

Guidelines (<https://www.england.nhs.uk/nhsidentity/identity-guidelines/>)

Colours

Colour is a key element of any organisation's identity. Our research shows that patients and the public strongly associate the NHS with the colours blue and white. 87% of people spontaneously recall these two colours when asked about the NHS Identity.

Therefore, NHS Blue and white are the dominant colours in the NHS colour palette. They help signpost people to NHS organisations and services, by ensuring that materials are instantly recognisable as originating from the NHS. They also ensure that communications maximise the strong value of the NHS Identity and the positive attributes that patients, the public and stakeholders attach to the NHS.

It is important to note that the NHS colour palette applies to the design of NHS communications including graphics and illustrations. For illustrations, we recognise that the palette does not include colours for skin tones. Please use the colours you require for that purpose. The colour palette does not apply to portrait/subject photography. Colour photography usually contains a multitude of colours and does not need to reflect the NHS colour palette or the colour emphasis shown below. However, abstract images do need to follow the NHS colour palette as the images are being used as graphics.

Core NHS colours

NHS Blue
Emphasis of tint use
Pantone: 300
CMYK: 99/50/0/0
RGB: 0/94/184
#005EB8
RAL: 5017

White
CMYK: 0/0/0/0
RGB: 255/255/255
#FFFFFF

The core NHS Blue and white are supported by four other groups of colours in the NHS colour palette, to provide NHS organisations with the flexibility to differentiate their communications from each other, but not from the NHS.

The colours in the NHS colour palette all offer at least an AA accessibility rating, with many offering the maximum AAA rating when used with sufficient contrasts on appropriate backgrounds.

Level 1: NHS blues

This is the top level palette that reinforces people's association with blue and white. There are a number of hues to support the main NHS Blue colour to give lighter and darker alternatives to add tonal variety.

NHS Dark Blue
Pantone: 287
CMYK: 100/75/2/18
RGB: 0/48/135
#003087

NHS Blue
Pantone: 300
CMYK: 99/50/0/0
RGB: 0/94/184
#005EB8

NHS Bright Blue
Pantone: 285
CMYK: 90/48/0/0
RGB: 0/114/206
#0072CE

NHS Light Blue
Pantone: 298
CMYK: 67/2/0/0
RGB: 65/182/230
#41B6E6

NHS Aqua Blue
Pantone: 312
CMYK: 88/0/11/0
RGB: 0/169/206
#00A9CE

Level 2: NHS neutrals

These colours help to support the top level blues. Black and dark grey can be used for type, depending on the background and application. The lighter greys can be used as backgrounds when they are appropriate and are useful online colours. White is, of course, the most important neutral base. These colours will support the overall blue and white look if they are used with the proper emphasis.

NHS Black
Pantone: Black 6 use
CMYK: 100k
RGB: 35/31/32
#231f20

NHS Dark Grey
Pantone: 7545
CMYK: 58/32/18/54
RGB: 66/85/99
#425563

NHS Mid Grey
Pantone: 7544
CMYK: 35/14/11/34
RGB: 118/134/146
#768692

NHS Pale grey
Pantone: 7541
CMYK: 7/1/3/2
RGB: 232/237/238
#E8EDEC

White
CMYK: 0/0/0/0
RGB: 255/255/255
#FFFFFF

Level 3: NHS support greens

Green is close to blue in the colour spectrum and gives a feel of being in the same colour family. Therefore, when they are used moderately and in a secondary support role, they will not compromise the strong associations people have with blue and white. However, if it becomes too dominant it will impact on people's ability to instantly recognise the NHS as being the source of the information.

NHS Dark Green
Pantone: 342
CMYK: 93/10/75/43
RGB: 0/103/71
#006747

NHS Green
Pantone: 355
CMYK: 91/0/100/0
RGB: 0/150/57
#009639

NHS Light Green
Pantone: 368
CMYK: 65/0/100/0
RGB: 120/190/32
#78BE20

NHS Aqua Green
Pantone: 3272
CMYK: 94/0/48/0
RGB: 0/164/153
#00A499

Level 4: NHS highlights

Highlights are very useful for drawing attention to details, helping to warm up the blue look and providing accent colours to enable NHS organisations, partnerships and services to differentiate themselves from each other. However, they should not be used too heavily otherwise they change the overall look dramatically and people will not associate your communication with the NHS. Therefore, use minimally and do not use large blocks of these highlight colours.

