

Balance

Using the fast2mark™ Essential Circle Tool from Piece O' Cake Designs

Becky Goldsmith



Finished quilt: 40" × 48"

Finished block: 8" × 8"

Use the fast2mark Essential Circle Tool from Piece O' Cake Designs to make the quarter-, half-, and full-circle blocks used in this fast and easy quilt.

MATERIALS

- Block background fabric(s): 2 yards (if you use the same fabric for all blocks) OR a variety of fat quarters and large scraps
- Orange fabric(s): A variety of large scraps to total approximately ½ yard
- Blue fabric(s): A variety of large scraps to total approximately ½ yard
- Binding: ¾ yard
- Backing and sleeve: 2⅞ yards
- Batting: 48" × 56"

Additional supplies:

- fast2mark Essential Circle Tool from Piece O' Cake Designs (by C&T Publishing)
- Sandpaper board (optional)
- 9 mm marking pencil (optional)

CUTTING

WOF = width of fabric

Block background fabric:

- Full circle blocks: Cut 3 squares 8½" × 8½".
- Half-circle blocks: Cut 5 rectangles 4½" × 8½".
- Quarter-circle blocks: Cut 18 squares 4½" × 4½".
- A: Cut 4 rectangles 4" × 8½".
- B: Cut 4 rectangles 4" × 16½".
- C: Cut 4 rectangles 4" × 24½".
- D: Cut 4 rectangles 4" × 32½".

Orange fabric:

- Full-circle block: Cut 1 square 8" × 8".
- Half-circle blocks: Cut 3 rectangles 4" × 8".



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- Quarter-circle blocks: Cut 10 squares 4" × 4".
- E: Cut 1 strip 1½" × 8½".
- F: Cut 1 strip 1½" × 16½".
- G: Cut 1 strip 1½" × 24½".
- H: Cut 1 strip 1½" × 32½".

Blue fabric:

- Full-circle blocks: Cut 2 squares 8" × 8".
- Half-circle blocks: Cut 2 rectangles 4" × 8".
- Quarter-circle blocks: Cut 8 squares 4" × 4".
- E: Cut 1 strip 1½" × 8½".
- F: Cut 1 strip 1½" × 16½".
- G: Cut 1 strip 1½" × 24½".
- H: Cut 1 strip 1½" × 32½".

Binding:

- Cut 1 square 27" × 27" to make a ½"-wide continuous bias strip 200" long. See Making a Continuous Bias Binding (below).

Essential Circle Tool Tip from Becky

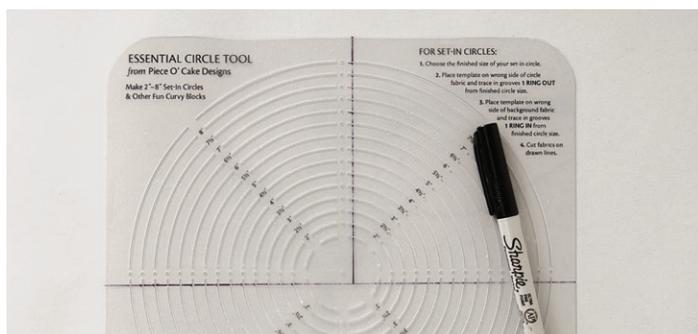
After using the Essential Circle Tool, I realized that adding an additional horizontal and vertical line makes it easier to use. I wish I'd thought of this sooner, but luckily it is easy to draw these lines on your tool.

The holes in the tool mark the *seamlines* in quarter- and half-circles. Adding the 2 drawn lines means that you don't have to eyeball the ¼" seam allowance.

