
Trudy Block with Carolyn Friedlander

Chapter 1 - Trudy Block

Overview

(light airy music) - Hi, I'm Carolyn Friedlander, I am a pattern designer, fabric designer and quilter. In this block we will be doing needle turn applique.

Piece block

- The materials you'll need are, the template for the project, which is on a PDF, you'll need some marking utensils, with applique, I usually like using these friction pens that you can remove with the iron. Of course, it's good to keep in mind that you always want to test your marks on the fabric before you actually use them, just to make sure it'll come out. You'll need some applique needles, a seam gauge, I like this little hand held one, it's super comfortable when you're using it. Can use some thread conditioner, it's an optional material, a small pair of scissors, as well as a large pair of scissors. You'll want thread that is contrasting to the fabrics that you've chosen, and then you'll also want a thread that matches your top fabrics, your applique fabrics. You'll need some fabric, I'm gonna be doing the seven and a half inch block, so for your background piece, you'll want a seven and a half inch square. And then for your applique pieces, you'll just wanna make sure that the pieces are large enough to cut from your template. You'll also want some applique pins. First step is to take your applique fabric, so your top fabric, make sure everything's nice and fat, nice and pressed. Since this is a darker fabric, I sometimes will use either just like a white pen to mark it or I'm just gonna flip it over on the back, cause then you can see the markings better. You'll notice the template, there are three different pieces. And, I'm gonna do both of my circles out of the same fabric. So I will take, I can just use this template to get them both. Position that on your applique piece. Hold it in place with your hand, and then trace your shapes. I printed my templates on paper. If you want a more substantial template you can always transfer your template on to template plastic. They make great template plastic just for this that you can cut with regular scissors. And it will be just a little bit more durable if you're planning to make a lot of blocks. You'll notice that I only used circle template B to trace my circles, that's because I'm only using one fabric for both circles. But you can totally use two different fabrics for your circles. In that case, go ahead and use circle template A to trace your smaller circle, and then use template B to trace your larger circle. Circle C will come in at the next step. Now, you can cut your shapes out. It's really great to use a larger pair of scissors for this so that you get a smoother curve. There are a couple different ways to trim your circle section. One way would be to just take your rotary cutter, snip just a little edge so that you can get your scissors in there. Or what I'm going to do is just fold it carefully, and do a small snip to make sure I'm not getting in to either of the circles to mess up the shape, just so that I can get my scissors in there. Now I can cut the rest of it out. We're going to take our background fabric, lay it down face up, and I'm going to put the applique fabric on top. And you can take your circle template C, and use that to center your circle. So I have aligned my template with the block edges, and then I'm going to position the circle inside. And now this print I used has a direction to it, and I kind of want to use the fabric so that it continues the motif. Of course, you can play with direction by rotating it around. But I'm gonna see if I can get it all to match up. There we go. So now we've got everything in place. Remove that, grab your applique pins, and pin it in place. These applique pins are really great because they are kind of short, so they pin and hold your work together but

they don't stick you. They'll stay in your piece without coming out easily. I like to kind of work in even amounts, so you'll notice I did the first halves and then I turned it 90 degrees and I'm pinning the other quarters. Now it's time to baste. I have my needle threaded with a contrasting thread. You'll always want to use your thread as it comes off of the spool. So, in order to do that, make sure to knot the end that you cut. There's a direction to the fibers and thread, and so if you use them in the same direction that they come off the spool in, you will have fewer knots. So now we're going to baste a quarter of an inch from the raw edge. So, we've got raw edges on this outside circle, we have raw edges on the inside of this inside circle, and then raw edges on the outside of this inside smaller circle. This is when I like to use my seam gauge. You can see that there's a quarter inch marking here, and that's the one that we're going to use. So, for example, here's a raw edge, we're gonna wanna baste a quarter of an inch from that. So, I've done a lot of this, I usually just eye ball it, but I did use the seam gauge for the longest time to make sure I had it right. You really want this to be pretty accurate because it's what we're using as our guide for hand appliqueing in our next step. So if you have good, smooth, even basting, you'll have a much easier time when you're appliqueing. You can just use a long running stitch to baste, like this. Again, you don't need to knot your thread at the end for your basting stitches. And I'm just gonna kind of work my way around, going up and down, a few stitches at a time. You can also take out your pins as you come to them, as long as your piece is still held in place. I think these are not necessary. Make sure not to be pulling your thread too tightly. If you're noticing that your fabrics are wanting to pucker, then your tension is maybe a little too tight. If you notice that, kind of ease the thread back into your stitch to smooth that out. I'm almost all the way around this first outer circle. I'm gonna continue basting. And then once I get to the end, I'm just gonna leave my thread long, I'm gonna take out this pin, flip over, and just jump to this next inside circle. I'm not even gonna have to cut my thread. This is just an easy little time-saving tip. Since your basting stitches will be removed later they can loop at areas that make sense. Because with the ability to jump around, that's usually how I like to be strategic with how I'm basting. If I've got neighboring areas, I'm gonna approach those first and work in order so that they connect. Also, if you're not comfortable with the quarter inch, I've been eye balling mine, just check in every few stitches with your seam gauge to make sure that you're on track. You can baste these pieces by machine. I like to do mine by hand because I find that, especially with thicker shapes, it's just much easier to navigate them by hand. If you decide to give machine basting a try just make sure you're using a super sharp needle and that you're not marring the fabric at all. Now that we're fully basted, well you can notice that I ran out of thread here. I didn't knot anything, I just started back up, and then I looped back over to finish this other circle. We're fully done, now we're ready to applique. So we're gonna grab the thread that matches our top applique fabric. If you're gonna use thread conditioner, pretty simple, you just kind of run it through, so you put it on top, hold on one side with your finger, pull it through. I usually run it through twice. Like that. Now thread your needle and knot one end, knot the end that you cut. To start the applique, first we'll take a look at the shapes that we have. We have an outside circle here on the large circle, we also have an outside circle for the smaller circle, and then we have an inside circle from the inside of this larger circle. I'm gonna start at the outside. You're gonna bring your raw edge in to meet your basting stitch. Since we basted a quarter of an inch from the raw edge, this is creating a perfect eighth inch seam allowance. This is why basting really accurately is super important because that's what we're using as our guide. Bring that in, and now bring your needle up, through the fold of the fabric. And now I'm positioned kind of in the middle of where I folded everything under. So, right in the center, everything's folded under really nicely. Bring your thread through, since it's knotted it will stay back

