

## **Patio Party: Round-Table Wedge Placemats**

Editor: Liz Johnson

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Rectangular placemats fit great on a square or rectangular table. But a lot of outdoor furniture sets feature *round* tables. This is one of those "square peg in a round hole" problems. Our project will help you make trapezoidal placemats, which fit nicely together when placed around a circular table. The sewing is the same as a rectangular placemat, but the shape gives a beautiful effect for each place setting. Your guests will be impressed – especially your seventh grade math teacher.

Lightweight interfacing gives these placemats the body they need to sit and stay. We added a simple topstitched "X" to hold all the layers together.

Our sample was made using the beautiful fabrics from Heather Bailey's Freshcut collection. For information on where to buy, read [How to Create a Fabric Pallet](#)

### **Sewing Tools You Need**

- Any Sewing Machine (we recommend the [Janome Jem Platinum 720](#))

### **Fabric and Other Supplies**

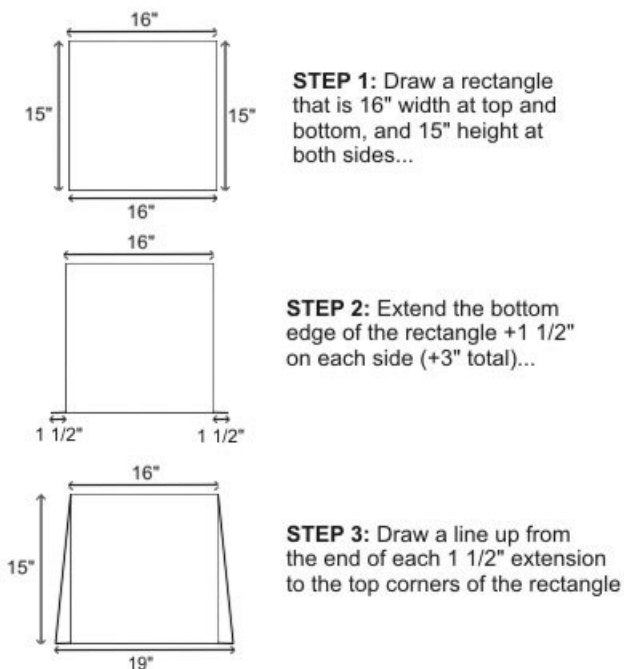


Heather Bailey's *Jelly Bean*-brown and lightweight fusible interfacing.

- Fabric for placemat tops:  $\frac{1}{2}$  yard of 45" wide fabric will yield two placemat tops ( $1\frac{1}{2}$  yards total for six placemat tops)
- Fabric for placemat bottoms (can be same as top):  $\frac{1}{2}$  yard of 45" wide fabric will yield two placemat bottoms ( $1\frac{1}{2}$  yards total for 6 placemat bottoms)  
*We used Heather Bailey's Freshcut in Jelly Bean-brown for the tops and bottoms of our placemats.*
- Lightweight fusing (also called fusible interfacing). Check packaging or bolt for length and width. You will need one 20" x 16" rectangle shape PER PLACEMAT
- All purpose thread
- Contrasting color all purpose thread for topstitching
- See-through ruler
- Two sheets of lightweight paper (at least 20" x 20" each)
- Pencil
- Iron and ironing board
- Scissors
- Straight pins

## Getting Started

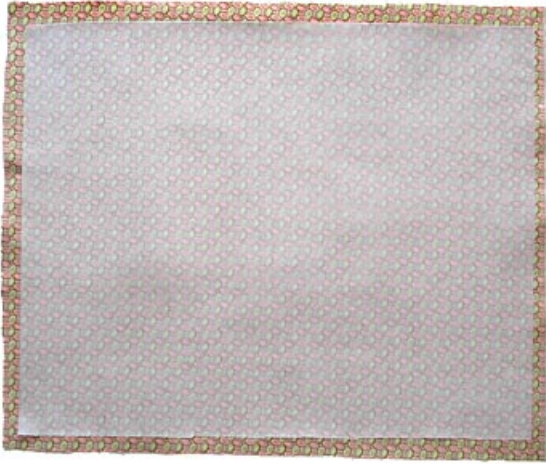
1. Using your see-through ruler and pencil, draw a trapezoid shape onto a sheet of lightweight paper. Our suggested measurements for an approximately 55" diameter round table are: 16" wide at the top edge, 19" wide at the bottom edge, and 15" high. If you dozed off during geometry, the steps for drawing a perfect trapezoid are shown below.



