

## Sew Perfect Circles - Round and Round We Go

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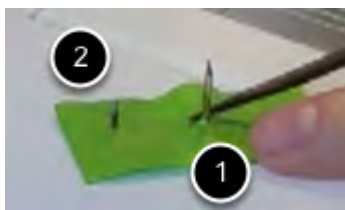
Sewing a perfect circle isn't as easy as you might think. In this class you'll learn about the circle attachment for a sewing machine as well as an alternate technique that requires only a tack and some tape. Let's get started.

### Optional ways to stitch a circle



You could draw a circle with a compass or by using a template from an office supply or art store. Then, you need to follow the line as you stitch. Truthfully, that's easier said than done.

### Use a Tack and Tape



1. Upholstery Tack with a flattened head taped to your machine **OR**
2. Thumb Tack and tape

Either one works for stitching circles.

## Circular Embroidery Attachment



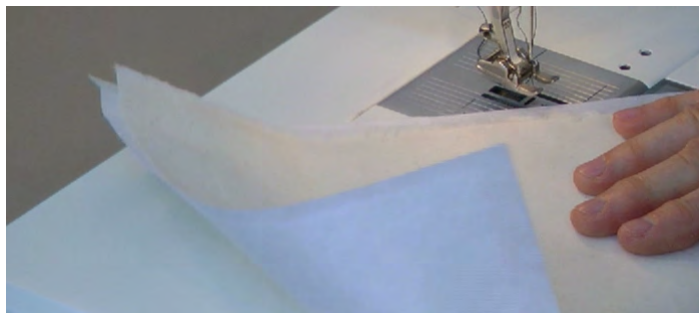
Most major brands of machines have a circular embroidery attachment. It's easy to use and guarantees a variety of easily sized circles.

## Flower Stitch Foot



The flower stitch foot is an inexpensive presser foot that can be used on most any sewing machine for some great small circle designs.

## You'll Need Stabilized Fabric



I'll be using plain muslin that I've stabilized with tear away stabilizer.

Stabilizers are available in packages or by the yard. Some stabilizers are meant to be cut away and others tear away.

## Temporary Spray Adhesive



You need something to attach the stabilizer to the fabric and the easiest way to do that is with a temporary spray adhesive. There are lots of brands of adhesive available.

Always spray the stabilizer rather than the fabric. By spraying into a box, you can contain most of the overspray.

