Holiday Swags

There are two types of swags. Single Swag: hangs on a wall/fence/door, and all the stems of the greens are wired together at the top. Double Swag: lies flat on a mailbox/table/cemetery plot, and uses greens facing in two directions with the stems wired together in the center. In both cases the general steps of construction are the same. Choose an assortment of greens. You want 4-6 layers of different greens, starting with a flat stiff green (cedar/grand fir), then adding fluffier and different types of fir, yellow cedar, juniper, sequoia, holly, etc.

SINGLE SWAG

Step #1

Step #2

Step #3

Step #4

Step #1   Lay your base layer of greenery face up. This will be your longest piece if it is a Single Swag. For a Double use 2 matching pieces, point their stems towards the center and overlap 4-6". These two pieces will be the finished length of your Double Swag. Lay the 2nd layer of greens on top, something with a different texture and color. This piece/s should be about 4" shorter than the base layer.

Step #2   Using a paddle of #22 or #24 wire, tightly wrap around the stems of these two layers, pulling the wire as tight as you can without breaking it, so tight that it digs into the stems slightly. The pieces should remain anchored together without shifting position when shaken.

Step #3   Continue adding layers of greenery with contrasting color and texture, wrapping each layer onto the existing swag with two tight wraps from one continuous piece of wire. Make each layer about 4" shorter than the one before so you get a staggered look.   The technique is the same with the Double and Single Swag, just keep the greens on the Double as symmetrical as you can, so both sides match.

DOUBLE SWAG

Step #1

Steps #2 & #3

Step #4

Step #4   When all greens are well wired together, and shaking doesn't loosen them, wind the wire around the end of a sturdy stem on the back and cut the wire. Bury the sharp end in the greens so it doesn't scratch your door/etc.

Embellish your swag by wiring on holly and/or cones and a large bow. Be sure to twist the wires tightly for all these elements and bury the sharp ends in the greenery.