

Fabric Origami Embellishments

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Last Christmas, my stepdaughter put up her first Christmas tree. I rummaged in the attic for old ornaments and decorations to give her. Then I had the idea to make her some ornaments using a method I learned at Leslie Fehling's Summerhill Retreat — fabric origami. She taught the same method at the 2009 Custom Sewing Institute, and uses these fabric flowers to embellish window treatments and pillows. I will continue to give my stepdaughter an original origami ornament every Christmas with each year written on the back.

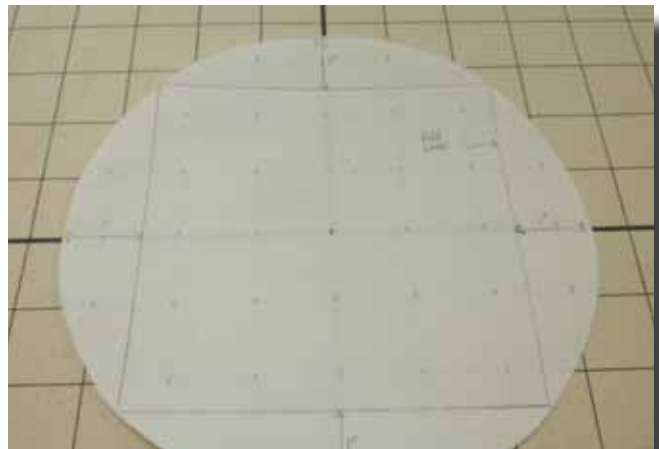
Materials and Supplies

Two 8-inch squares of contrasting fabric (silk or cotton quilting fabrics are best)
Decorative Wire Ornament Hanger (available at Michaels or Ben Franklin)
Paper (for practice pattern and folding)
Compass
Needle and Pins
Erasable Fabric Marker
Surface for fabric folding and pinning
Tieback Ring, 3/8 inch
Covered Button or Bead (optional)





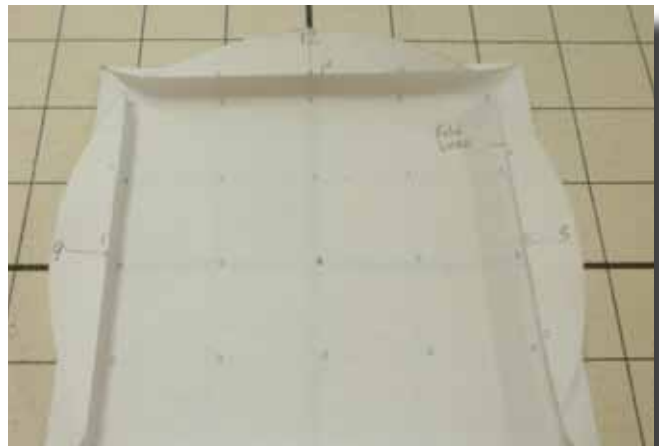
1a. Using a compass, draw a perfect 7-inch circle on paper. (Note: The circle should be no less than 6 inches and no larger than 8 inches. Keep in mind that the seam allowance is $\frac{1}{4}$ inch and that your sewn circle will be a $\frac{1}{2}$ inch smaller than your cut circle.) Cut out the circle, fold in half vertically, then horizontally, and mark the center.



1b. Fold the circle into a square by folding each side in 1 inch measured at the 12, 3, 6 and 9 o'clock positions on the circle.



1c. Draw folding lines for Step 1d by connecting the 12, 3, 6 and 9 o'clock positions on the reverse side of the circle.



1d. Fold the 1-inch flaps back $\frac{1}{2}$ inch and pin at the 12, 3, 6 and 9 o'clock positions on the circle. Finger press the folds.



1e. Mark the circle center on the back and fold each corner to the back center point utilizing the fold lines drawn in Step 1c. At this point, you've completed the basic folding pattern for your fabric piece.