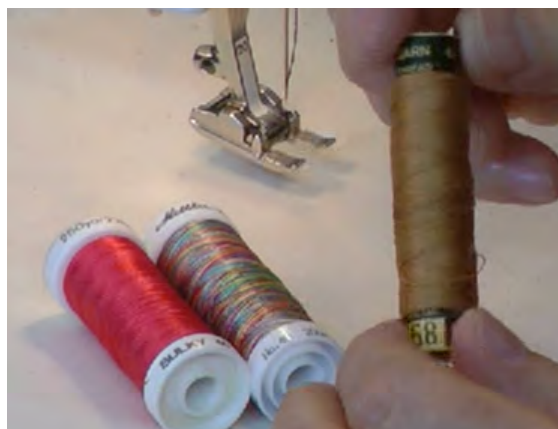
## Needle



Topstitch needle - size 90/14

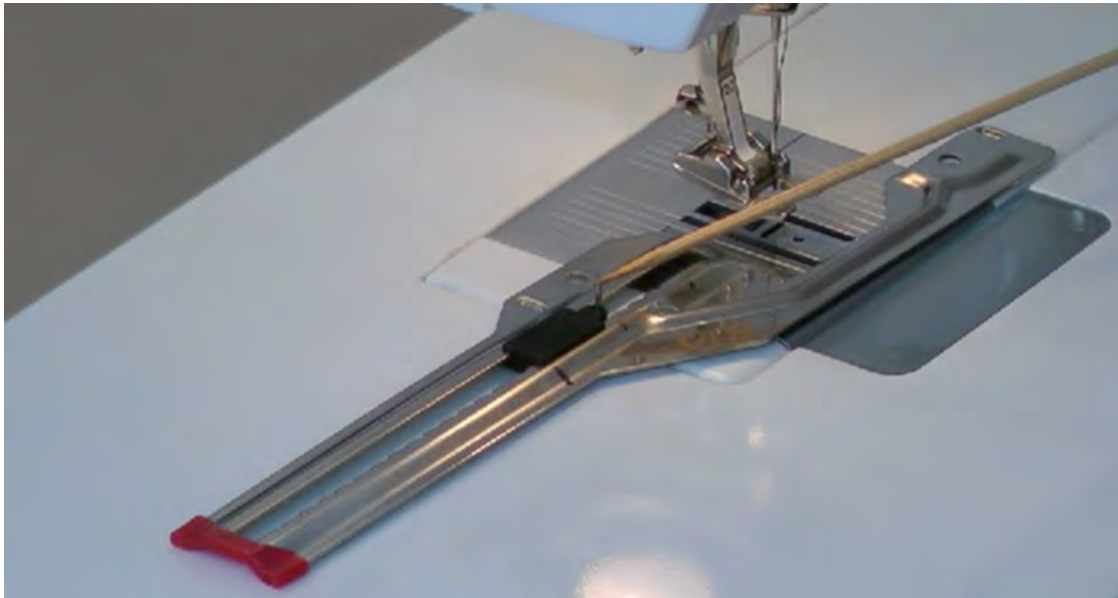
A topstitch needle has a bigger eye and causes less thread abrasion when stitching.

## Decorative Thread



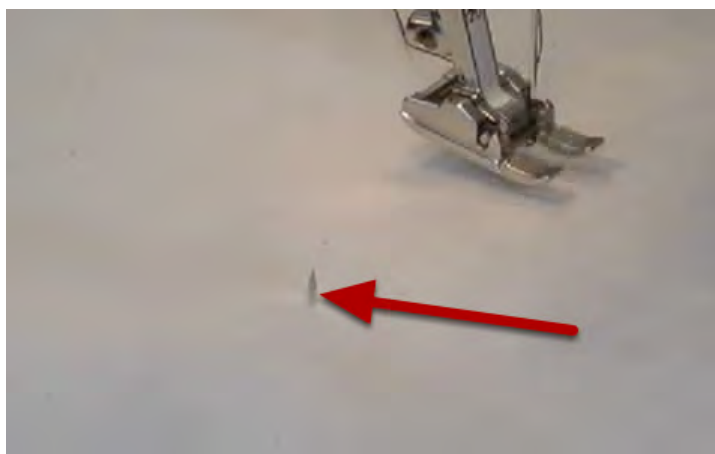
Use good quality machine embroidery or decorative thread - 30 or 40 weight is easy to work with. You can find rayon, polyester and cotton decorative threads quite easily. For more dimensional stitching, try 12 weight thread which is quite a bit heavier.

## Get Ready - Install the Circular Embroidery Attachment



Be careful of the sharp tack! That's where your fabric goes. Connect the attachment to the machine according to the instructions.

## Add Fabric



Place the stabilized fabric on the tack.

## Select a Stitch



Feed dogs are up.

Try various stitches to see what they look like.

The fabric rotates around the pin and voilà you have a circle!

Don't restrict the fabric as it stitches.

