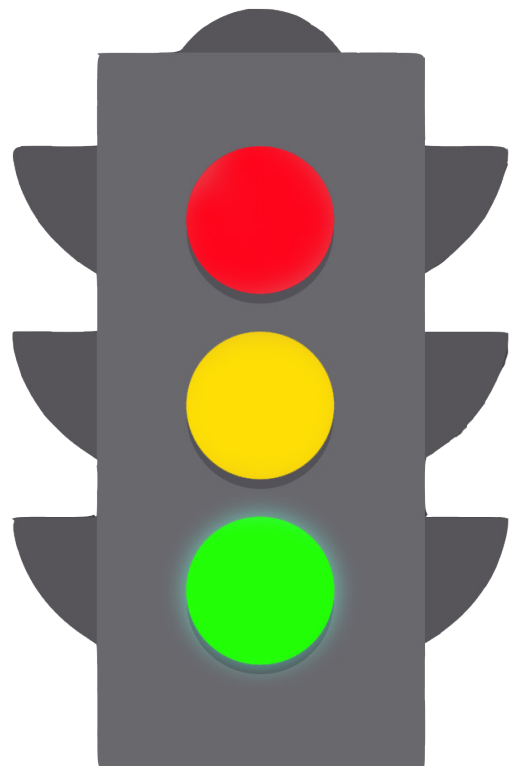# COLOR

THEORY

by: membo siago

Table of Contents

The power of color

Color plays a vital role in design and everyday life. It can draw your eye to an image. Sometimes it can trigger an emotional response. It can even communicate something important without using words at all.

So how do we know which colors look good together and which ones don't?

The answer is simple: Color theory.

Artists and designers have followed color theory for centuries, but anyone can learn more about it. It can help you feel confident in many different situations, whether it's choosing colors for a design or putting together the perfect outfit. With a little insight, you'll be looking at color in a whole new way.

Color Basics

Let's start at the beginning with a refresher on the basics. Remember learning about primary and secondary colors in school?

Then you already have some knowledge of color theory. Secondary colors are created by combining two primary colors.

Red and yellow make orange; yellow and blue make green; and blue and red make purple. If we mix these colors together, we get even more in-between shades, like red-orange and yellow-green. All together, they form what's called a **color wheel**.
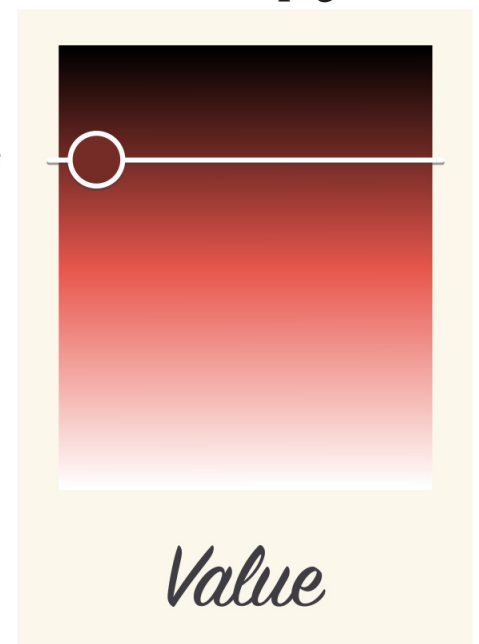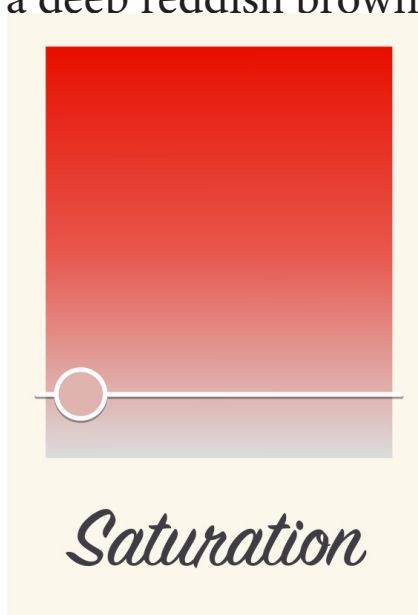
The color wheel

Hue, Saturation and Value

These are terms you might not encounter in daily life, but they're the key to understanding more nuanced colors—like all those little paint chips at the home improvement store.

Hue is the easiest one; it's basically just another word for color. In the example below, you might describe the hue as coral pink or light red, depending on your interpretation.

Saturation refers to intensity—in other words, whether the color appears more subtle or more vibrant. Highly saturated colors are brighter or richer. Desaturated colors have less pigment and therefore less oomph.

Value has to do with how dark or light the color is, ranging from black to white. As you can see below, this gives us many different shades, from a deep reddish brown to a light pastel pink.

Value

Saturation

Hue

Color Schemes

So how do we put this all together to create professional-looking color schemes? There are actually tried-and-true formulas based on something called color harmony that can help.

Color harmony uses the color wheel to illustrate time-tested color combinations. We'll explore some of the most common types of harmony below.

Monochromatic

Analogous

Complementary

Triadic

Tetradic

Split Complementary

Few Samples

Test your skills. Answer is found at the last page.

Picture A

Picture B

Picture C

Picture D

Choosing the right colors

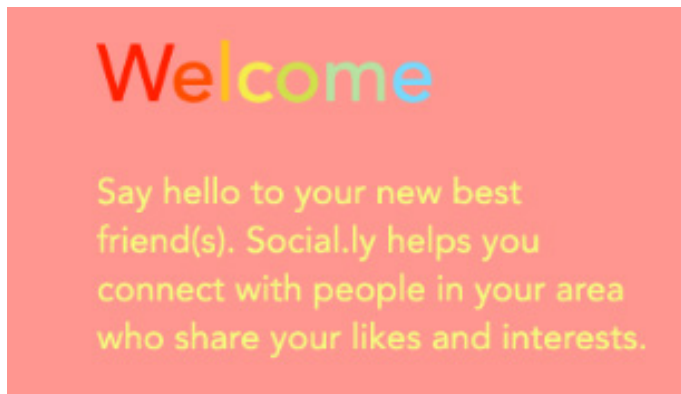- Avoid colors that seem to vibrate next to each other
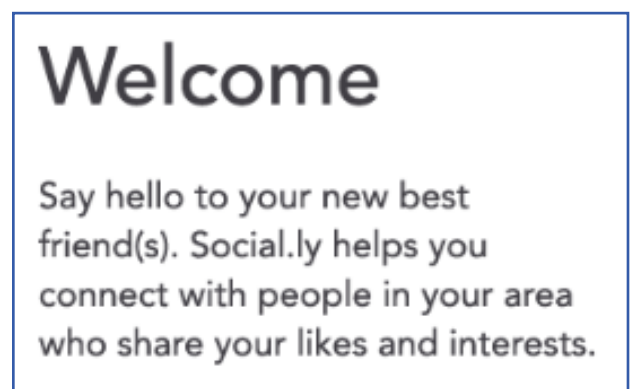

- Your colors should be legible and easy on the eyes when working with text.

Every color you choose sends a message. It's important to consider the tone of your project, and choose a color palette that fits.

Also remember that,
Choose bright colors for fun or modern vibe.
Desturated colors appear more serious or business like.
Choose colors according to the context.

Conclusion

Everywhere you look, there's color, color, and more color. It can be intimidating to use it in your work, but it doesn't have to be. Just keep experimenting, and remember what you've learned about color theory. Soon, choosing great-looking colors will feel like second nature.

color combination