

A free project, compliments of...

Terri Stegmiller

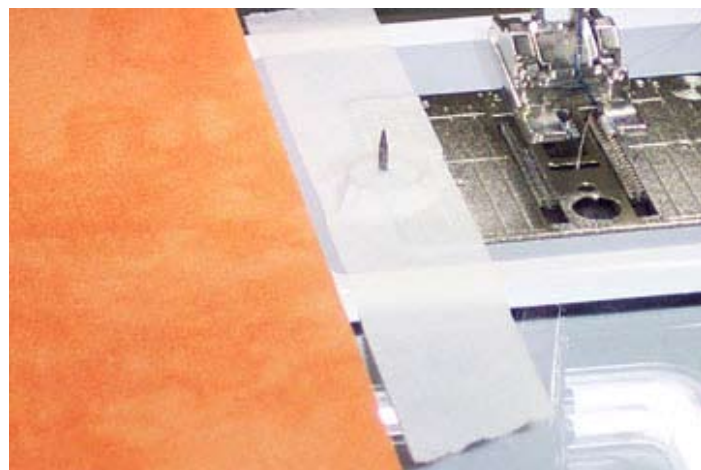
All information provided herein is done so in good faith. Terri Stegmiller takes no responsibility for problems or issues encountered by the reader when using any of this information. Always make sure you take appropriate health and safety precautions when working with your supplies and equipment.

Circle Stitching Tutorial

Sewing a perfect circle can be challenging. You could, of course, use a template and draw a temporary line on your fabric to following with your sewing machine or you could purchase a special attachment for your sewing machine, also known as a flower stitch foot. I'm going to show you a method that doesn't require templates or a special foot. I learned this method from my friend Wendy Coyne who has graciously allowed me to document it and share it with you.

Place your tack, pointed side up on your table. Tear off a strip of tape approximately four inches long. With the sticky side of the tape facing the table, hover the tape over the tack so that you can pierce the tape close to the center. Don't worry if you aren't exactly in the center. Close is good.

Now take the tape with the tack in it, to your sewing machine bed and place it to the left of the needle. Be sure to smooth the tape down well so it's secure and the tack stays put. The closer the tack is to the needle, the smaller your circle will be. If you want a certain size circle, measure the distance from the needle to the tack and double that amount. This will give you the circle's diameter.

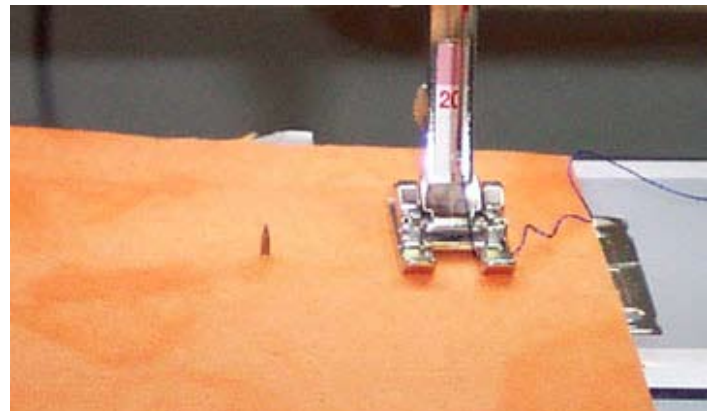


Fuse your interfacing to the backside of your fabric.

Supplies

- Thumbtack or drawing pin
- Fabric
- Fusible interfacing
- Tape

Place your fabric under the sewing needle carefully so as not to displace the tack. Once your fabric is in the correct position, press it down gently on the tack. The tack will pop up to the surface. You can at this point place a small piece of hard rubber or eraser to cover the tip of the tack. I normally just sew with the point of the tack exposed. I don't find that it gets in my way and pokes me.

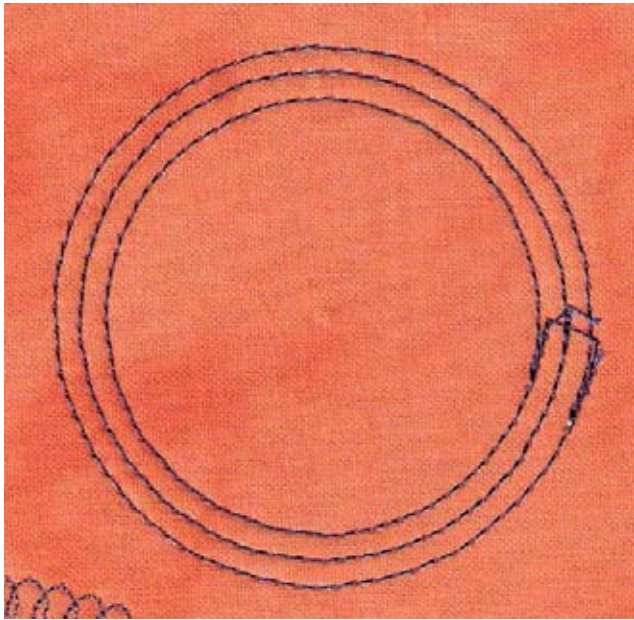


Select the stitch you want, adjust the length and width, and start sewing. The fabric will start moving in a circular motion.