there, and now you're gonna fold a little bit more. I always like to fold with me right hand and hold what I folded with my thumb in my left hand. And so now you're gonna go back down right next to where you came up, but only through the background, and in the same motion from behind, come back through the fold of the fabric. It's really important that you're going straight down and straight back up. You can do that in the same motion but just make sure that you're going straight down and straight up. Pull that through. At this point, you also wanna make sure that your tension is correct, and that you're not pulling it to tight. So if it's looking puckered, just smooth it out a little bit. The trick to getting a smooth and continuous curve is stitching and folding in tandem. So you're not folding under half of your circle and then stitching to catch up, you're going to be folding and stitching, folding and stitching, as you go. Continue appliqueing the rest of that first circle. I'm almost finished with this first outside circle. In general, I like for my stitches to be somewhere between, well less than a quarter of an inch, but more than an eighth of an inch a part. So I shoot for like, three sixteenths of an inch. Doesn't have to be exact, but, just keep them kind of consistent. I'm approaching where I first started, and I'm just gonna continue folding and making sure everything's turned under nice and even. Once you get there, you'll kind of feel the knot that you first started, so that's how you know how far you need to go. And I'm getting very close. I'm gonna do one more stitch which will put me right next to that first knot. And I'm gonna bring my needle to the back. And to knot, I will grab just a couple threads from the background fabric, but not including the basting stitch, and make a couple knots. So I'll do that probably three times. I'm not gonna cut my thread yet, cause I'm gonna show you a little tip for the next piece. Since the next circle that I'm doing is pretty close to the first one, it's right here, I'm gonna be able to connect those sections, but first, I need to prepare this inside curve. So now this next circle is an inside curve. In order for that to turn under more easily, we're going to need to clip into the seam allowance. I'm going to start just where this loop is, so that way I know when I've come around the full circle. And now we only have an eighth of an inch seam allowance, so you wanna make sure to go shy of half of that, so shy of a sixteenth of an inch. The trick to clipping is, the tighter the curve, the more clips, the more gradual the curve, the fewer the clips you'll need. Since this an even curve, you'll just want to be clipping evenly. And you'll get a feel for how many clips you need, as you start to applique and turn it under. If it's too hard to turn it under, then that just means you need more clips. Or if it's way too easy to turn under, and you're still seeing raw edges from your clips, that means you've maybe clipped a little bit too much. But that's not a big problem, you can always just remove your basting stitches a little bit so that you can fully turn everything under, so you don't have raw edges. Here you can see, I've finished snipping. These little bits will make a big difference. I'm gonna flip to the back after I'm done clipping. I'm going to make another knot. Now this time, I've pulled my applique away from the background cause I don't want knot against that. Next to the basting stitch, just a couple little knots. This will save you a little bit of time if you've got a lot of thread left over after you've finished the outside circle, you can just jump to this next area and continue on. So that's ready, I'm gonna flip it back over. And again, I'm feeling for where my knot is. So I start that, bring your raw edge in to meet your basting stitch. And now you'll notice that it's much easier to turn under. In fact, if you wanted to try turning it under before you did the snips, you'll notice that the snipping really helps you bring everything in. So I'm just gonna continue around with the same stitch like I did before on the outside circle, until all of the inside is turned under. Continue appliqueing the rest of this inside circle on your B circle, and then you can do the outside of your circle A, just like you did your first outside circle of B. I've already finished those here. I was able to jump from the back with my thread like I showed you for the first circle. And we've got everything appliqued. Now you have your

quarter inch gap that was created by the eighth of an inch seam allowance from both sides of the circle. And now it's time to remove your basting stitches. Everything's gonna look a lot better once you get rid of these. I'm gonna snip my loop. And you should be able to just slip your scissors in there, pull it out. With these larger ones, you might wanna clip it kind of in half if you don't have any breaks on them. Just pull it out. Now you've got these nice clean edges. Give it a good press, and it'll look really nice. There's so much you can do with really simple shapes. In this one, I played around with fussy cutting the flower for my center circle, and used a different fabric for the outside circle. Also, with this inside circle, I used a cotton lawn, which is really fine. You can totally applique with all types of different fabrics. I love working with anything from heavier linens to thinner cotton lawns, such as this once. That's one of the really satisfying things about applique, is that you're really hands-on with the process. You can feel the fabrics, you can play with different types of fabrics, you have so much control because it's in your own hands. It's also super portable, so you'll find, hopefully that it's relaxing. It's a great technique that you can work on all the time.