

## Instructions for Insetting Circles in Quilt Blocks

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1. **Background block should be cut at least ½” bigger than you want to have in the end.** This allows for you to trim it down if putting the circle in causes the square to get a bit wonky. So, if I want to have an 8 ½” block with a circle in the middle, I start with a 9 or 9 ½” block and trim it down once the circle is in.
2. **You will cut a hole in the background block to be 1” smaller in diameter than the circle you are inseting.**
3. **Prepare the background block...** it can be anything you want: a single fabric, half-square triangles, quarter-square triangles, a four-patch, literally any design you want as the background.
4. **Fold the background block in half, and in half again,** so you have it folded down to a quarter block. Press using steam.
5. **Cut a hole in the background block.** To do this you place the folded quarter block under the cut-a-round ruler. Line up the folded sides of the block with the two “fold lines” on the “cut-a-round” ruler. Selecting the circle size you want for the hole, run your 28 mm rotary cutter along the quarter-circle line that is marked as being the appropriate size. Set aside the circle portion you have just cut from the background block. The background block now has a hole that is 1” smaller than the circle you are going to inset.
6. From your foreground, or circle, fabric, use a cardboard “frame” to find the location that you want to cut as the circle. Mark the rough centre of that circle on the fabric. Then, cut out a piece of fabric large enough to allow you to cut the circle size you want. Take this rough-cut piece of foreground fabric and fold it in half, and in half again... steam press as you did with the background block.
7. Place the folded foreground fabric under the cut-a-round ruler, lining up the folded sides of the fabric with the two “fold lines” marked on the ruler. **Cut the circle** using the 28 mm rotary cutter and the quarter-circle line that is marked as being **one inch larger than the hole you cut in the background block.**
8. **Place the background block face up in front of you. Place the circle face up over the hole in the background block.** The four fold lines at 3, 6, 9 and 12 (as on a clock face) are the four registration marks at which you pin the background block to the circle. Starting at 12, take the background block and fold it over onto the circle so that the right sides are together... pin it. Then move to 3, then 6, and finally 9. Do not pin more frequently. It is unnecessary and makes sewing more difficult.
9. **Sew a ¼” seam, with the circle fabric on the bottom** and the background block fabric on the top. Sew slowly from the first pin halfway to the second pin, matching the outer edges of the two pieces of fabric. Then easing or stretching top or bottom as is necessary, match the outer edges of the two pieces of fabric and sew to the next pin. Repeat this four times, easing at each quarter-circle.
10. **When finished press from the back first,** then give the block a good steam press from the front. If you want the circle to stand out, press the seams towards the centre of the circle. If you want the circle to appear recessed, press the seams towards the outer edges of the block.
11. **Do not clip or trim the seam allowance...** it isn’t necessary and you risk having the fabric tear beyond the seam.
12. I recommend sewing free-arm when setting in circles. It is easier to place your hands to ease the fabric as you sew.
13. Once you’ve done a few of these, you will find that they go quite quickly... about 10 minutes per circle.