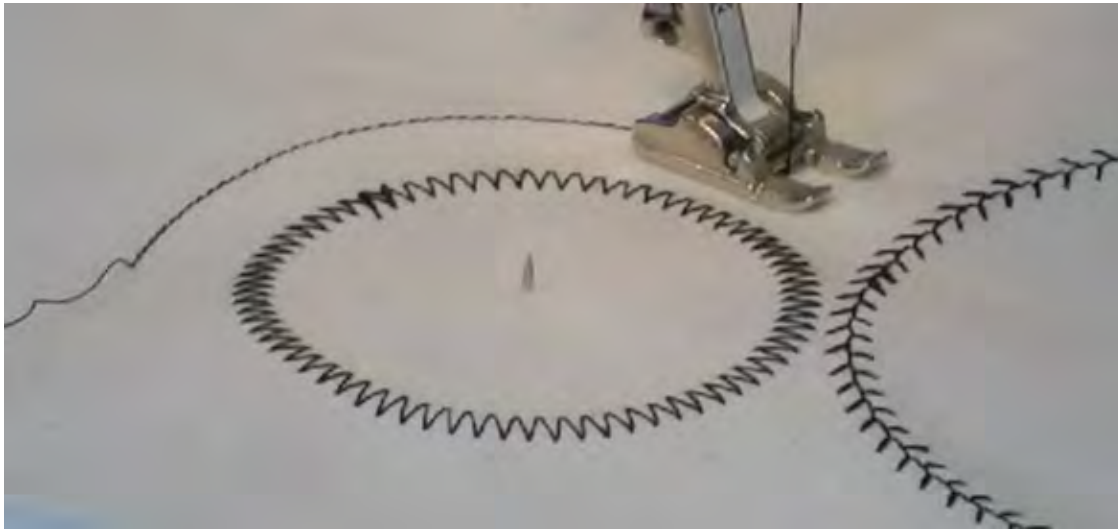
Stitch a bit slower than you might normally stitch.

## Adjust the Size



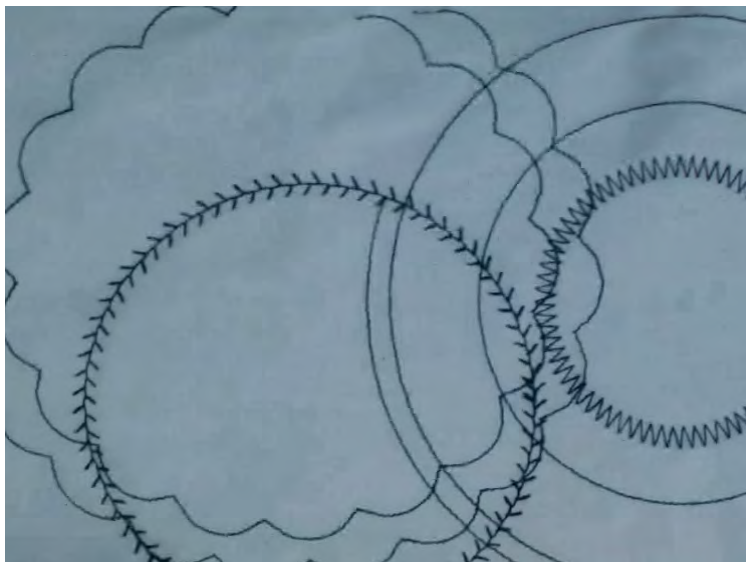
By sliding the pin to a different position, you can change the size of the circle.

## Concentric Circles



If you leave the fabric on the pin and just change the location of the pin, you create concentric circles because you are using the same pivot point.

## Experiment



The best way to learn to use this attachment is to experiment with different stitches and pin positions.

## Circle Appliqué



Place stabilized background fabric on the pin

Place the appliqué fabric over the pin, too. It's a good idea to starch this fabric.

Check to be sure that your circle will stitch completely on the patch of fabric by simply rotating the fabric on the pin before stitching.

First, stitch the circle with a straight stitch making sure that the patch is stitched down smoothly.

## Trim



Trim the patch close to the stitching line with appliqué scissors.

If you don't have these special scissors, use a tiny trimming scissor and trim carefully.



