

Around the Table Dresden Placemats

By Joanna Marsh

With spring just around the corner, take some time to make some decorative Dresden placemats that will brighten up your winter blues! Enjoy the smooth quilting of the Janome Memory Craft 8900QCP Special Edition and the even stitching that will really make your dining room home decor shine and play with different sized circles for the center of your Dresden's to offer some variety.

Skill Level: Intermediate

Sewing Time: 4 hours

Janome Supplies Required:

- Memory Craft 8900QCP Special Edition
- 1/4" Seam Foot O
- QBS Foot for Free Motion Quilting
- AcuFeed Foot AD
- Blue Tip Needle
- Pre-wound Bobbin
- Empty Bobbin

Fabrics/Notions Required (for 1 placemat):

- 1 fat quarter fabric (A) sub cut into: 6 Dresden fan templates
- 1 fat quarter fabric (B) sub cut into: 2 Dresden fan templates
- 1 fat quarter fabric (C) sub cut into: 2 Dresden fan templates
- 1 fat quarter fabric (D) sub cut into: 2 Dresden fan templates
- 1 fat quarter fabric (E) sub cut into: 2 circles at least 2 1/2" in diameter (center of Dresden)

Student Supplies Required:

- Marking pen/tailors chalk
- Rotary cutter/ruler/mat
- Safety pins



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Piecing the Dresden:

1. For each placemat, cut 12 fans using the template provided. The template piece includes a 1/4" seam allowance. Print the template at 100%.
2. Cut two Dresden fan blades of each fabric B, C, D. Cut six Dresden fan blades of fabric A. From fabric E, trace a circle at least 2 1/2" in diameter.

Tip: If making multiple placemats, play with different size circles for the centers of the Dresdens for a more unique look. To trace these, you can use objects like the mouth of a cup, bowls, etc. to obtain differing size circles.



3. Start with one of the cut fan blades and fold the outer (larger) corner to the other outer corner, with right sides together. Sew this edge using a 1/4" seam allowance. Sew all 12 of the Dresden fan blades this way.



Tip: To speed step 3 up, try chain piecing. As soon as one folded blade has passed all the way through, start the edge of another folded blade without cutting your threads.

Attaching Borders with a New Technique



4. After sewing this seam, unfold the fan blades and finger press the seam open to minimize the bulk.



5. Make sure the point of the fan blade that you just pushed right side out is centered to the middle of the fan blade. Press with an iron. Repeat this with all remaining fan blades.

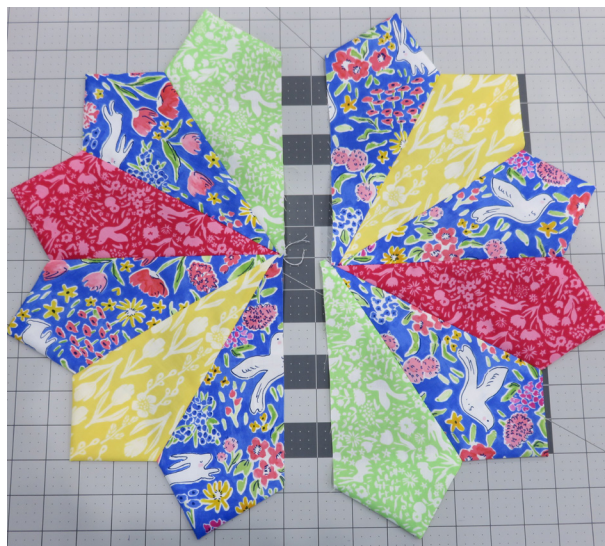


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6. Take one fan blade of fabric A and one of fabric B. Place fabric B right side up and fabric A right side down, matching the edges. Begin sewing from the wide top to the narrow bottom. It is more important that the outer edges of the Dresden match up than the centers. Sew a 1/4" seam down one long edge. Press the seam open.