The highlight colour 'Emergency Services Red' is not exclusively for use in relation to emergency and urgent care services. However, because of its strong association and use in this area, you should carefully consider how you use it for other purposes.

Euro Ambulance Yellow is a colour reference to be used for ambulance livery only.

NHS Purple

Pantone: 2685
CMYK: 90/99/0/8
RGB: 51/0/114
#330072

Dark Pink

Pantone: 683
CMYK: 26/99/12/50
RGB: 124/40/85
#7C2855

NHS Pink

Pantone: 675
CMYK: 18/100/0/8
RGB: 174/37/115
#AE2573

NHS Dark Red

Pantone: 1955
CMYK: 9/100/54/43
RGB: 138/21/56
#8A1538

Emergency Services Red

Pantone: 485
RAL 3020 Traffic Red
CMYK: 0/95/100/0
RGB: 218/41/28
#DA291C

NHS Orange

Pantone: 144
CMYK: 0/51/100/0
RGB: 237/139/0
#ED8B00

NHS Warm Yellow

Pantone: 1235
CMYK: 0/31/98/0
RGB: 255/184/28
#FFB81C

NHS Yellow

Pantone: Process Yellow
CMYK: 0/0/100/0
RGB: 250/225/0
#FAE100

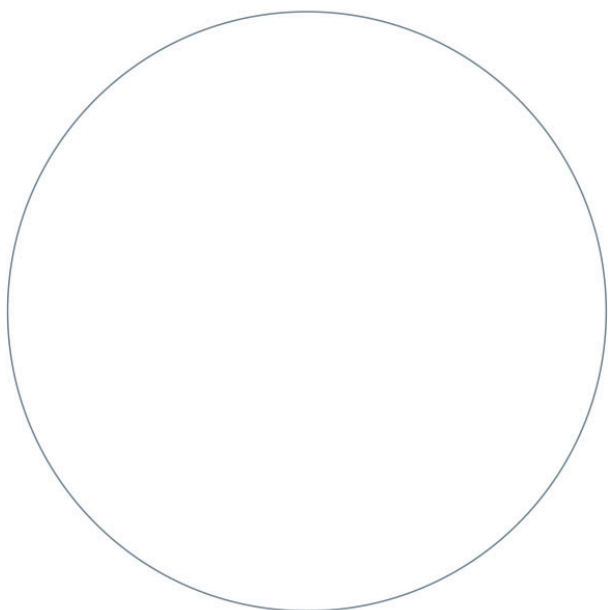
Euro Ambulance Yellow

RAL 1016 Sulphur Yellow

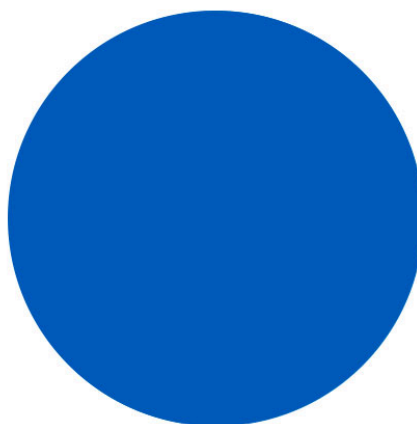
Colour emphasis

Follow this guide to get the overall colour emphasis right. NHS Blue and white must always be the dominant colours. They can be supported by the other colours in the NHS colour palette as long as they are used in decreasing levels of emphasis, as shown in the chart below. This ensures that materials are instantly recognisable as originating from the NHS.

