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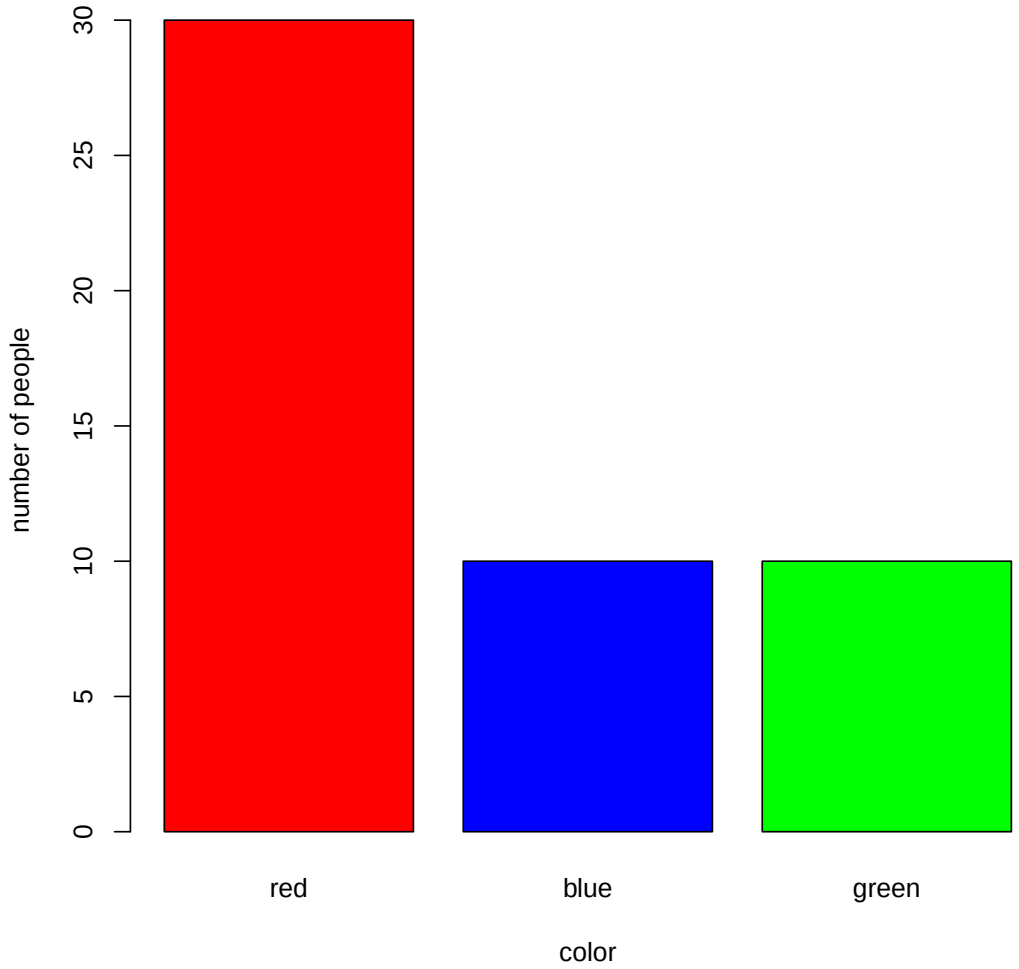
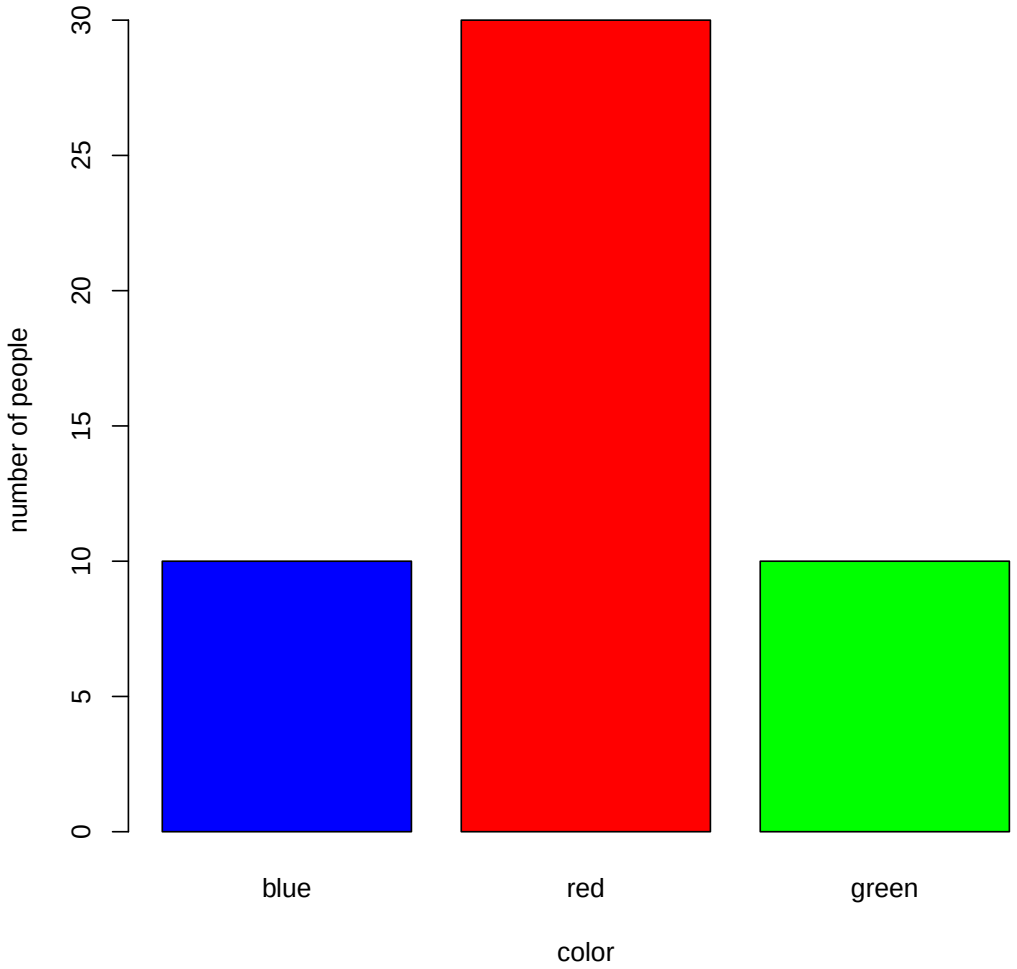
A picture is more vivid. Here is a common way of graphically describing a categorical variable.