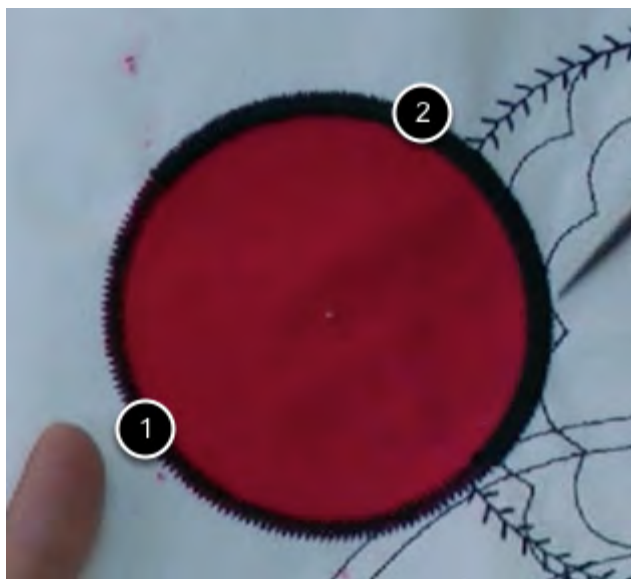
## Replace the fabric on the pin



Place the fabric back on the pin in exactly the same pivot hole.

Second Stitching - select a zig zag stitch 3.5mm width and .75mm stitch length (not quite a satin stitch).

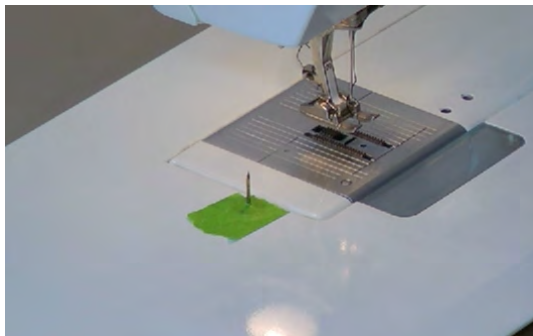
## Stitch once more



And finally, increase the width of the zig zag slightly and decrease the length slightly. When the stitching is complete, you've stitched a perfectly appliquéd circle with a beautiful satin stitch. The sample shows part of the circle with the first zig zag stitching and the other part with the completed satin stitch.

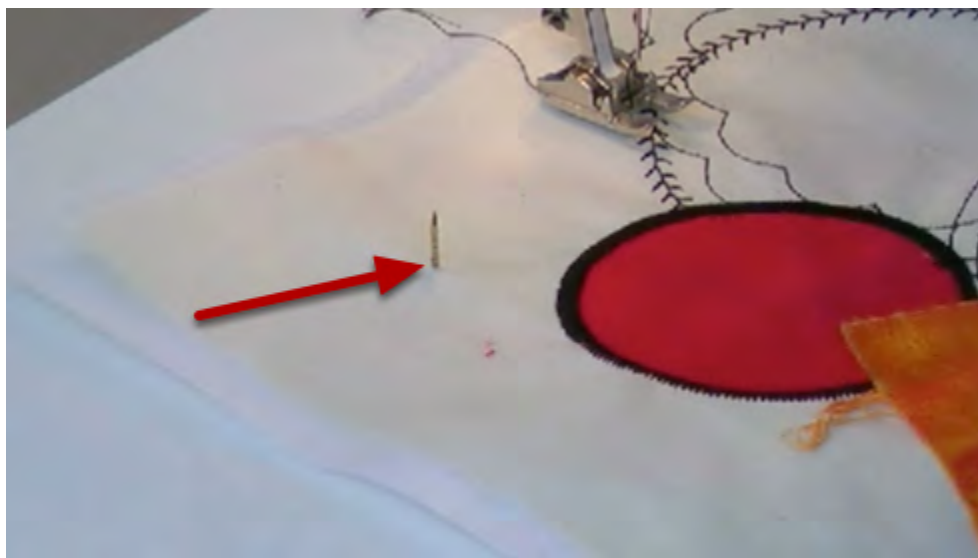
1. The first zig zag stitching
2. The second zig zag satin stitching.

## Stitching a circle using a tack



Tape the tack (point up) to the bed of the machine. Use painter's tape because it doesn't leave sticky residue behind.

## Add Fabric



Place the fabric onto the tack. (I'm using an upholstery tack, but you can use a thumb tack. The head of the tack needs to be as flat as possible.) Stitch.

To stitch concentric circles, you have to physically move the tack each time while leaving the fabric in place on the tack. **NOTE:** An upholstery tack is heavier, so it leaves a bigger hole in fabric than a thumb tack.