2. Cut out this trapezoid shape along the outside drawn lines. Label as PLACEMAT PATTERN and set aside.
3. Using your see-through ruler and pencil, draw a rectangle onto a sheet of lightweight paper that is 20" wide x 16" high. Label as FUSING BLOCK and set aside.



4. Smooth out the fusing *with your hands* to get it as flat as possible. Note: DO NOT PRESS FUSING WITH IRON YET TO SMOOTH OUT!
5. Pin the FUSING BLOCK pattern piece you made above onto the lightweight fusing and cut around pattern edges. Cut ONE piece of fusing per placemat (six total pieces in our example).
6. With your iron on LOW HEAT, press the glue side of one cut fusing piece on the wrong side of one placemat top fabric piece. You want the fusing adhered to the wrong side of the fabric. You have now created one FUSED FABRIC BLOCK. You will need one FUSED FABRIC BLOCK for each placemat you intend to make. Repeat as many times as needed for your number of finished placemats. (The Hints and Tips section at end of this article explains why we do this.)



*Note: If the fusing does not stick to the fabric, turn the heat on the iron up just a bit, but be careful not to make it too hot, otherwise the fusing may melt! You can test a small piece of fusing on a scrap of your placemat fabric to get the correct iron temperature.*

7. Pin the PLACEMAT PATTERN piece you made above on top of one FUSED FABRIC BLOCK, and cut out along pattern edges. This will be your placemat top.



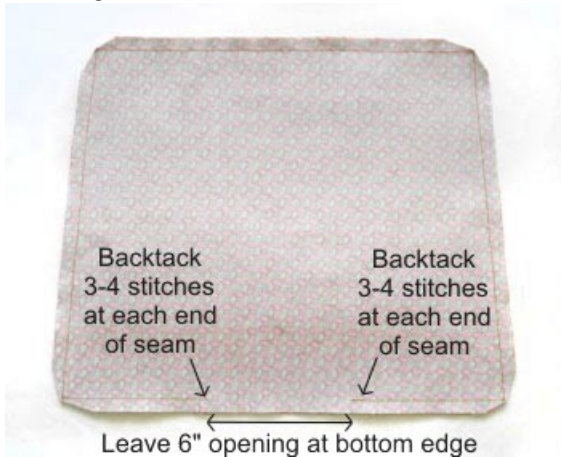
8. Pin the same PLACEMAT PATTERN piece on top of the fabric you are using for the bottom of the placemats, and cut out along pattern edges. This will be your placemat bottom.
9. Our placemats use Heather Bailey's Freshcut in *Jelly Bean-brown* for both the top and bottom. But they would also be very cute, and reversible, if you used different fabrics for the top and bottom. Here's one we made with *Jelly Bean-brown* on the top and *Dotted Paisley-green* on the bottom.



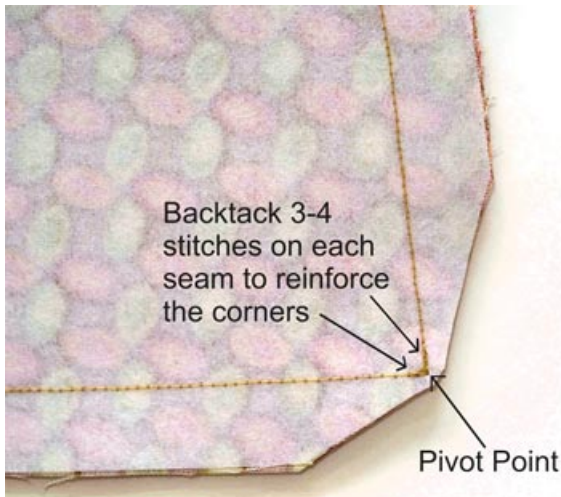
10. Pin the placemat top to the placemat bottom, right sides together, lining up all raw edges.

## At Your Sewing Machine & Ironing Board

1. Sew a  $\frac{1}{2}$ " seam around all four edges of the pinned placemat top and bottom, leaving a 6" opening near the middle of the bottom edge. Remember to secure the start and end of your seam by back-stitching. More on this in our article on [Securing Machine-Sewn Seams](#).



