

Color schemes, color theory, color wheel.

Information

A color scheme is a plan or organization of color to use in a work or composition. A color scheme is a way to work with color.

All color schemes include tints and shades of the hues.

color theory information

What colors should I use?

If you have no idea what colors you like or what colors will convey the mood you want, here are some color scheme suggestions. Keep this sheet as you will be tested on these terms. The color system we are using is called the twelve color wheel because there are 12 colors and it is in a circle like a wheel. On the net – search for the interactive color wheel by the virtual instructor.

1. **Triad:** Triad means three colors evenly spaced around the color wheel. There are four triads in the 12 color wheel. Ex.: Primary, secondary and two tertiary/intermediate triads.

A. **Primary triad color scheme:** red, blue and yellow. They can not be obtained by mixing other colors together. They must be purchased at a store or ground from minerals.

B. **Secondary triad color scheme:** orange, purple and green. The secondary colors are obtained by mixing 2 primary colors together. Ex.: Red and blue = purple, Yellow and red = orange, Blue and yellow = green

2. **Intermediate/ tertiary color scheme:** obtained by mixing together one primary color and one secondary color. Ex.: Blue and green = blue-green (there are two tertiary triads, but one does not have to use them as a triad.

3. **Neutral color scheme :** white, black, and gray (One can add the neutral colors to any color scheme and the color scheme will stay pure.)

4. **Color temperature color scheme:** These two color schemes are based on perceived color temperature.

A. **Cool color scheme:** blue, green and violet. This color scheme includes all colors from Yellow-green to Violet. All of these colors have blue in them.

B. **Warm color scheme:** Yellow, red and orange. This color scheme includes all colors from Yellow to Red-Violet.

5. **Color emotion color scheme:** This is cultural based. Colors have an emotional meaning based on the artist's culture. Artists can have a personal color meaning or emotion scheme as well.

6. **Complementary color scheme:** These are colors that are opposite each other on the wheel. Ex.: A. yellow and purple, B. blue and orange, C. red and green. Complementary color schemes are very intense as they excite all of the rods and cones in the back of the eye which causes a physical excitement. They are used for sports teams and Christmas because of this fact. If a sport team can't use a complementary pair, they will use a color plus white. The white will excite all of the cones in the eye also and cause the same effect. If designing a room, a designer will not use complimentary pairs as they are too intense to be lived with for long.

7. **Analogous color scheme:** The most harmonious color scheme. This color scheme uses three or four colors that are right next to each other on the color wheel. These colors then have a color in common. An example of an analogous color scheme is? Yellow – green, Yellow, Yellow – orange, Orange.

8. **Monochromatic color scheme:** One color plus all of its shades and tints.

9. **Color value color schemes:** The lightness or darkness of a hue. Pastels and shades.

A. **High Key color scheme** are pastel colors or tints: ex. Light blue, pink, light yellow etc. These colors have white add.

B. **Low Key colors scheme** are dark colors or shades: ex. Dark blue, dark red, dark purple. These colors have black added.

9.5. Color intensity: The brightness or dullness of a color. This is also used in High key or Low key color schemes, but the brightness or dullness of the color is considered instead of the value. Intensity is the amount of light of the pure color that reaches the eye. A color is at its most intense right out of the tube. (brightness) Any mixing of the color with white, black or a compliment cuts down the amount of pure color light that reaches the eye. The color intensity is cut down or dulled. (dullness)

10. **Split-complement color scheme:** Since complementary colors are a little intense, most artists use a split complement. Ex.: Red – the complement of red is green, but green is too intense so they split the difference and choose the two colors beside green (Yellow-green and Blue-green). Therefore you would use three colors – Red, Yellow-green and Blue-green. Or Green – the complement of Green is Red, but if that is too intense choose the two colors on either side of Red – Red-orange and Red – Violet. Therefore you would use the three colors of Green, Red-orange and Red – Violet. Another example: The complement of Yellow-green is Red-Violet. If Red-Violet is too intense , choose the two colors on either side of the Red-Violet: Red and Violet. Again use the three colors of Yellow-Green, Red and Violet.

11. **Plastic color scheme:** cool colors recede to the background; hot colors come forward to the foreground.

12. **Local color scheme:** Color that is seen in nature. Ex. Green leaves, blue water, brown tree trunks.

13. **Subjective color scheme:** Color that you choose. Fantasy colors like blue tree trunks and pink grass.

14. **Tetrad color scheme:** four colors that are evenly spaced around the color wheel. Ex.: Yellow, red-orange, purple, and blue-green. It follows a square or rectangle. The rectangle will not have the colors evenly spaced.