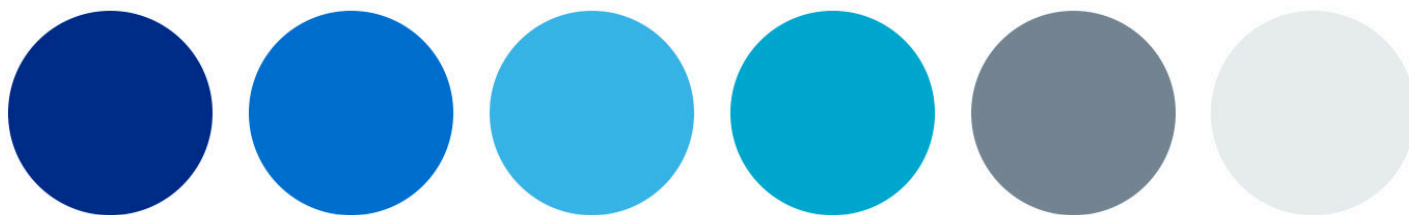
LOTS OF WHITE.



PROMINENT USE OF NHS BLUE.



PLENTY OF CORE BLUE AND PALE NEUTRALS.



MODERATE USE OF GREEN, BLACK AND DARK GREY.



MINIMAL USE OF HIGHLIGHTS.



What does this mean in practice?

Here is an example of how the colour emphasis works in practice. This has:

- plenty of white
- **Emphasis of tint use**
- prominent use of NHS Blue
- minimal use of highlights.

Anywhere programme

Rapid Improvement in Emergency Care

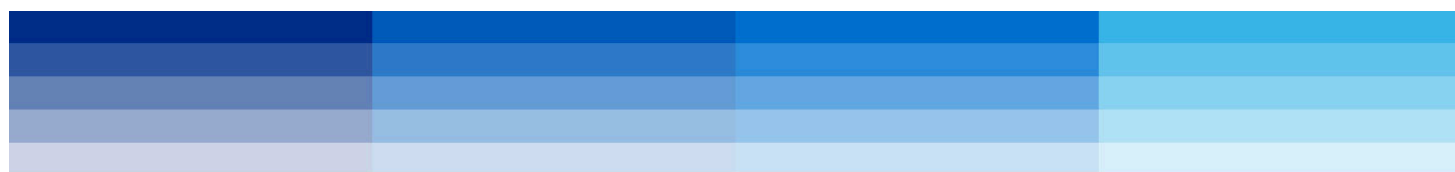
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Using tints

Emphasis of tint use

Tints are percentage values of the colours which look like this:



NHS Dark Blue

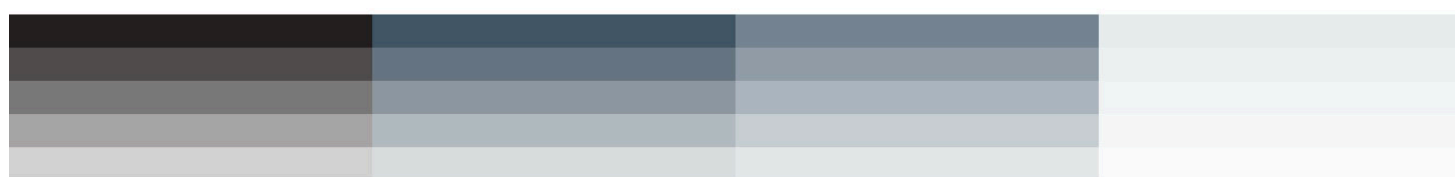
NHS Blue

NHS Bright Blue

NHS Light Blue



NHS Aqua Blue



NHS Black

NHS Dark Grey

NHS Mid Grey

NHS Pale Grey

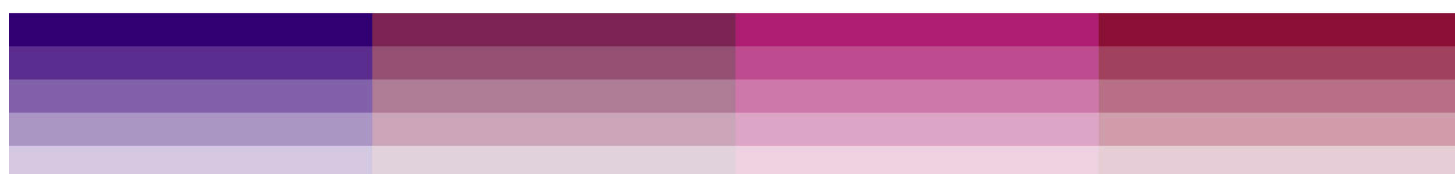


NHS Dark Green

NHS Green

NHS Light Green

NHS Aqua Green

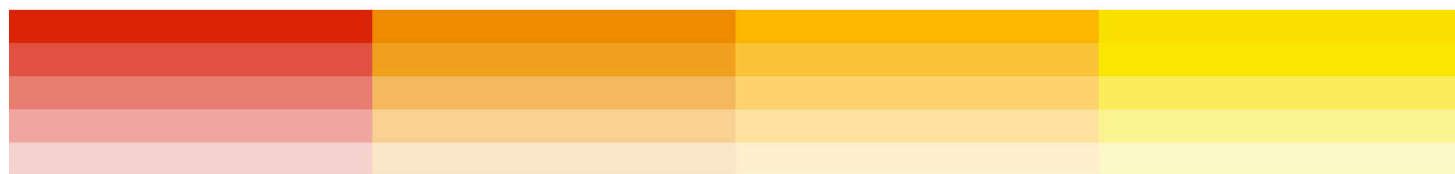


NHS Purple

NHS Dark Pink

NHS Pink

NHS Dark Red



NHS Red

NHS Orange

NHS Warm Yellow

NHS Yellow

The top bar in each case shows the solid (100%) value of the colour and the bars below show decreasing values from 80% to 20%. It is acceptable to use tints of the colours. Any % value is accepted as long as it is visible, clear and accessible.

However, three important factors need to be considered when using tints:

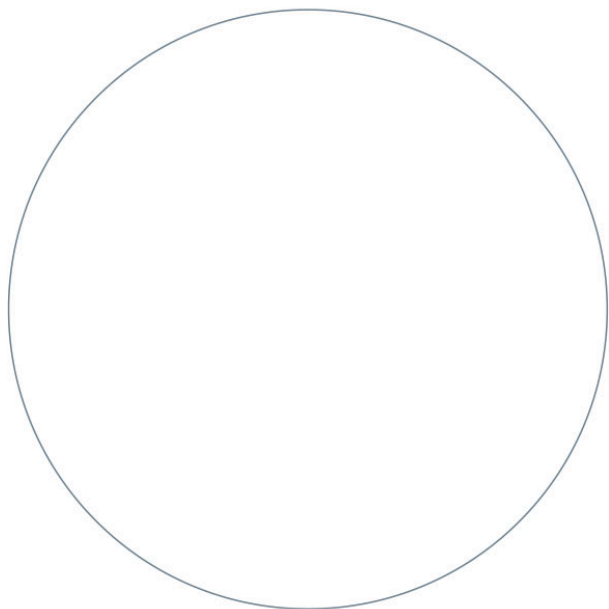
- type and NHS logos should always be reproduced in 100% solid colour, never in a tint
- the NHS logo should never be reversed out of a tint, only out of 100% solid NHS Blue
- 100% solid NHS Blue should always be the dominant colour over any tints
- tints should never endanger the legibility or accessibility of any communication

- the colour emphasis should always be adhered to when using tints, as shown below.
- Emphasis of tint use

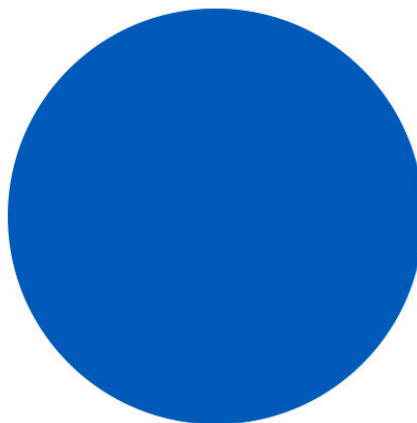
Emphasis of tint use

100% solid NHS Blue and white must always be the dominant colours used. They can be supported by tints of the other colours in the NHS colour palette as long as they are used in decreasing levels of emphasis, as shown in the chart below.

