

Skill Builder Month 5: Dresden Plates



Before we begin, a few words about the templates:

1. The template used is the 7" block size from *Marti Michell's Perfect Patchwork Templates – Dresden Plate* and the set is available thru Country Concessions, Hummingbird Sewing, or thru your favourite shop. Like all rulers, it is not inexpensive to purchase and may need to be ordered. The set includes multiple sizes and styles of fans. A sample of the template used in this pattern, with dimensions, is included on the final page. ***In spite of my best efforts, it will not print at the correct size.*** A separate pattern page that should print to the correct size is available on the website. Double check before cutting your fabric.
2. This is a 22 ½ degree ruler – each quadrant will have four complete fan blades. If the template you choose to use is 20 degrees, additional blades will be required and the corners will need to be re-designed. (There will be an extra half blade to deal with). Other template sizes may also need to be adjusted.
3. Refer to the size shown on the template page – this is for a finished 7" block. Some templates show 7" as the size of each finished blade, not the entire block.
4. As in previous months, any 5" finished round may be substituted.

Using the paper templates:

1. It is best to photocopy or trace the original template and preserve the original in case additional templates need to be made.
2. Roughly cut out around the template copy.
3. Glue the paper template to either boxboard (cereal box weight cardboard), manila folder, or HEAT PROOF template plastic.
4. Cut the template to size.

Cutting:

B/G: (can be cut a bit wider and trimmed after applique)

Cut 2 – 5 ½ x wof – trim to 5 ½ x 32 ½". Reserve trimmings

Cut 2 – 5 ½ x wof – trim to 5 ½ x 42 ½". Piece with reserved trimmings as needed.

Fan Blades:

Cut strips the width of the template (approximately 3 1/16") in your choice of fabrics

Sub-cut a total of 144 fan blades

Centre Circles:

A total of 20 half circles are required – or cut 10 if using the template provided

See **TTT** for full instructions

Fan blade options:



Try any of these: One fabric, shades of one colour, vertical or horizontal stripes or scrappy as in the finished sample.

Centre Circles:

The centre circles are **finished** 2 ¼" diameter. Use the method described, or your choice of method, including fusible web, remembering to include a seam allowance at the base of the semi-circles.

Assembly:



1. Sew the fan blades – Fold the blades in half and, backstitching at each end of the seam, sew a ¼" across the top of the fan as shown.
2. With the blade still right sides together, lightly press a centre crease in the blade.
3. Trim the seam as shown.
4. Press the seam open.
5. Turn the blade right side out, align the seam with the crease and press.
6. Make 16 fans of 8 blades (forming a half circle), and 4 fans of 4 blades. Sew from the outer edges to the centre, backstitching at the outer edges. It is more important to line up the outer edges. Press the seams open.

Adding the centre circles: These can be sewn to the fans either before or after the fans are applied to the background fabric.

DO NOT sew/fuse the end fans and circles to the longer border strips until they have been laid out and checked to make sure the blades and circles line up correctly with the shorter strips to form a continuous corner !!

TTT:

1. The template given makes two half circles at a time.
2. Prepare the template copy as above.
3. Using the template, cut fabric ovals approximately ¼" larger all around.
4. By hand, sew a small basting stitch within the ¼" seam allowance, knotting at the beginning and leaving a several inch long tail at the end of the stitching.
5. Lay the template on the wrong side of the fabric and pull the thread to gather around the template.
6. Holding the tail taut, press the fabric smoothly around the template.
7. Remove the template and pull the tail gently to restore the circle.
8. Cut the oval in half. Note: the template will make a half circle that is a bit longer than needed to allow for adjustments.
9. For the corner quarter circles, trim to size as needed. It's easiest to lay out the half-circle on the fans and then trim to match the base fabrics.
10. Applique the circles to the fans either now or after the fans are applied to the background.

Lay out the fans:

1. On the shorter background strips: Centre an 8-blade fan on the shorter background strip. Add a quarter fan to each end of the strip. Centre two additional 8-blade fans between the ends and centre fan. There is approximately 1" between the fans.

2. Sew the fans to the background using your choice of method such as straight stitch near the folded edges, a small zig-zag stitch, a blanket stitch, or by hand. Use matching, contrasting, or invisible thread as desired. Add the centre circles if not previously applied.
3. Make two of the short strips and sew to top and bottom of the quilt centre. Press to the previous plain border.
4. Lay out 5 - 8 blade fans along the longer background strips, centering one fan along the strip and working out. **Be sure the end fans and centres align with the shorter borders before stitching or fusing.**
5. Stitch the fans and circles in place.
6. Stitch the completed strips to the top and bottom of the quilt. Press toward the previous borders.
7. If the background strips were cut oversized, the quilt should be trimmed to: 42 ½ x 42 ½”.

Next month: Final Round ! Baby Bargello

