Deepvali, is an official holiday in many countries and celebrated across the globe. It began in ancient India as a harvest celebration and Hindu holy festival, marking the start of a new year. Rituals, customs, and spiritual significance vary from region to region, but the basis of Diwali is a celebration of light over darkness, good over evil, and knowledge over ignorance. Families gather for feasts, gifts are given, and millions of lights are displayed while fireworks illuminate the skies.

A Hindu tradition for Diwali, weddings, and any celebration is a “Toran” or “Bandanwar” decorative door hanging. These are garlands or valances that are displayed over doorways and windows to welcome guests with a bright and beautiful entryway. Toran are made with a variety of materials: some are made with fresh flowers and mango leaves to add a delightful scent, some are decorated with small mirrors to reflect the candles and lights used during Diwali. Other materials include beads, bells, macramé, and embroidery.

Materials (required)

Twisteez, 30" coated wires, pack of 50 (33407-1050); need one per student

Felt Swatches, 9" x 12", Red (63201-3003); share one between two students

Snippy Scissors, sharp (57040-2005); need one pair per student

Blunt Tapestry Needle #13, 12-pack (65104-1009); need one per student

Elmer's Glue-All, 4 oz (23886-1004); share one between two students

Prang Classic Markers, set of 8 (21267-1089); share one set among three students



Materials (optional)

Roylco Felt Shapes, package of 500 (65308-1500); share one across class

Hygloss Metallic Foil Paper package of 24, assorted, 8-1/2" x 10" (11205-1002); share one across class

Artstraws, box of 1800 white (60903-1004); share one across class

Wooden Barrel Beads, package of 100 (60702-1000); share one among 10 students

Pony Beads, package of 1000 multicolor (60772-1030); share one across class

Creativity Street Craft Stems, 12" Tinsel, package of 100 (60923-0009)

Creativity Street Acrylic Gems, 1 lb assortment (60722-0001)

Creativity Street Sequin Mix, 9 oz (60718-1002)

Smart-Fab Fabric, package of 45, 12" x 18" (62130-1006)

Hygloss Book Rings, silver tone, 1", package of 50 (64203-1001)

Creativity Street Embroidery Floss Set, 24 skeins (63100-1009)

Creativity Street Glitter Poms, package of 80, 1/2" Dia (61750-1005)

Elmer's Glitter Glue, assorted colors, 6 oz (65304-)

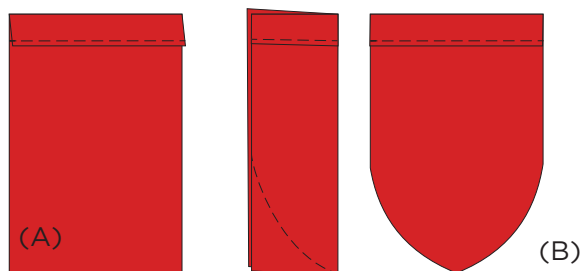


For this project, each student creates a Toran garland that can enhance a window or doorway. Garlands can also be strung together to create Toran that stretch across a room or hallway for the enjoyment of all who pass beneath.

GRADES K-8 Note: Instructions and materials are based upon a class size of 24 students. Adjust as needed.

Preparation

1. Cut felt swatches in half, into 6" x 9" pieces. Each piece will need a pocket formed on one end so it can be strung onto the garland. Fold the short side over approximately 1", and secure it along the edge by gluing, stitching, or stapling (A).



Traditionally, these panels mimic the shape of mango leaves. Examples are often shown with a point on one end. To create perfectly symmetrical points, fold the panel in half vertically and cut a straight or curving line from the folded edge about halfway up (B).

