

Silm

Colour

Color is one of the most powerful tools in the designer's toolkit.

You can use color to impact users' emotions, draw their attention, and put them in the right frame of mind to make a purchase. It's also one of the main factors in customers' perception of a brand or a product.

When a design gets it right, you likely never notice it — but when it gets it wrong? It doesn't matter if it's an overly bright, eye-singeing background, or black text on a dark gray background, sub-par colour choices can ruin even the most functional app or website. Much like other aspects of design, color isn't just there to spice up an app. Color can be a tool just like any other feature of the user experience

With an infinite number of possible color combinations out there, it can be hard to decide what colors will make the biggest impact on your site or app. It would be impossible to test everything, but I've picked up a few tricks and trends about how color affects users' attitudes and behavior.

In this article, we'll cover basic color theory, psychology, accessibility issues, and impact on conversion rate etc. We'll also look at how color can attract attention and make a website memorable.

The theory of colour

it's important to understand some basic principles of color and design. While color might not seem like an exceedingly complex subject, there's a good reason why every art class begins not only with a lesson on how to use color, but how to make color.

The basics — as explained by the color wheel — are simple: primary colors (red, yellow, and blue) can be combined to create secondary colors (green, purple, and orange). Likewise, various fractions of white can be added to a color to create tints, and black can be added to

create shades.

Colors opposite from one another (like red and green, or blue and orange) are considered complementary. These colors contrast strongly, making them stand out when next to (or on top of) each other. Colors that are next to each other are considered to be analogous. These colors have much lower contrast, meaning that they tend to not stand out as much when close together.

There's nothing inherently "right" or "wrong" about colors with high or low contrast. Sometimes an application will call for bright colors that starkly contrast against one another. Other times, you'll want something that's a bit gentler. Generally, the more you want something to stand out, the more you should rely on contrasting colors.

The best way to get a feel for how colors go (and don't go) together is to play around with them. Even if you aren't working on a project right now, a quick spin of Adobe's color wheel might get your mind thinking about color in a new way.

Swatches of Emotion: Color and Psychology

When you're solidifying the design philosophy behind your app, you can't just be thinking about how things look — you have to think about how they feel. We're not talking about haptic feedback, either. Ever since Johann Wolfgang Goethe studied the physiological effects of color, we've been obsessed with using color to produce physical and emotional effects.

Even today, color takes center stage in many brands' philosophy of design. Healthcare, business, and government all tend to use blue, as it gives off a sense of trust and professionalism. Green is seen as a youthful color that's full of energy — and, of course, reflects a sense of environmentalism and closeness to nature. Red is energetic and impulsive, giving off the impression of speed, efficiency, and power. Every color that we see (and certainly every color that we intrinsically associate with certain brands) implies something, either directly or indirectly, that helps drive our perception of individual brands.

Think about the brands and symbols you recognize as being very color-centric. Apple, Wikipedia, and the New York Times all feature grayscale colors, symbolizing a calm

trustworthiness. These brands are viewed as balanced and reliable. Whole Foods, John Deere, and Starbucks all feature green shades in their logos, connecting nature and wholesomeness to their brand and their products.

Some colors even go beyond their brands, defining entire industries. Think about how many fast food or restaurant chains use red or yellow color schemes, for example. These colors help trigger us mentally, placing us in a certain psychological place that primes us to purchase some sort of product.

While this is something that marketers figured out long ago, science justifies a lot of our mutual feelings about color. Red, for example, has been found to make some people react faster and more forcefully to certain stimuli. It also can intimidate: researchers found that when test takers saw the color red, their scores were worse.

Even stranger? The color of a pill has a mild effect on how it works. Blue pills work best as sedatives, yellow works best as an antidepressant, and in all cases, bright colors work best. While this is likely just the placebo effect boosting our responses to active medication, the effect is strong enough for companies to consider it when producing new pharmaceuticals.

Now, chill I'm not saying that using a yellow-based color scheme in your mood tracking app is going to make it effective as an antidepressant but the color palette you choose could reasonably have an impact on a user's mood — so choose wisely.