

CHERRY BLOSSOM BRANCH

Materials Needed:

- 18 gauge Kraft paper covered floral wire
- 20 gauge white cloth covered floral wire
- 180 g Italian crepe paper (white, blush pink, brown)
- 160 g German crepe paper (green)
- tacky glue
- scissors
- turmeric
- templates

Part 1 -- Flower Centers:

1. Your branch will have 10 individual cherry blossoms.
2. Gather your 10 small white rectangular pieces of crepe paper. As finely as possible, fringe each white piece of crepe paper three quarters of the way down. When complete, twist your fringe.
3. To color the ends of your stamens to resemble pollen, pour a small pool of glue that you can dip your stamen tops in then dip into the turmeric. Set aside to dry.
4. Once your stamens are dry, gather your 10 pieces of white floral wire. Dot a line of glue along the base of your fringe and wrap around your piece of floral wire. You will want to line the start of where your fringe begins to the top of the wire. As you're wrapping, ensure that the bottom edge of the fringe continues to line up with the previous layer. This base will be where your petals will sit. Also, make sure that you are not stretching the fringe, only slightly pulling it as necessary to attach it. We want to provide as sturdy a base as possible for your petals. Pinch the fringe for 10-15 seconds to ensure that the glue is fully setting.
5. Set aside your fringed centers to dry.

Part 2 -- Flower Petals:

1. Use your petal templates to cut 5 petals for each of your 10 individual flowers.

I suggest you cut 5 petals at a time.

'Batch cutting' is a lifesaver in terms of how much time it can save you rather than cutting one petal individually. To batch cut, you will fold your paper strip like an accordian into 5 sections then line up your template to cut.

2. After you've cut all of your petals, you will shape your petals. You will lightly cup each petal in the center. Make sure to remember that once you stretch your petal, you cannot return to the original shape or size. To shape your petal, you will use your thumbs and forefingers to gently cup the center. To save on time, once you cut your 5 petals, you can gently cup the 5 petals stacked together. For all of your petals, you will dab tacky glue at the petal base and adhere to the center with the bottom level of the petals lining up with the bottom edge of your fringed center.

With cherry blossoms, think of a star's five points. Your first four petals will have a slight overlap over the previous petal with your final petal's right edge tucking into the center and the first petal. When looking from above, it should look like your bloom is swirled like a snail shell. You will pinch all of your petals at the base once you're finished so that the glue sets and your petals stay in place.

The final trick here is to then hold the bases of your petals together tightly. Open up the petals slowly. You will keep holding the base so they don't slip. By opening up the petals now, it ensures against the unfortunate surprise of having them be un-even once they're dry.

Part 3 – Branch, Buds, Sepals & Leaves:

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1. Main branch: Take a piece of your brown crepe paper. Dot glue down the entire length of the strip of paper. You will use the brown paper like floral tape and cover the entirety of your piece of brown paper wire.
2. Buds: Grab 3 pieces of white wire, 3 strips of pink crepe paper and 3 strips of green paper. Take a strip of your pink paper and dot glue down it. What you want to do is wrap tightly around the end of your wire, aiming to create a q-tip like shape. You don't have to use the entire strip of pink, just enough that you're creating a small bulb at the end. Then, take your green strip and wrap tightly so that only a small amount of pink peeks out, giving the illusion of a bud. You will do this 3 times.
3. Sepals: You will have one sepal for each cherry blossom. Sepals will serve as a bridge between your blossom and the stem. They cover the base of each flower. Cut as directed with your template.
Add a small amount of glue at the base and wrap evenly around the base of the flower.
4. Stems: Dab glue on a strip of green crepe paper to cover and secure the sepals to your stem. You don't have to wrap to the very end of the wire. You can wrap $\frac{3}{4}$ of the way down as the bottom will be covered by the brown paper as you attach your stems to your branch.
5. Leaves: You will cut 3 large leaves and 5 small leaves from your green strips. You will use your leaf templates to batch cut your leaves just like you cut your petals. Cup your leaves gently as you did your flower petals. You can shape the 3 large ones together and the 5 small leaves together and not individually.

Part 4 -- Branch Assembly

1. We will start from the top. Grab your strips of brown paper and your glue as you'll use the brown paper as floral tape to attach all of your different elements.
2. Slightly bend back the top 1.5 inches of your floral wire. Dot glue at the base of all three large leaves and affix them in a triangular pattern. You want the tops of the leaves to be pointed down. Wrap your brown paper at the base of the leaves as an extra layer of security, then keep moving down your stem.

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3. Now, you will attach the first cluster of flowers. We will attach 5 blossoms with the brown strip by lying the wires flat against the main stem. You don't need to continuously change the brown strip of paper to a new one. You can continually wrap it from one thing to the next. Make sure to wrap tightly so that your blooms aren't going anywhere. Wrap them about halfway up on the blossom stems. The bottom half adds more bulk to your main stem which helps thicken it and gives your stem more dimension and texture.
4. Keep moving down your stem. Here you're going to add your 3 buds. Attach these first (the same way you attached your blossoms). Once you've secured your buds, glue two small leaves opposite each other right under the base of the buds and secure the bases of the leaves with your strip of brown paper just like how you did with your large leaves.
5. You'll continue moving down your stem. Here you will attach the final 5 blossoms and your final 3 small leaves in a triangular pattern. Follow the same steps as before, securing the blossoms first and then attaching the leaves.
6. After assembling the branch, slightly bend the stem in opposite directions so it resembles the curvature of a real branch.