

'Perfect' Circles Gather and Starch Method Lorraine Stenoish

Requirements:

Pencil (for light fabrics use erasable pencil)

Any needle and double thread for gathering

Perfect Circles template and/or Templar heat-resistant template

Strong cardboard. A heavy empty fabric bolt works well

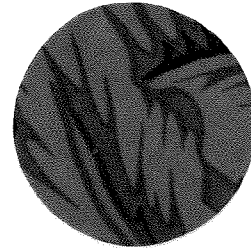
Strong Stiff Pins

Starch or Mary Ellen's best press

Iron, Clover mini-iron works well

Roxanne's glue

Optional: sandpaper for tracing. For hand-applique: I prefer silk thread and straw needles



Getting Started:

1. Using template, trace circle or shape. Works nicely on sandpaper to minimize shifting.
2. Cut out using a scant $\frac{1}{4}$ " seam allowance
3. Using needle and double thread, do a gathering stitch around circle. Works best for knot and last stitch to be on right side of fabric.

Ironing:

1. Carefully position template over circle.
2. Gather stitches by pulling both knot and needle end. Pin template to cardboard with strong pins to heavy cardboard. Insert one pin through knotted loop, gather, pull tightly with needle end and wrap around second pin.
3. Use fingers or tiny sponge to dab all gathers with starch.
4. Carefully use mini iron to iron all gathers.
5. When cool, remove template. Reiron for a sharp crease. If necessary, gather up threads.

Finish:

1. Using pattern as a guide (light box if necessary) position circle on background piece.
2. Be careful to overlap in correct order. Pieces behind first, pieces on top, last.
3. Lightly dot with Roxanne's glue to position.
4. Proceed to machine or hand sew. For hand-sewing, I recommend YLI silk thread and a straw needle.

Additional Notes:

1. Circles can be 'assembly lined.' Have multiple pieces going at the same time.
2. Note that this can be used for more than just circles. Ovals, teardrop, rounded leaves work fine. This does not work well on severe inside curves, although gentle ones can be manipulated.