Process

1. Design felt panels with a variety of materials. Felt shapes are easy to cut and glue. Add sparkle with glitter glue, sequin shapes, and acrylic gemstones. Foil paper can be cut into shapes to mimic mirrors or gilding. Details can be added with marker or, for older students, embroidery. Traditional Toran sometimes include images of peacocks, tigers or elephants, flowers, or religious images and symbols. Often a tassel, pom pom, or bell is attached at the lower point.
2. Provide each student with a plastic-coated wire. Twist one end to form a loop, wrapping the end of the wire around itself to secure the loop. Thread the other end of the wire through the eye of a blunt plastic needle and wrap it back around itself to hold the needle in place temporarily.
3. Thread items onto the needle, aiming for symmetry on the wire and for the panel to be centered. Ideas for stringing:
 - straws, cut into small lengths
 - beads with large openings
 - small bells
 - tassles
 - shapes created with craft stems
 - natural materials, such as leaves and flowers
 - artificial or paper flowers
 - fabric flowers (see below for instructions)
4. Once the wire is strung, remove the needle and form a loop in the end of the wire, wrapping it securely.
5. Hang above a doorway or window by positioning adhesive mini hooks in the loops on either end of the wire. Or, connect Toran together by joining the wire loops with a book ring to make room-size garlands.

Easy fabric flowers (we recommend using Smart Fab)

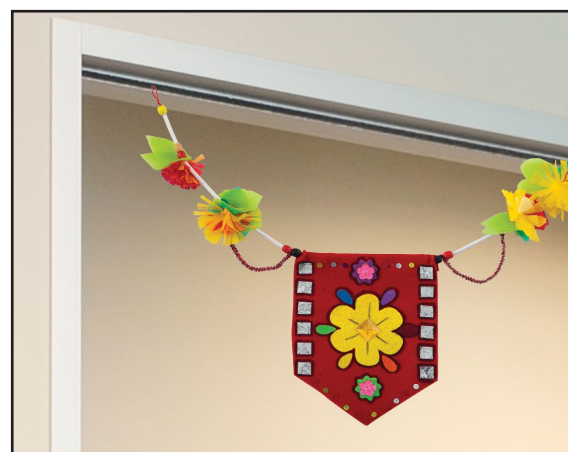
Fabric within the ranges of yellow, orange, and red will mimic the colors of marigolds, an important flower in India that is often used in making garlands and for weddings.



Step 1: Design a felt panel using a variety of materials.



Step 2: Twist a loop in the end of a plastic-coated wire and thread items to create a symmetrical garland.

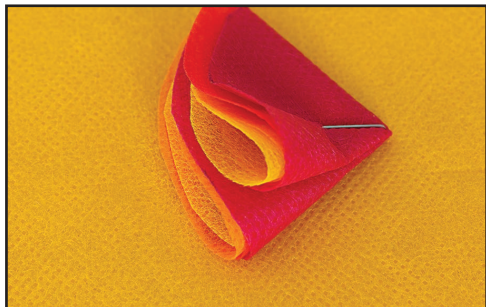


Step 3: Hang above a doorway or over a window. Connect Toran for a room display.

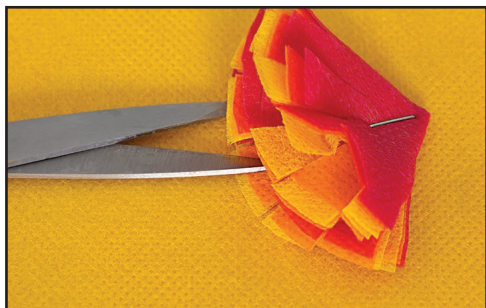
Easy fabric flowers (continued)



Step 1: Cut a circle template from cardboard, 2" to 3" in diameter and cut 3-4 fabric circles. Fold or layer fabric to make multiple circles at once. Stack circles together.



Step 2: Fold stack in half, then in half again and staple together at the pointed end.



Step 3: Use small, sharp scissors to cut small lines from the rounded edge towards the staple.



Step 4: Unfold and separate circles and "petals" as much as possible.

National Core Arts Standards - Visual Arts

Creating

Anchor Standard 1: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.

Connecting

Anchor Standard 10: Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make art.