2. Trim all four corners of the seam allowance.

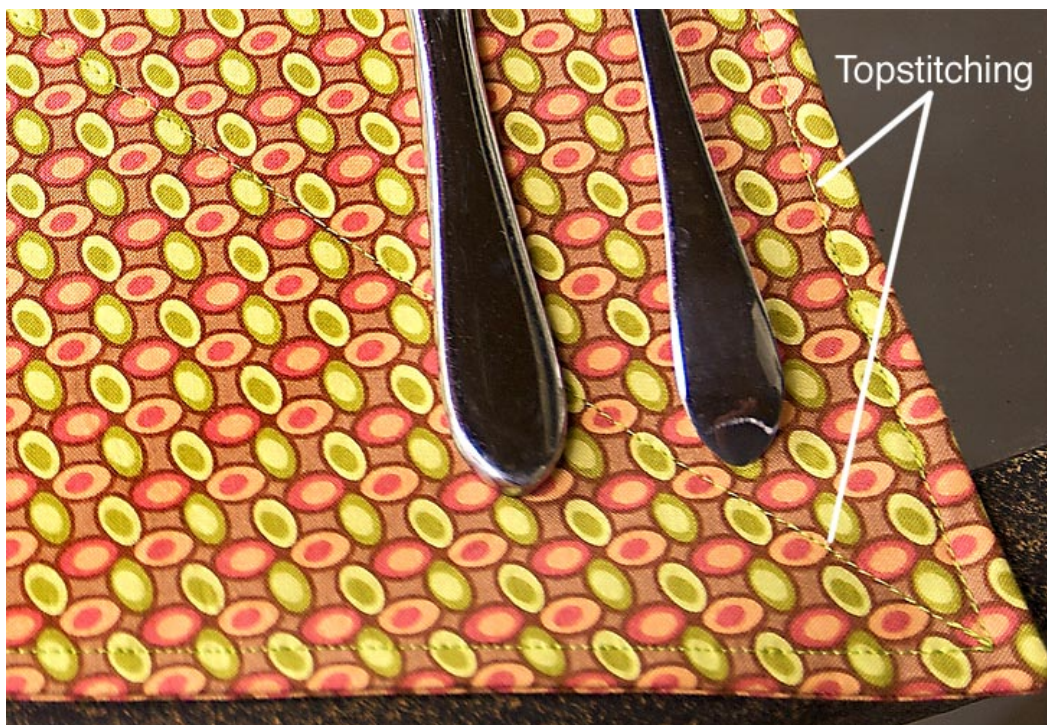


3. Using the 6" opening you left along the bottom of the placemat, turn the sewn placemat inside out to reveal the right sides of the top and bottom fabric. Be sure to push out each corner with your finger or the blunt point of a knitting needle so it is flush and square to the outside.
4. Press flat around all four edges and four corners of the placemat. Press the seam allowances at the opening to the inside so the opening is even with the rest of the seam.



5. Topstitch  $\frac{1}{4}$ " all around four edges of placemat. If desired, sew a topstitch from top right corner to bottom left corner, and also top left corner to bottom right corner, to create an "X" pattern on the placemat.





## Hints and Tips

We use interfacing in sewing projects to give the finished piece extra stability. Think about a button down shirt. The collar, cuffs and buttonholes needs to be stiffer than the rest of the shirt, so interfacing is sewn between the layers of fabric to make these parts stand up. We're adding interfacing in this project to stiffen the placemat.

## Why should I make a fused fabric block?

So your fused and non-fused sets of pattern pieces are an exact match.

If you have a pattern piece that needs to be backed with fusing, it is wise to fuse a piece of the fabric that is larger than the pattern piece, then cut your pattern piece out of this larger fused block of fabric and fusing. The process of heating the fusing to melt the glue and adhere it to your fabric can sometimes minimally shrink the fabric. By making a larger fused fabric block, you allow any shrinking that may occur to happen and then cut out your pattern piece(s) from this pre-shrunk block. Otherwise, you risk ending up with one size for your plain fabric piece and a slightly different size for the fused fabric piece. When you put the two pieces together to sew, they won't match up as nicely as they should.

When purchasing fusing, read the label on the bolt to determine the recommended ironing temperature and wash instructions. If a sales associate is available, ask for their assistance in purchasing the correct weight fusing for your project. Bring the fabric you wish to fuse with you to the store if possible.

### Contributors

Project Design: Alicia Thommas

Sample Creation & Instructions: Gregory Dickson

*Other machines suitable for this project include the Singer Athena and the Husqvarna Husky 145.*

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