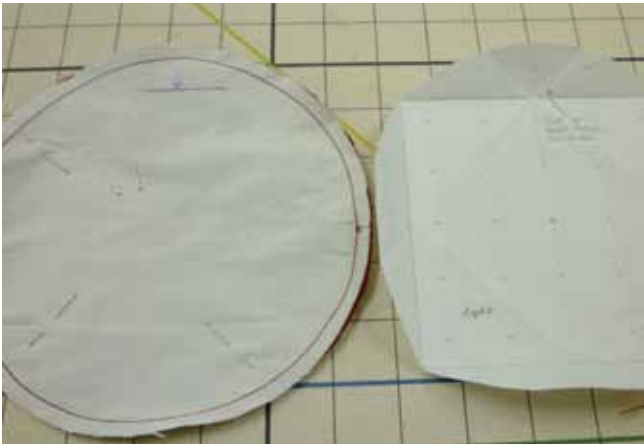
1f. Using the pattern piece, decide the contrasting fabric layout, i.e., which will be top and bottom (dark and light) when you begin folding to obtain the final fabric flower look.



1g. The fabrics will be stitched right sides together all the way around, so you'll need a slit in a fold line to allow turning the circle right side out. Make sure the slit line will not show in the final fabric folding arrangement. Use the paper pattern piece to determine the optimal location.



2. Mark the circle on the wrong side of one of the 8-inch fabric squares using a compass. In this example, I marked a 7-inch circle. Cut the circle out and pin right sides together with the other 8" fabric square. Cut the second circle using the first one as a template. Make sure they are exactly round. Using a stitch length of 2.0, stitch the two circles together with an exact 1/4-inch seam.



3. Using the paper pattern piece, mark the cutting slit on the appropriate fabric circle. Cut the slit in one circle only.



4. Turn the circles right side out through the slit. Press an exact circle. Note: There's no need to notch the seam nor finish off the slit.



5. As was done in Step 1b, fold the circle into a square. The folds should be 1 inch at the 12, 3, 6, and 9 o'clock positions on the circle. The corners should be 90-degree angles. Pin and finger press the folds.



6. Repeat Step 1d.



7. Stitch through the fabric layers at the 12, 3, 6 and 9 o'clock positions.



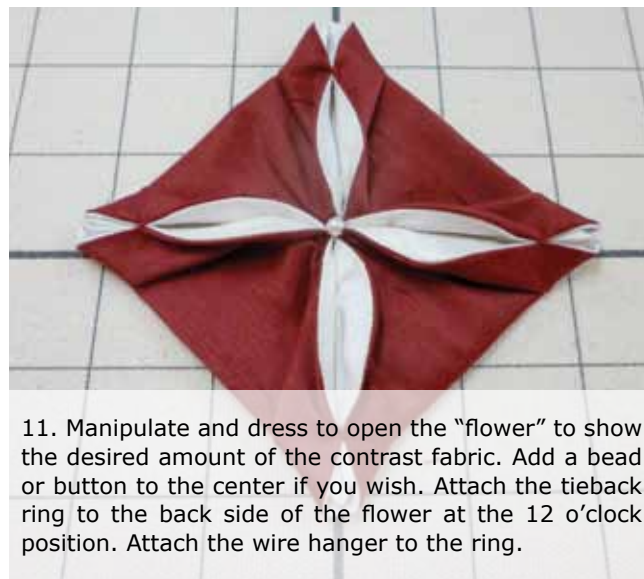
8. Mark the center of the circle on the reverse side. Fold each corner to the reverse center and pin.



9. Stitch two stitches through all layers approximately 1/2 inch from each corner.



10. Stitch down the center points.



11. Manipulate and dress to open the "flower" to show the desired amount of the contrast fabric. Add a bead or button to the center if you wish. Attach the tieback ring to the back side of the flower at the 12 o'clock position. Attach the wire hanger to the ring.



Origami References

Besides the hands-on training and written instructions provided by Leslie, I have found the following references for fabric origami to be helpful: *Beautiful Quiltagami — New Ideas for Fabric Folding* by Jo Hiney, *Fantastic Fabric Folding — Innovative Quilting Projects* by Rebecca Wat and *Flower Origami — Fabric Flowers from Simple Shapes* by Kumiko Sudo. ✂