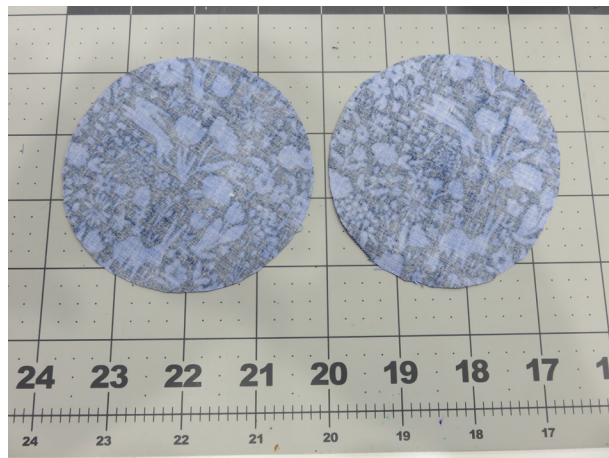


7. Repeat step 6 with a fabric A-C pair and again with a fabric A-D pair. Then join the pairs you just sewed together, until you have a half-circle.
8. Repeat steps 6 and 7 with the remaining six fan blades, so you have 2 half circles.

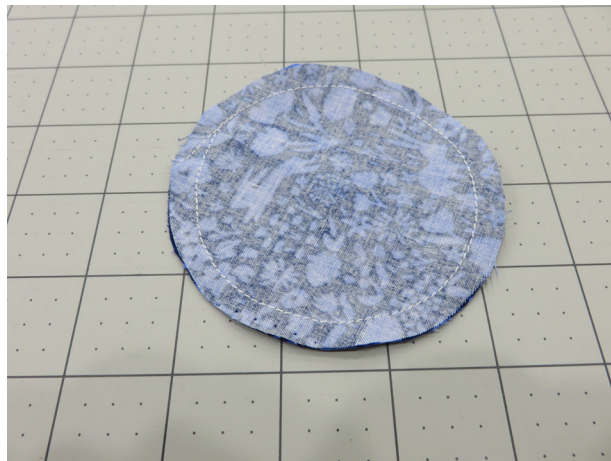


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9. Now place one half circle on top of the other, with right sides together and join them with a 1/4" seam allowance. Press the seams open.
10. Cut two circles out of fabric E that are the same diameter. Use the mouth of a cup as a template, at least 2 1/2" in diameter. Keep in mind that your finished circle will be 1/2" less in diameter than when you trace it, due to seam allowance. Trace these onto the fabric prior to cutting and then cut with fabric scissors.

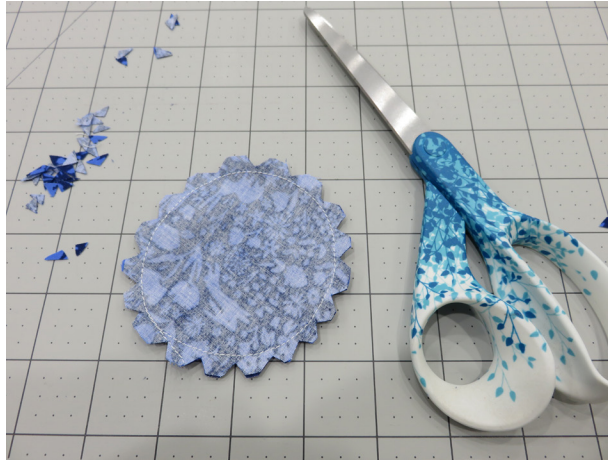


11. Place these circles, right sides together and pin in place. Sew around the perimeter of the pinned circles with a 1/4" seam allowance.

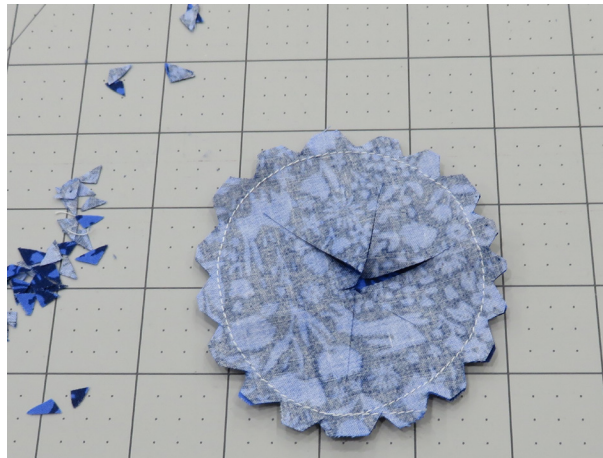


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12. Using a pair of fabric scissors, cut notches around the perimeter without cutting into the stitches. This will allow for a smoother rounded edge once the circle is turned right side out.



13. Use a safety pin to separate the two layers (or you can pinch one layer up with your fingers) and pull just the fabric from the top circle up enough to trim a hole in the middle with fabric scissors. Make sure you are only snipping a hole in one of the circles.