## Flower Stitcher



Install the foot. You may need a special shank adaptor for your machine.

Lower the feed dogs.

This foot works with utility or construction stitches - zig zag, blind hem stitch, etc. The 3-step zig zag is my favorite stitch to use with the Flower Stitcher

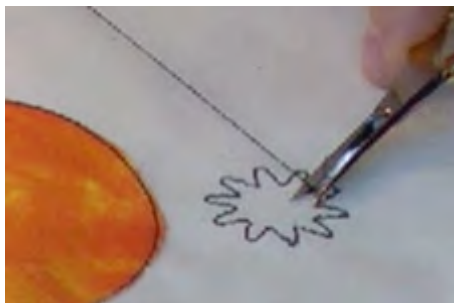
## Flower Stitcher in Action



**Do not restrict the fabric at all.**

Sew rather slowly.

## The Flower



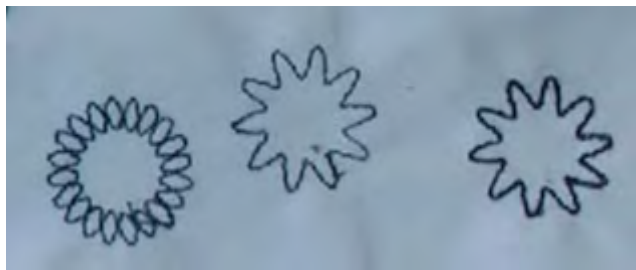
Cute, huh?

This flower is stitched with the 3-step zig zag. You can change the stitch width, but nothing else.

You can stitch the flower more than once for a heavier look.

It's a lot of fun to play with this foot. Experiment and keep notes on your results. I usually write my notes right on the fabric sample.

## Play



Each of these flowers is stitched with the 3-step zig zag.

## Different Stitch



Here's an example using a different utility stitch.

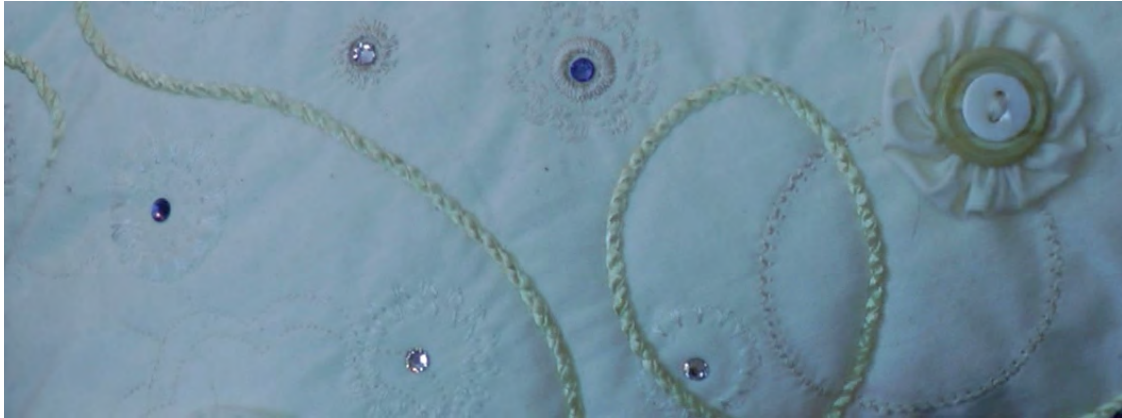
It takes some practice to stitch concentric circles with the Flower Stitcher, but you can do it. Just remember that this foot stitches small circles only.

## Pillow with Perfect Circles



I've used both the circular embroidery attachment and the Flower Stitcher on this pillow.

## Close up



Here are some of the details. You can see where I've created both large and small circles.

## Quilt Block



Each flower was stitched with the Flower Stitcher. Stems and leaves are free-motion embroidery.

## Another Quilt Block



The concentric circles in this quilt block are created with the circular embroidery attachment.

## Sleeve



These flowers were stitched with the Flower Stitcher just above the cuff on a sleeve.

Now you know how to stitch perfect circles!

**See you again soon.**