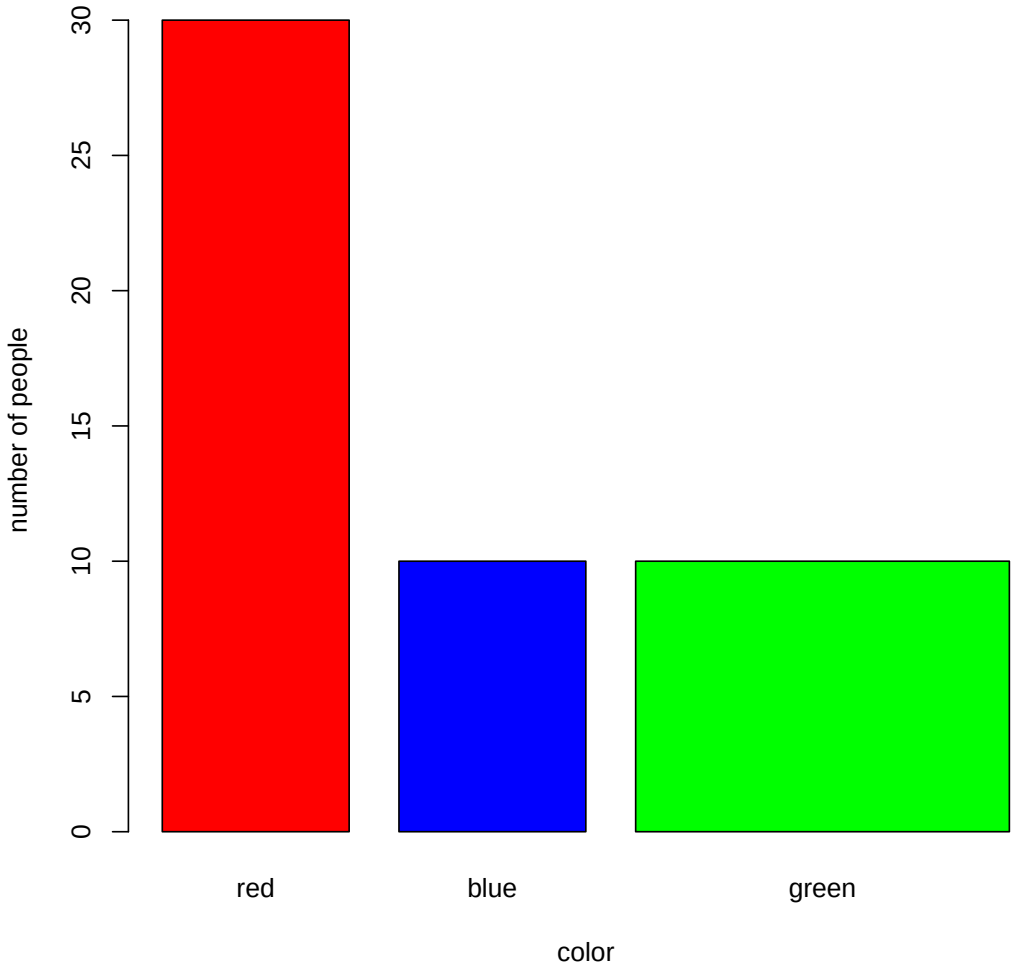
Bar graph of the categorical variable "favorite color"