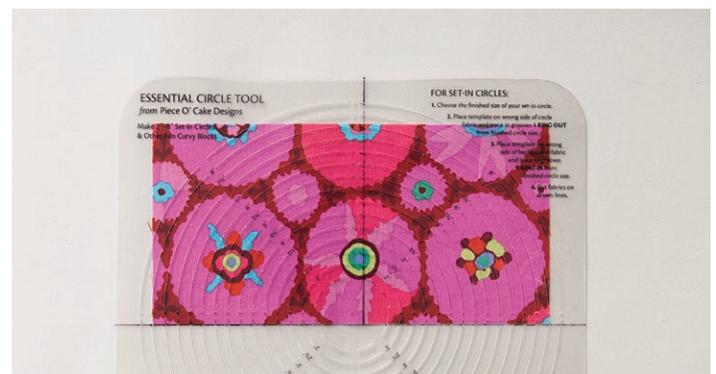
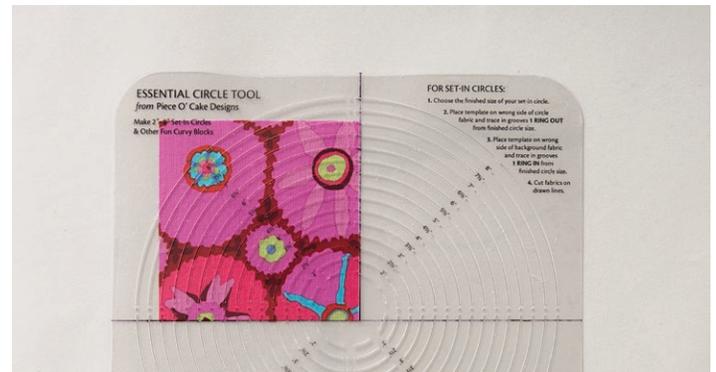
You will need a fine-tip permanent marker (such as a Sharpie Ultra Fine Point Permanent Marker) and a ruler.

Draw a line from side to side, ¼" below the line of holes.

Draw another line that starts at the line you just drew, extending to the top of the tool, ¼" to the right of the vertical line of the holes.



When placing the tool on your fabric to make quarter- or half-circles, line up the raw edge(s) of the fabric with the lines you drew on the tool. Draw the curve in the appropriate groove. (Refer to Using the Essential Circle Tool for Quarter- and Half-Circles in the instructions that came with the Essential Circle Tool.)



Full-Circle Block Assembly

The circles have a 7" finished diameter, inside each 8" finished size block.

Refer to the Set-In Circles instructions that came with the Essential Circle Tool.

Use the 6½" groove when tracing on the background fabric.

Use the 7½" groove when tracing on the orange and blue circle fabrics.

1. Construct 1 orange full-circle block.
2. Construct 2 blue full-circle blocks.
3. Carefully trim full-circle blocks to 8½" × 8½" as needed, keeping the circle centered in the block.

Half-Circle Block Assembly

Refer to the Quarter- and Half-Circles instructions that came with the Essential Circle Tool.

Use the 6½" groove when tracing on the background fabric.

Use the 7½" groove when tracing on the orange and blue circle fabrics.

1. Construct 3 orange half-circle blocks.
2. Construct 2 blue half-circle blocks.
3. Carefully trim half-circle blocks to 4½" × 8½" as needed.

Quarter-Circle Block Assembly

Refer to the Quarter- and Half-Circles instructions that came with the Essential Circle Tool.

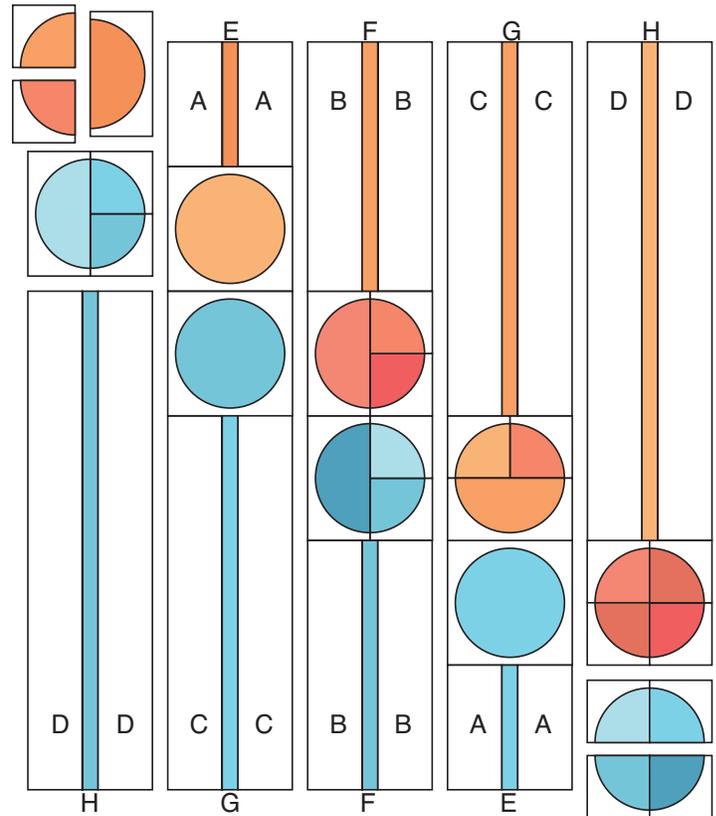
Use the 6½" groove when tracing on the background fabric.

