

Colour

Design and Colour is a monstrous topic. I'm certainly not going to cover it all in this section, but that's not the intention. This book is about the basics of graphic design as it applies to the web and, as such, I'm going to take what I feel is useful in colour theory and just present and explain that. Colour theory can be complicated because, over time, it has come to represent three areas of study: scientific, artistic and psychological.

Within this chapter, I'm just going to talk about one area – artistic – and touch on another, psychological. I'm not going to be discussing the science of colour and how that applies to things like accessibility on the web, whole books have been written on that subject alone.

Designing with colour is perhaps the element of graphic design which is the most difficult to get right. Why? Because it is the most subjective. For some, a palette of dark grey with splashes of bright pink will be just great; to others it would just be all wrong. Too many designers, whether schooled in colour theory or not, end up making subjective decisions about colour and then when it comes to explaining those decisions to a client, things begin to unravel.

This chapter will help you move beyond the subjective and provide you with the foundation you need to make objective decisions. It's about getting to grips with simple colour theory, creating effective colour combinations and making sure you don't offend a traditional Chinese wedding company by designing their website in predominantly white (*which is associated with funerals, by the way*).

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