

# Alternative trees to grace small places

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Let your imagination run wild on an old pallet for a one-of-a-kind Christmas display, as done by Fresh Pickin's of Wallowa.

Who doesn't love a full Noble Fir Christmas tree? But for many people living in apartments or other small homes, having a Christmas decoration that takes up that much space is out of the question.

A tiny tree or tabletop tree is an option, but here are a few more ideas that conserve space and may establish a new tradition.

Antique ladders that lean against the wall are very popular as decorative features in homes, often as handy storage places for books. But with a little repurposing, they can become your Christmas centerpiece.

Wrap your leaning ladder in lights and garlands, add your favorite ornaments, and even place your favorite Christmas book collection or Christmas gifts on and around it. By dressing the ladder up with fresh fir boughs or a wreath on the top step, you can enjoy the traditional smell of Christmas in a fraction of the space of a traditional tree.

This next idea takes up as much space as a tree, but uses the space very well. A newer free-standing wooden ladder, the kind with cross braces along the back that match the level of treads in the front, can be used as a platform to display numerous Christmas Village scenes. Simply place boards through the ladder from tread to matching brace and you have multiple platforms for Christmas Villages or Nativity Scenes. An entire collection can be easily viewed and enjoyed, one step at a time, on such a ladder.

Or consider a well-used sled as a focal point. The less useful the sled is for actual sledding, the more decorative it becomes. Lean your sled against a wall, drape a fresh wreath around the point of the sled and attach decorations to the wood bed of the sled. Voila! A space-saving decoration with plenty of Christmas tradition built right in.

Another idea, especially handy in a studio apartment, or even as a front porch decoration, is the wooden Christmas tree. These are built from flooring, trim, pallet boards and other reclaimed materials, which have been cut in graduating lengths to create a pyramid or tree shape. The boards are mounted to an upright and either given a platform base or simply attached to a wall. These trees can then be decorated as you see fit, for a scene-stealing abstract representation of a tree.