Simple Bargello Quilt by Julie Luoma, Off the Wall Quilting

My quilt was made with 4 colors. If you want to get the feeling of movement, make sure you have a pretty big contrast from the darkest to the lightest.

You can number your fabrics or name them like I did. (mine were black, stripey, dark red, light red)

I used "about" 2 yards of each color…including two borders and the binding. I don't measure much, though.

Press your fabric and fold it in half, selvedge to selvedge

Cut 2.5" strips. I just cut all of it.

1
2
3
4
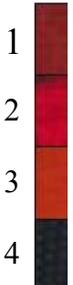
Lay your piles of strips out in the order you want them, darkest to lightest. Don't stress over this.

Start sewing the strips together. Here's how I do it:

I sewed the two darkest together. All of them.

Then I sewed the two lightest together, again, all of them.

Press your seams to one side.

Look at your strips and notice that the ends are even where you started sewing them and probably not completely even on the other end since fabric comes in different widths.

Starting with the uneven edges, sew the two dark strips to the two light strips. This way you are sewing in the opposite direction than when you made the first two sets of strips.

Make sure you are sewing them so that they come out in the order you want the colors.

Press the seams to one side.

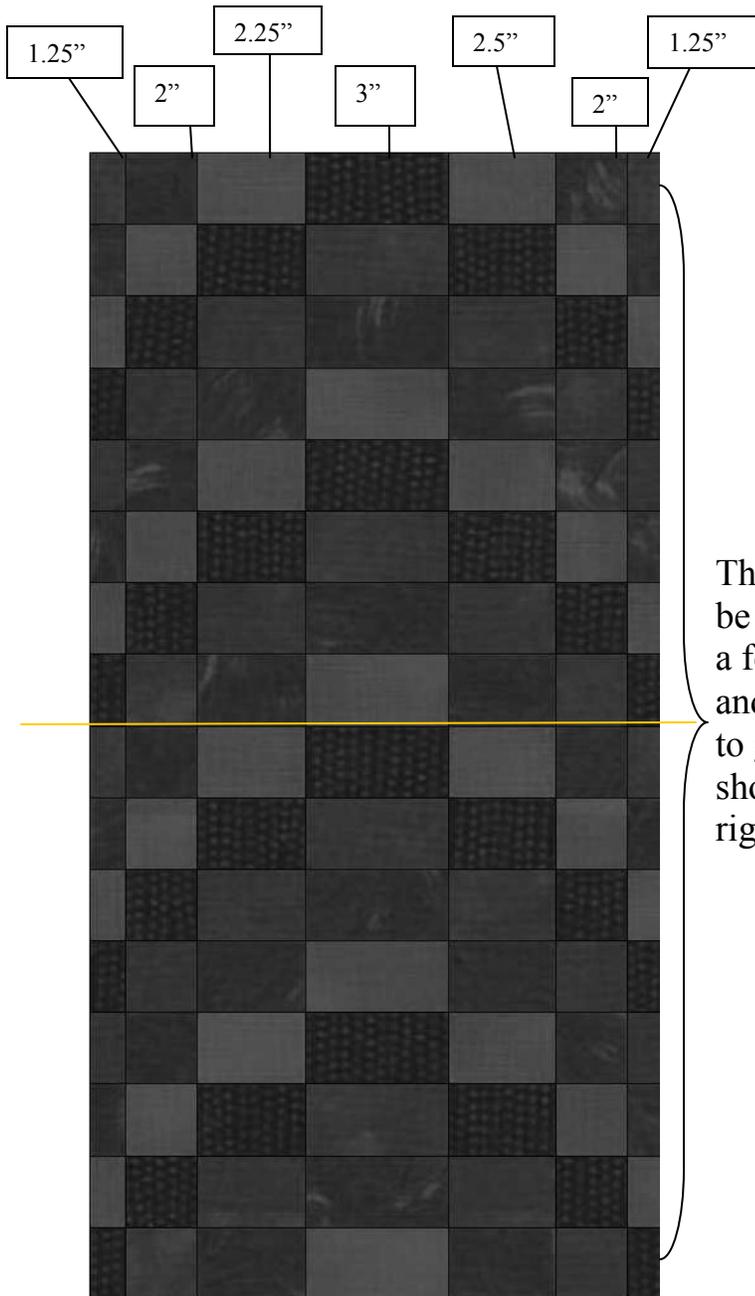You should end up with a stack of strips, 4 fabrics wide.

Sew two 4-fabric wide strips together to make a panel with 8 strips.
Press the seams to one side.

Take one of the 8-strip pieces and fold it in half at the seam. Lay it on your cutting board and trim one end even.

Look at the pattern below. You are going to cut strips (at a right angle to the strips you sewed) that match the sizes for each row. I'm going to have you do one at a time here to get the hang of it, but you can then cut all of your strips of each size if you want.

You will cut 3 of each measurement you see in the boxes.

1.25"

2"

2.25"

3"

2.5"

2"

1.25"

This is two sets high, you will be adding a third and unsewing a few pieces from the bottom and re-sewing them at the top to get the colors to line up as shown. Don't worry about that right now, just cut the srips.

