

FABRIC COLOR AND DESIGN CHOICES

First, choose a feature fabric that includes two or more colors you like. This fabric is *usually* used for one of the quilt borders as well. Fabrics with large colorful prints, paisleys, floral designs, or just multi-swirls of color are good choices. Then choose two different color families to go with this feature fabric.

Hint

Using a red viewing lens will help determine the value differences between several fabrics when they are next to each other.

The remaining 11 fabrics should go with one of the two color families you selected to emphasize. These do not necessarily need to be mono-colored fabrics, but should primarily feature a color from one of the two families. Pick out fabrics in light, medium, and dark values in each of the color families. There should be a definite change of value between the fabrics, so that the colors do not blend together and look flat.

The “standard” arrangement described in the next section has 6 fabrics in each color family. The feature fabric is incorporated into either of the two color groups. So for this arrangement, you would need 6 fabrics for one color family, and 5 fabrics, plus the feature fabric, for the second color family. (Modifications to this grouping are covered in Chapter 10, “Design Variations.”)

Selecting fabrics in a variety of print sizes adds interest to a quilt. Be adventurous and use a fabric that you ordinarily would not use. I call this a “risky” fabric. A risky fabric is one you customarily would not choose because the design or color(s) are not ones you typically pick out. However, such a fabric can add a sparkle.

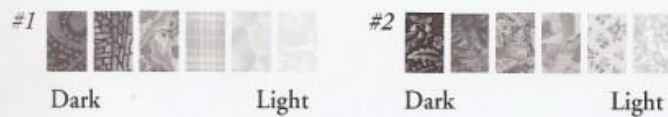
Directional fabrics are also fun to use. Directional fabrics have a printed design going in one direction. **Special instructions on page 25 give specific sewing instructions for using directional fabrics.** This information should be followed closely so that the directional fabric does not end up being upside down in the bottom area of the heart shape.

ARRANGING THE FABRICS

The heart shape of the design is made prominent by the arrangement of the fabrics. The following sections guide you through grouping the 12 fabrics to achieve a pleasant effect. There are several ways to arrange the fabrics. In each case the fabrics are assembled in a specific order. First the fabrics are divided into color families. Then each color family is sorted by value, for example, dark to light. Different visual effects result from how the color value order is manipulated.

The Standard Arrangement

The “standard” arrangement is the one I teach most often in my classes. (Other arrangements are covered in Chapter 10, Design Variations.) In it, I shade from one color group to the other, from dark to light then light to dark. The feature fabric is incorporated into one of these runs, in the color family where it fits best. To begin, set your fabrics in front of you and arrange the two color families by value from dark to light.



Place one group on the left side, keeping the values in order from dark to light. The other group is placed to the right of this group. Switch the value run, keeping them in order, so that the values shade from light to dark. This is the “standard” value arrangement.



Step back and check to make sure that there is a definite value change between each fabric. If the values blend too closely, the heart shape becomes undefined or mushy. Another point to keep in mind is that the first dark fabric in line, at one end (A), will end up appearing next to the last dark fabric in line, at the other end (B).



Once all the fabrics are lined up in a pleasing order, decide which fabric you would like to see in the V that is formed at the exact center of the Bargello Heart. Usually one of the lighter fabrics is chosen (*), but a dark fabric can also be used.



Next, determine which of the fabrics on either side of the V fabric, the fabric to the immediate right (a) or left (b), you would like to see “surrounding” the V. When the heart is constructed, this fabric will appear to enclose the V fabric.



Hint

Refer to Figure 1, on page 15, to see where the “center V” and “surrounding” fabrics will end up in the finished heart design.

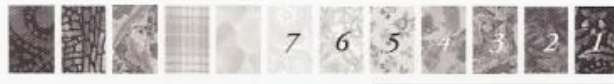
Assigning Fabric Numbers

The next step is to assign a number to each fabric (keeping the fabrics in the established order), from #1 through #12. As each fabric is numbered, check to see where it appears in the finished heart design illustrated on the following page. The fabrics in the illustration (Figure 1) are arranged from dark to light/light to dark, as discussed in this section.

The center V fabric is assigned #7. The fabric that is chosen to surround it is assigned #6. These two fabrics together form the central area of the heart.



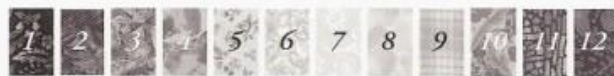
The fabrics on the other side of #6 are assigned numbers in descending order from #5 to #1. They form the inner area of the heart image.



The fabrics on the other side of #7 are assigned #8 through #12, and form the outer area of the heart.