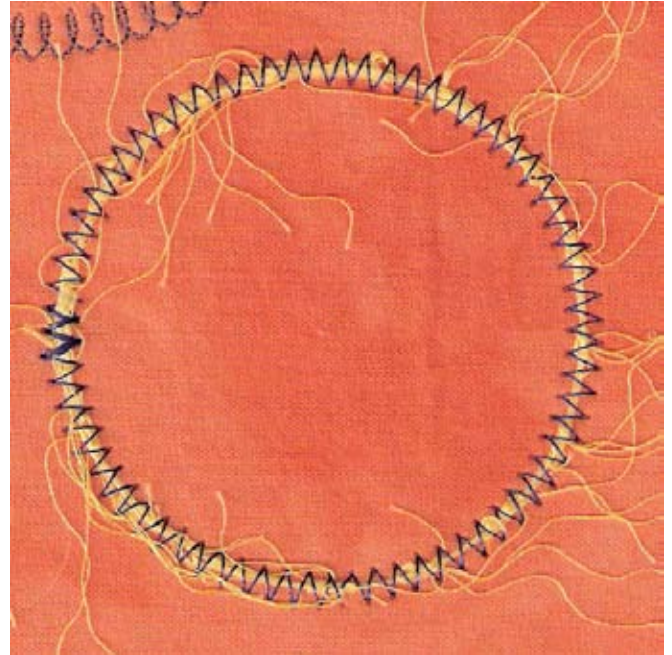
When you get back around to where you started, you should still be aligned and your stitching should meet perfectly.

The following sample shows three straight stitched lines. I started out sewing the line in the middle. When the middle line was completed, I didn't remove the fabric from the tack, but left it in the same spot. I then moved my needle position on my machine, all the way

to the left and sewed another straight line. I did just the opposite for the outer line by moving the needle position all the way to the right.

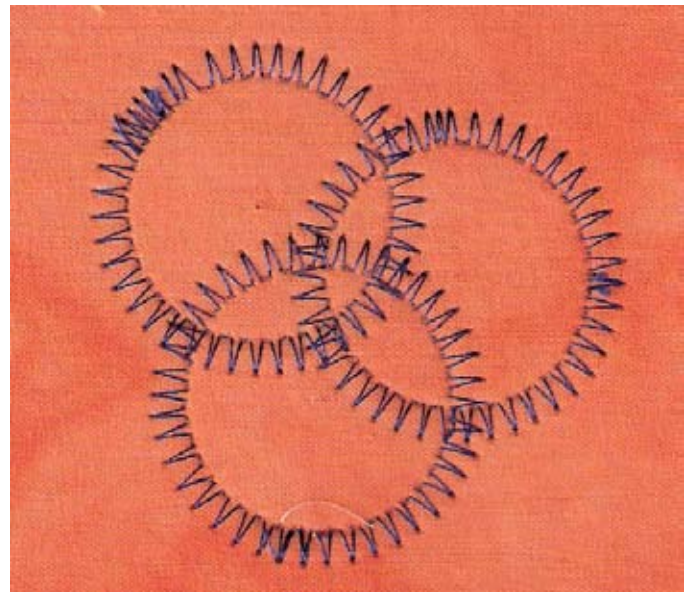
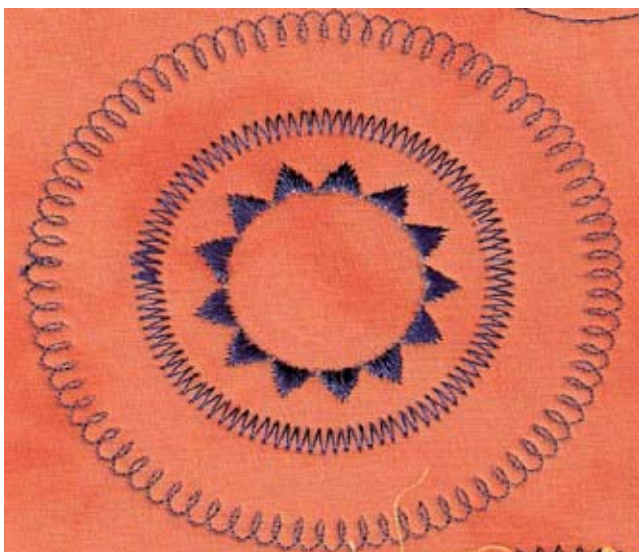


You can also couch thick threads, yarns, and fibers with this method and create some lovely designs.