Bar graph: favorite color, different order



Bad bar widths!!!



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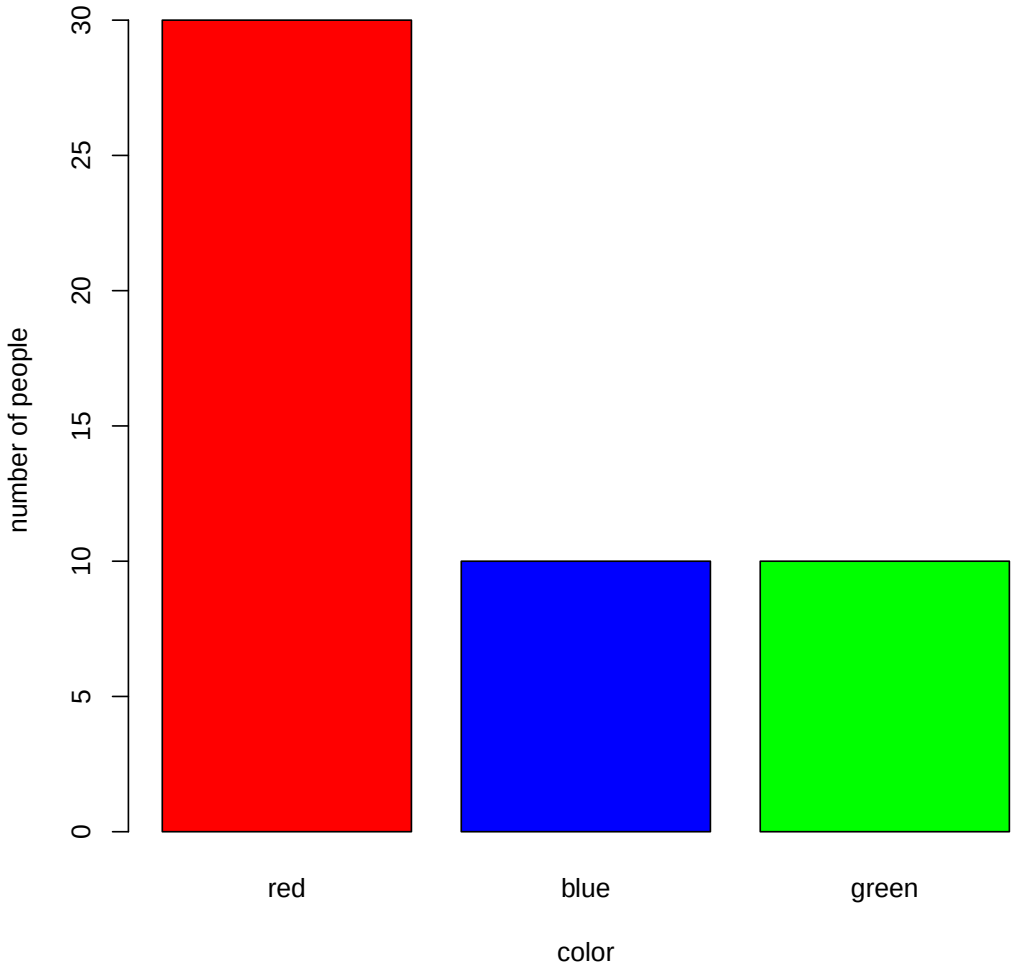
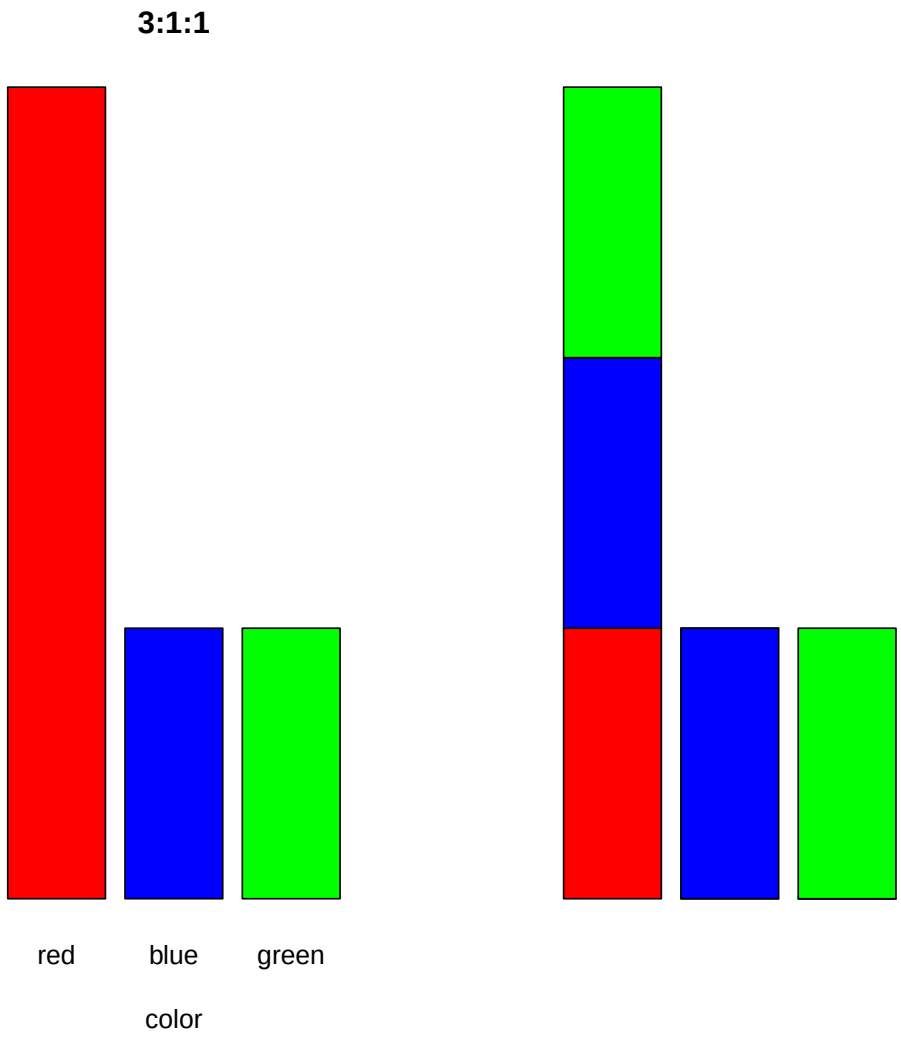
This observation will be crucial when we start creating graphical summaries of quantitative variables.

A good bargaph



No vertical axis needed; can still see relative proportions



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Apart from the numbers on the vertical axis, the appearance of the bar graph depends only on percents. It would have looked the same if the data consisted of 300 red, 100 blue, and 100 green; or 4800 red, 1600 blue, and 1600 green; and so on, as long as the percents were 60, 20, and 20.