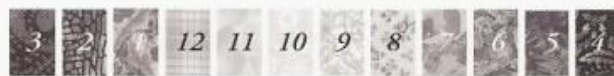


Now, arrange the fabrics so that they are in order, from left to right, #1 through #12. Switch the fabrics to opposite sides, if necessary.



Arrangement Variations

The V fabric (#7) does not necessarily need to be one of the fabrics in the center of the value run. If you choose a fabric toward one end, for example, the look of the heart will change, but the numbering procedure is the same. First choose the #7 and #6 fabrics, then number the rest accordingly.

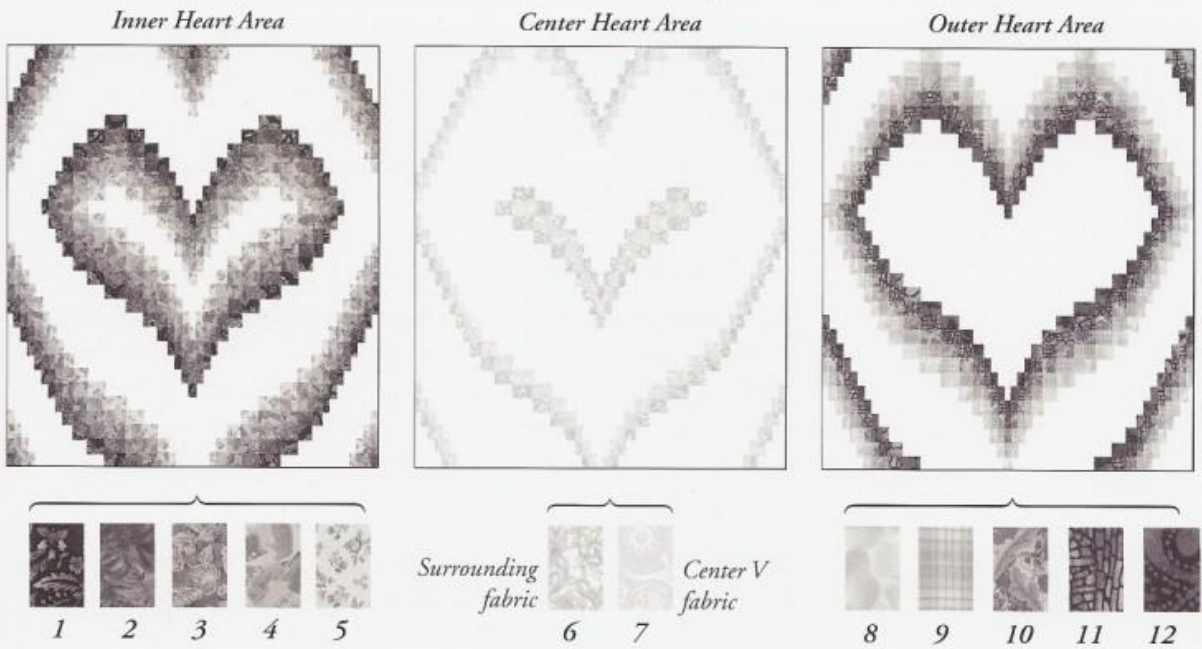


Finally, switch the fabrics around so that they are in sequence from left to right.



See Chapter 10, "Design Variations," for illustrations of some different fabric value arrangements.

Figure 1 How fabric numbers correspond to the areas of the heart image



The Inner, Center, and Outer areas, shown above with their numbered fabric swatches, form this complete Bargello Heart image when put together.

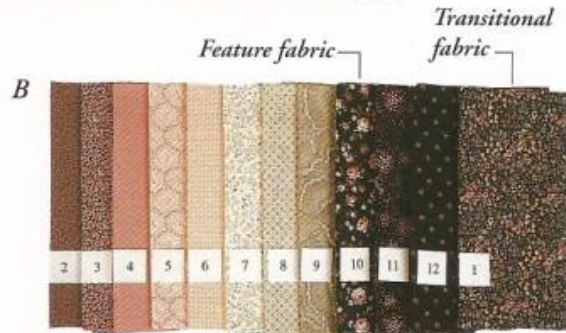


The pink color family ranges from a dark burgundy fabric to a tiny pink, blue, and white print. The black color family ranges from a pale gray and white geometric print to black fabrics with floral prints.



The V fabric (#7) and its surrounding fabric (#6) determine the order in which the rest of the fabrics will be numbered.

The last fabric in the black color family was chosen to blend with the burgundy at the other end of the row. This can be thought of as a "transitional" fabric.



Fabric #1 is moved from the end of the row to the beginning, so that the fabrics are in order from #1 to #12. Swatches can now be cut from the fabrics and secured to a Fabric Chart for reference.



1. *Victorian Dreams* by Nancy Podolsky, 64" x 66" (Basic size). Quilted by Norene Michener.