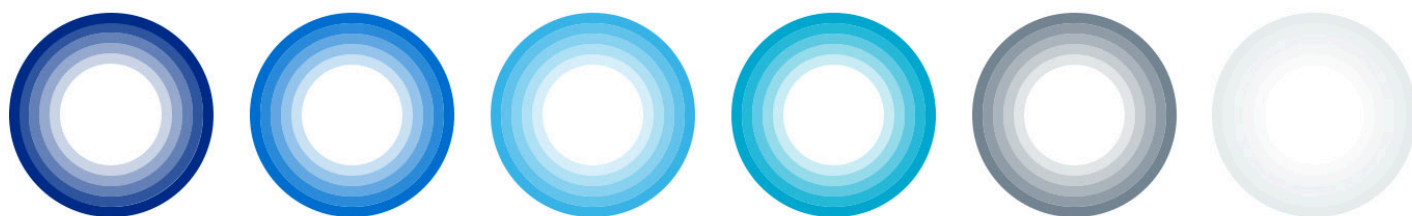
LOTS OF WHITE.



PROMINENT USE OF NHS BLUE.



SUPPORTING USE OF BLUE AND GREY TINTS.



MODERATE USE OF GREEN, BLACK AND DARK GREY TINTS.



VERY MINIMAL USE OF HIGHLIGHT TINTS.



Emphasis of title use
To see visuals of how to apply these guidelines visit the 'Identity examples' pages.

(<https://www.england.nhs.uk/nhsidentity/identity-examples/>)

RELATED CONTENT

[Why has the NHS colour palette changed? \(https://www.england.nhs.uk/nhsidentity/faq/why-has-the-nhs-colour-palette-changed/\)](https://www.england.nhs.uk/nhsidentity/faq/why-has-the-nhs-colour-palette-changed/)

[Does the NHS colour palette apply to both external and internal signage? \(https://www.england.nhs.uk/nhsidentity/faq/does-the-nhs-colour-palette-apply-to-both-external-and-internal-signage/\)](https://www.england.nhs.uk/nhsidentity/faq/does-the-nhs-colour-palette-apply-to-both-external-and-internal-signage/)

[Visual styles, graphic devices and straplines \(https://www.england.nhs.uk/nhsidentity/identity-guidelines/visual-styles-graphic-devices-and-straplines/\)](https://www.england.nhs.uk/nhsidentity/identity-guidelines/visual-styles-graphic-devices-and-straplines/)

[Imagery \(https://www.england.nhs.uk/nhsidentity/identity-guidelines/imagery/\)](https://www.england.nhs.uk/nhsidentity/identity-guidelines/imagery/)

[How can dentists use the NHS Identity? \(https://www.england.nhs.uk/nhsidentity/faq/how-can-dentists-use-the-nhs-identity/\)](https://www.england.nhs.uk/nhsidentity/faq/how-can-dentists-use-the-nhs-identity/)

THIS SECTION

– Select Guideline –

Go

“The colour blue being through everything – it’s a brand in itself, the colour, so I think for this reason it should be quite consistent.”

— Public Research 2015

[Find out more \(https://www.england.nhs.uk/nhsidentity/why-its-important/public-and-stakeholder-research-report/\)](https://www.england.nhs.uk/nhsidentity/why-its-important/public-and-stakeholder-research-report/)

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[NHS Identity principles \(https://www.england.nhs.uk/nhsidentity/why-its-important/identity-policy-and-principles/\)](https://www.england.nhs.uk/nhsidentity/why-its-important/identity-policy-and-principles/)

[Public and stakeholder research report \(https://www.england.nhs.uk/nhsidentity/why-its-important/public-and-stakeholder-research-report/\)](https://www.england.nhs.uk/nhsidentity/why-its-important/public-and-stakeholder-research-report/)

Accessibility (<https://www.england.nhs.uk/nhsidentity/accessibility/>)

Emphasis of tint use

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