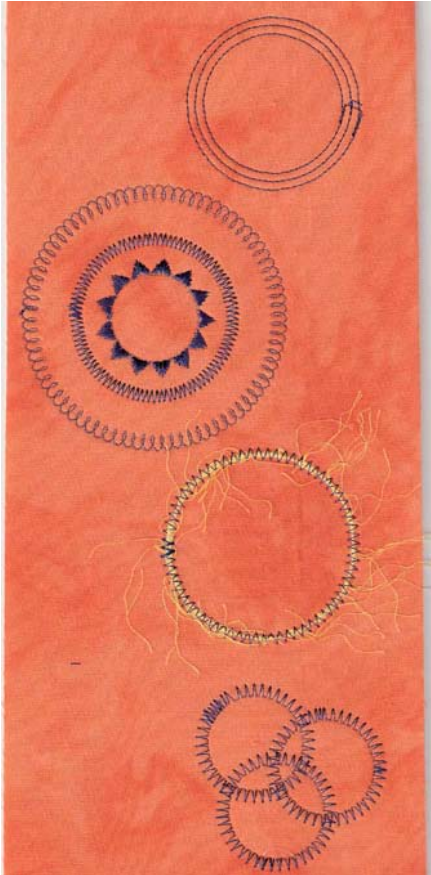


In the next stitch sample, I started with the middle zigzag stitched circle. I removed the fabric from the tack and lifted the taped tack off the machine bed and moved it in closer to the needle. I set my machine up for the next stitch, the inner sunburst, and then when I placed my fabric back on the tack I positioned it using the previous hole from the tack. Again, I did the same thing with the outermost circle. I removed the fabric, moved the tack out farther from the needle, set up the next stitch, replaced the fabric on the same tack hole and resumed stitching.

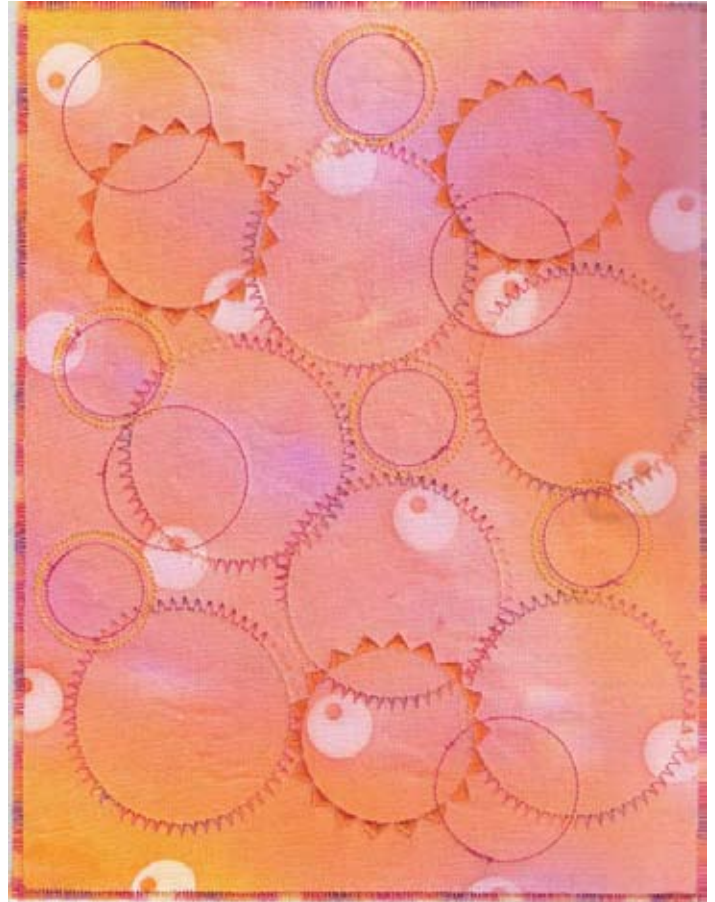
Overlapping circles is always a pleasing look.



Here is a full view of my circle stitch sampler. I also did one in blue.



And here is a journal quilt I made using this technique:



When you are finished stitching your circles, you will notice a small hole left by the tack. I take something sharp, like my seam ripper and carefully rub the tip back and forth over the hole to move the fabric fibers back into their position before the hole was there.

With all the fancy stitches that some sewing machines have these days, I think there are many unique and fun ways to use this technique to create fun circular designs. But even if your machine doesn't have many stitches, you can still enjoy this process. Have fun!