



# Table Treatments: Place Mats, Napkins and Runners

7.135

Page 1

Napkins, place mats and table runners all add to a dressed table. This guideline covers basic sizes and shapes for these table treatments. For information on tablecloths, see Guideline 7.130.

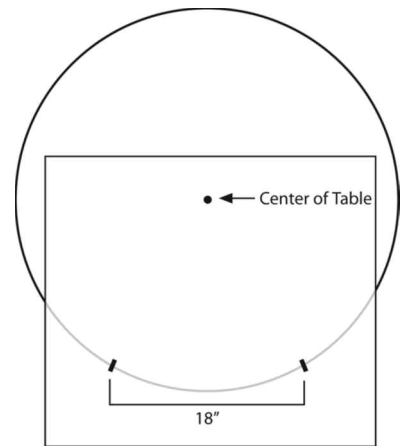
## Place Mats

Place mats are perfect for sectioning off place settings and providing a more elegant table for casual dining. They also protect the tabletop from daily wear.

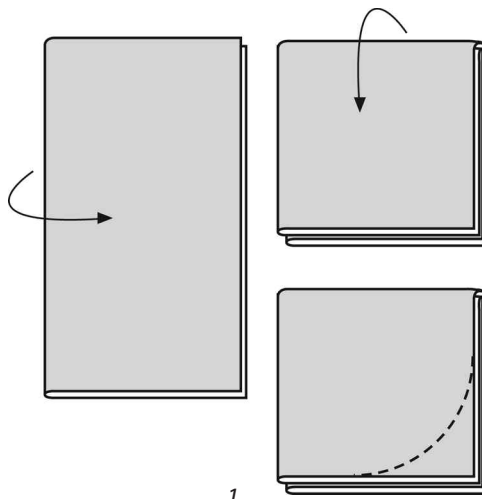
**Rectangular place mats** usually measure 12" to 14" deep by 18" to 20" wide. Draw a pattern with a right-angled ruler, and add whatever is needed for a hem finish (see "Hem Finishes" at the end of this guideline). Because of their straight lines and angular shape, rectangular place mats lend themselves to mitered corners and embellishments using ribbon.

**Oval place mats** are the same general size as rectangular place mats, only with softened corners that may help them fit more comfortably on a smaller table. To draw a pattern, start with a rectangle of the desired size. Fold the rectangle into fourths, and, using a large plate as a template, round the outer corners (1). Avoid using flat ribbon when trimming an oval place mat. Instead, use bias tape, scroll braid or ruffled trim, all of which can follow a curve without bunching or rippling.

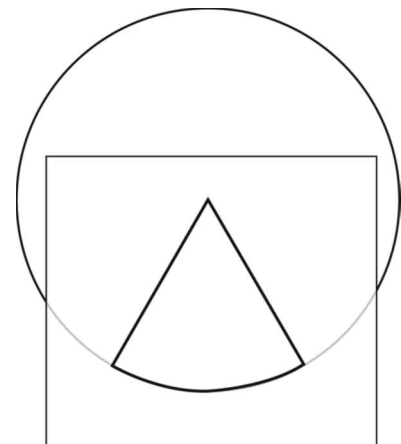
A **contoured "oval" place mat** (narrower along one long edge than the other) more comfortably fits the curve of a round table. To create a pattern, place a large piece of pattern tissue or newspaper on the table. Mark the center of the table with a dot. Then place two marks 18" apart at the edge of the table (2). Connect the edge marks to the center to create a pie shape. Connect the two edge markings by drawing a line that follows the curved edge of the table (3).



2



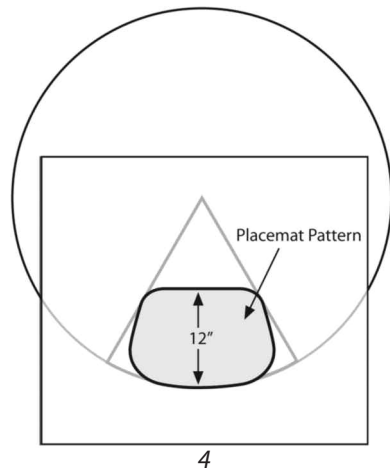
1



3

Next, make several marks within the pie shape, each one 12" from the edge of the table. Using a plate as a template, round the edges of the place-mat area (4), and cut your pattern from the tissue.

Keeping these general dimensions in mind, consider drawing your own novelty place mat shape to reflect the room's theme or decorating style. Choose the shape, the silhouette of a piece of fruit, a fish shape or even a seasonal design, then add the seam allowances to the basic shape. Quilt or stitch and clean finish the place mats as you would any standard shape.



## Napkins

Measuring anywhere from 6" to 22" square, fabric napkins can be used as small cocktail coasters or for full-size formal dinner napkins. Select a practical, absorbent fabric, or make a decorative festive choice as the occasion warrants, coordinating or contrasting the chosen fabric with the table covering or place mats. Decide upon a finished size; then add hem allowances (see "Hem Finishes") as necessary before cutting.

When making a large number of napkins, decide the napkin size depending on the width of the chosen fabric. Position two, three or more napkins across the full width of the fabric, eliminating as much fabric waste as possible. For example, for 60"-wide fabric, cut two 30" napkins across the width or three 20" napkins. For 45" fabrics, cut two 22 1/2" napkins or three 15" napkins.

---

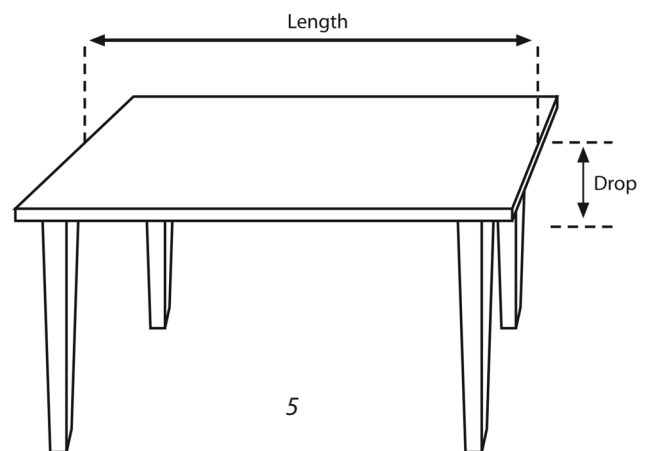
*Tip: Instead of hemming the edges of a napkin, cut a second napkin in a coordinating fabric, and line it to the edge. Seaming the two fabrics is faster than hemming, and the two coordinating or contrasting fabrics provide an interesting design element. Or they can create two separate looks depending on how they're folded and what table treatment they're meant to coordinate with.*

---

## Table Runners

Table runners can be used alone to help highlight and protect a beautiful tabletop or used with a tablecloth. They typically measure about 18" wide, but they can be cut wider or narrower to fit the table.

Measure for the length of a runner by measuring the length of the table and adding two times the desired drop (one for each end) (5).



Runners can be made like place mats. You can stitch two different fabrics right sides together and turn for a reversible, changeable runner, or you can use any of the hem finishes you would typically use for a place mat.

## Hem Finishes

Depending upon the fabric choice, hemming a rectangular place mat is an acceptable finish. If the place mat is oval or it has an intricate shape, bind the cut edges with a double-fold bias tape to create a clean finish on both sides and add a design element to the mat. Line the place mats with a coordinating fabric to create interest and make them reversible.

As with tablecloths, a doubled, topstitched hem of 1/3" to 3/4" is ideal for napkins. Or serge the cut edges. 🖱