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14. Use this hole to turn the circle right side out. The hole should be big enough that you can put your fingers inside the circle and push out the roundness of the seam allowance. Place the circle with the uncut side up and press with your iron. Make sure the edges of the circle are as smooth as possible.



15. Place the pressed circle in the center of your assembled Dresden fan. Pin in place or fix to the center with the fusible webbing.

Option: Attach the circle in the center of the Dresden with your preferred method - by machine, using a blanket stitch, decorative stitching around the edge of the circle or by hand.

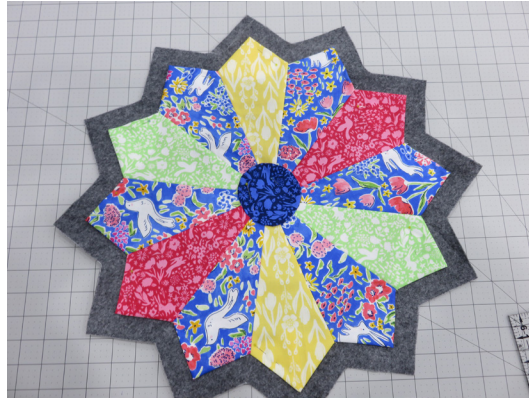
Finishing and Quilting the Placemat

1. Place your completed Dresden right side up, on top of the felt, with at least 2" of felt all of the way around the pieced Dresden.
2. Use a ruler to trace around the pieced Dresden so that there is 1" of felt all of the way around the outer edge of the pieced Dresden.



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3. After tracing 1" around all edges of the Dresden onto the felt, cut on the lines you drew.



4. Now prepare the batting. Take a piece of fusible high loft batting, measuring roughly 24" x 24" and place only the pieced Dresden on top of it. With a marking pen that will show up on the fusible batting, use the pieced Dresden as a template and trace the shape onto the high loft batting.

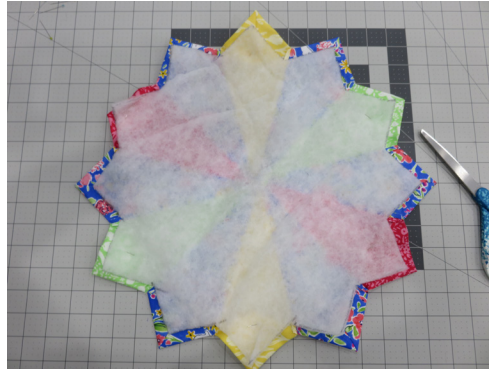


5. Cut out the traced batting. Then use a ruler to trim 1/2" of batting all of the way around the high loft batting. So the trimmed piece of batting will be 1/2" smaller all of the way around than the pieced Dresden.



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6. Place the pieced Dresden right side down, then line up the prepared high loft batting pieces so that all of the edges of the batting would be concealed when viewed from the right side.

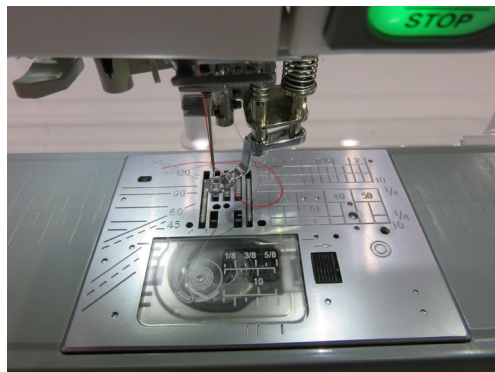


Place the prepared piece of felt over the exposed high loft batting. Center the layers as below. Pin in place if necessary and fuse the batting according to the manufacturer's instructions, being careful not to cause wrinkles while fusing.



Option: At this point, you can choose to add extra security to keep the fan blades down on the felt. You can hand stitch the edges down, perform a blanket stitch, etc. or you can pin in place and allow the quilting to secure it.

7. Attach QBS foot for free motion. Lower the feed dogs and adjust the presser foot pressure to 5” and set the machine to “D4” “D4S”.



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8. Wind the bobbin with quilting thread that coordinates. Thread the machine with matching thread.
9. Quilt as desired and have fun with it!

Tip: When free motion quilting, try to keep your quilting stitches a uniform length - not too small and not too large. You may want to practice the quilting motif before starting on the actual placemat.

10. Try free motion quilting a fun motif or stitch-in-the-ditch.

There is no need for binding since the batting is completely concealed under the finished edges of the Dresden, so after quilting, you're done! Now make as many of these as you need for place settings and enjoy!