Step by step:
Lay or hang each pile of strips together and then lay the next stack in order
Cut 3 strips 1.25 inches

Cut 3 strips 2 inches
Cut 3 strips 2.5 inches
Cut 3 strips 3 inches
Cut 3 strips 2.5 inches
Cut 3 strips 2 inches
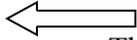
Or, you can just cut 6 at 1.25 inches
6 at 2 inches
6 at 2.5 inches
3 at 3 inches
Lay them out in stacks of 3 in order

Sew two of the 1.25 inch strips end to end. Make sure that you keep your strips going the same direction so the colors stay in order when you sew them together. Now add another, again, keeping them all in the same color order.

That's your first row! Press all of the seams going in the same direction.

Now take 3 of the 2 inch strips and sew them end-to-end like the first row.

Hold this strip up next to the first strip and you will see that all of the colors line up. Move the strip up one color and you can see how it should step up to make the pattern. Remove the top piece by unstitching it and then move that piece to the bottom of the strip and sew it on.

Your strips should now line up next to each other with the colors stepping up a position. Press your seams going in the opposite direction from the first row.

1
Remove stitching here
2
3
4

2
3
4
1

Add top piece down here
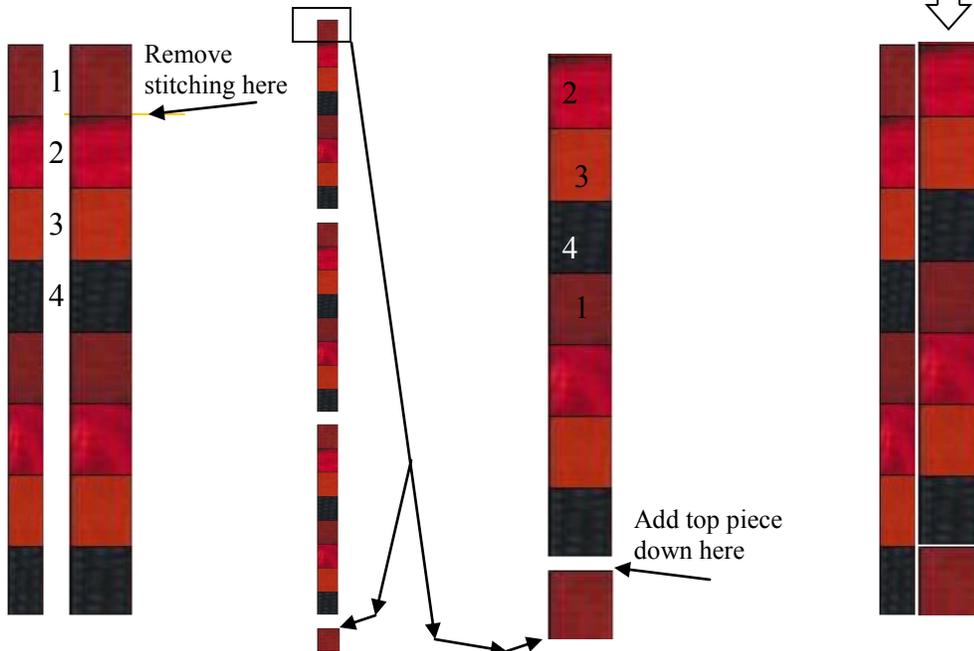
Sew the two long strips together.
Lay them right sides together and line up your first two seams. Because they are pressed opposite directions, you should be able to feel both "bumps" and you can feel when they are up tight with one another. This is the key to matching up your seams so it looks like you have straight lines both up and down.
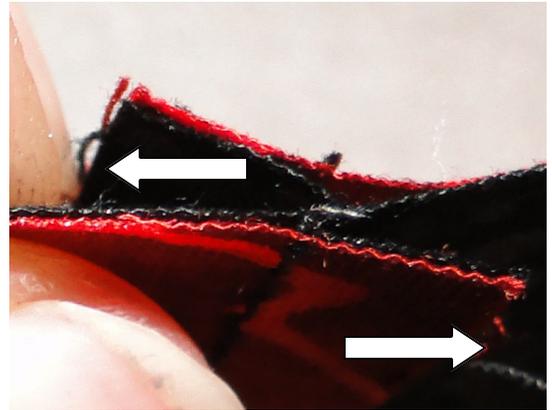
Keep going row by row doing the same thing.

Sew all three strips end to end and then look at the pattern or the previous strip to see how much you need to move the colors up.

The next row will need two pieces removed from the top and moved to the bottom. The one after that will need three. Then two, then one, etc.

After you finish a section of 7 strips, make another one just like it.
Now flip the 2nd one around so it's pointing down instead of up and put it next to the first piece. It should look like this

Sew those two pieces together and make two more!

Keep going until you have 3 of these or it's as wide as you want it.

Add borders as desired. I added a 3" black border and then cut my remaining strips at a 30 degree angle into 2.5 inch strips and made those into another border.