Use the 7½" groove when tracing on the orange and blue circle fabrics.

1. Construct 10 orange quarter-circle blocks.
2. Construct 8 blue quarter-circle blocks.
3. Carefully trim quarter-circle blocks to 4½" × 4½" as needed.

Quilt Assembly

1. Place the full-, half-, and quarter-circle blocks and strips A-H on your design wall. Play with their placement until you are happy with the look of the quilt.
2. Sew together the half- and quarter-circle blocks to make complete circle blocks. Press the seam allowances in either direction.
3. Refer to the quilt assembly diagram (below) and sew the E-H strips between the A-D rectangles. Press the seam allowances toward the center.
4. Sew the blocks together into vertical rows. Press the seam allowances in alternate directions.
5. Sew the rows together. Press the seam allowances in either direction.
6. Refer to Finishing Techniques (below) and layer, baste, and quilt your project. Add a sleeve and documentation patch.



Quilt assembly



General Instructions

Fabric Preparation

Prewash your fabric before using it. Prewashing is a good way to test for colorfastness and shrinkage. Different fabrics shrink at different rates. It's better if the fabric bleeds and/or shrinks *before* it is sewn into the quilt. I like to work with prewashed fabric because has a better hand, it smells better, and I find it easier to work with either by machine or by hand.

About the Fabric Requirements

Cotton fabric is usually 40" to 44" wide off the bolt. To be safe, all fabric requirement calculations are based on a 40" width.

Use the fabric requirements as a guide, but remember that the yardage amounts will vary depending on how many fabrics you use and the sizes of the pieces you cut. The measurements in this book allow for both fabric shrinkage and a few errors in cutting.

Seam Allowances

All machine piecing is designed for ¼" seam allowances.

Finishing Techniques

Finishing the Quilt

1. Construct the back of the quilt, piecing as needed.
2. Place the backing right side down on a firm surface. Tape it down to keep it from moving while you baste it.
3. Place the batting over the backing and *pat* out any wrinkles.
4. Center the quilt top right side up over the batting.
5. Baste the layers together. (Yes, we thread baste for both hand and machine quilting.)
6. Quilt by machine or by hand.
7. Trim the outer edges. Leave ¼" of backing and batting extending beyond the edge of the quilt top. This extra fabric and batting will fill the binding nicely.



Trim outer edges.

8. Finish the outer edges with continuous bias binding (see instructions below).
9. Make a hanging sleeve and label, and attach them to the back of the quilt.



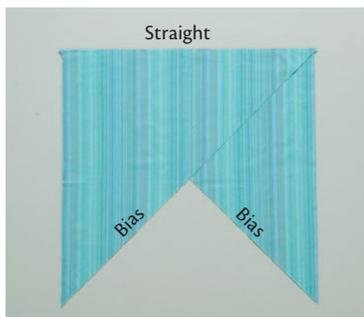
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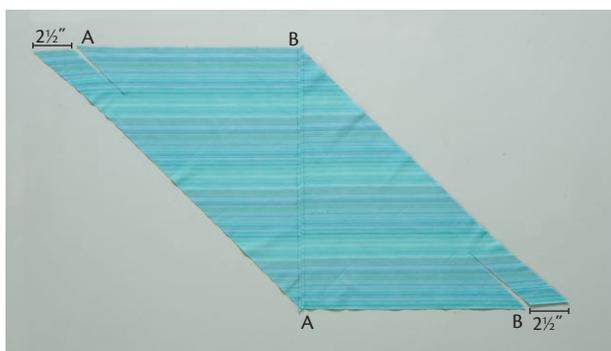
Making a Continuous Bias Binding

1. Start with a square of fabric and cut it in half diagonally. Refer to the pattern for the size of the square.
2. Sew the 2 triangles right sides together as shown. Be sure to sew the edges that are on the straight of grain.



Sew straight-of-grain edges of triangles together.

3. Press the seam allowances open. Make a short cut $2\frac{1}{2}$ " wide into each side as shown.



Make short cut into each side.

4. Match the A's and B's with the fabric right sides together. Pin and sew. Press the seam open.



Pin and sew. Press.

5. Use a rotary cutter and ruler to cut the continuous bias strip $2\frac{1}{2}$ " wide from the tube of fabric.



6. Turn the end of the strip under $\frac{1}{2}$ " and press.
7. Press the binding strip in half lengthwise, wrong sides together.

Sewing the Binding to the Quilt

1. With raw edges even, pin the binding to the edge of the quilt top, beginning a few inches away from a corner. Start sewing 6 " from the beginning of the binding strip, using a $\frac{1}{4}$ " seam allowance. Use a walking foot if you have one.



Sew, using $\frac{1}{4}$ " seam allowance.

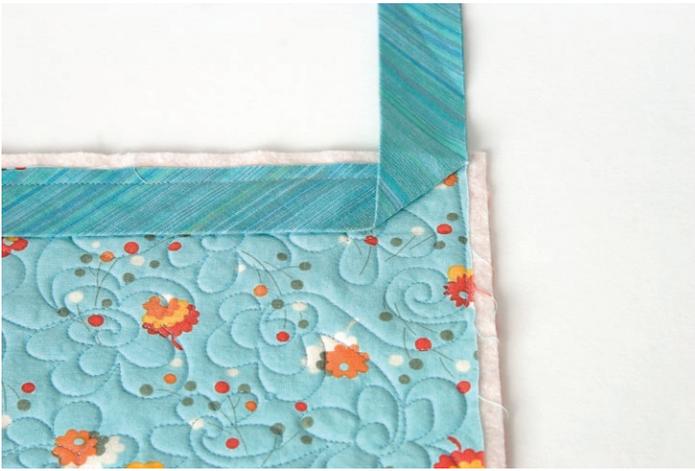
2. Stop $\frac{1}{4}$ " away from the corner and backstitch several stitches.
3. Fold the binding straight up as shown, so that it creates a 45° angle at the corner.



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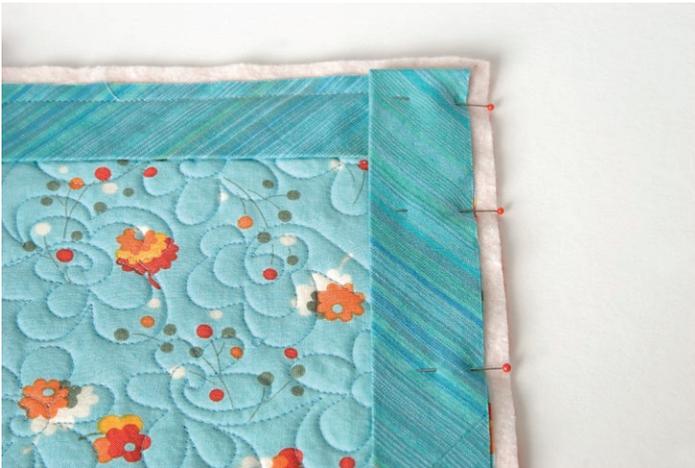
Fold binding up.

4. Fold the binding straight down, pin in place, and begin sewing the next side of the quilt.



Slip squared end into angled end.

8. Pin the joined ends to the quilt and finish sewing the binding to the quilt.



Fold binding down and pin.

5. Sew the binding to all sides of the quilt, following the process in Steps 2–4. Stop a few inches before you reach the beginning of the binding, but don't trim the excess binding yet.

6. Overlap the ends of the binding and cut the second end square. Be sure to cut the binding long enough so the cut end is covered completely by the angled end.

7. Slip the squared end into the angled end.



Pin and finish sewing.

9. Turn the binding to the back of the quilt, covering the raw edges. If there is too much batting, trim some to leave your binding nicely filled. Stitch the folded edge of the binding to the back of the quilt.

About the Author



Becky grew up in Oklahoma and met her husband, Steve, at the University of Oklahoma. They married in 1978. Steve is a college professor at Austin College in Sherman, Texas.

Their two sons, Chris and Jeff, are grown and married to Lorna and Celia, respectively. Becky and Steve have three grandchildren and are having great fun watching Elanor, Jack, and Bear grow up.

Becky met Linda Jenkins, her partner in Piece O' Cake Designs at a meeting of the Green Country Quilters' Guild in Tulsa, not long after Becky started quilting. They've been friends ever since. They started Piece O' Cake in 1994 and Becky could not have asked for a better partner. Linda and Becky still work together, but Becky designed the Essential Circle Tool and wrote this pattern on her own.

Designing and making quilts, writing books, and teaching others how to make quilts is a better career than Becky could ever have imagined. She thinks quilters are wonderful people and loves being a part of the global quilt-world!

Find Becky online at pieceocake.com.



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