

Title:

Color Theory for Fashionistas - Three Easy Steps to Perfect Color Every Time

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1597

Summary:

Everything you need to know about color to make perfect choices. Get the most from your jewelry by color coordinating it with your entire ensemble.

Now you have the easy way to faultless color every time. Just follow the steps in this article and you'll never go wrong.

Solve those tough problems, when an outfit just doesn't look quite right, but you don't know why. It's your colors and it's easy to decipher once you know the color secrets.

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fashion colors, fashion and color coordination, jewelry site color, color fashion jewelry, fashionistas, color theory, how to get the most from your jewelry, fashion tips

Article Body:

Color is everywhere, in your clothes, in your jewelry. Color is life. Fashion and color coordination can make or break your carefully planned outfit.

Here's a bit of color theory with a fashionista bent.

Primary colors

These are red, blue and yellow. In theory, you can make any color from these three primaries (except white, which is really an absence of color). In practice, it depends on what red, blue or yellow you start with, but we are not mixing paints here, so just remember that the primary colors are red, blue and yellow. You'll learn why in the next step.

The secondary colors are the colors you get from mixing equal amounts of any two primaries. (If the primaries are pure, mixing all three will give you black.)

The secondaries are purple, orange and green.

Now why do you care?

Well, primaries and secondaries together give us complementary colors. The complement of the color is the color directly across from it on the color wheel, or if starting with a primary, the color made from mixing the other two primaries. So essentially a color and its complement contain all of the primaries between them.

Red's compliment is green (Merry Christmas!). Yellow's complement is purple. Blue's complement is orange.

This is as much contrast as you can get between colors of the same value (brightness or darkness). So if you want to make a bold statement, the primaries are a treat.

Enter the secondaries

The secondary colors are made by mixing equal parts of any two complementaries. So the secondary colors are green (yellow and blue), orange (yellow and red) and purple (blue and red).

Let's say you have a yellow dress and you want this outfit to be a traffic stopper. If it's for daytime, you can use bold purple jewelry and accessories. This classic combination of purple and yellow is eye catching. It can be sophisticated and definite or more playful, depending on the yellow and purple you start out with.

However, you don't always want to be quite that much the center of attention. What do you do to make more subtle fashion statements, but still use colors well?

The yellow and purple we used above are complementary colors. This means they are directly across from each other on the color wheel.

The colors to each side of our main color's complement are the triad colors. (Triad because the color you start with plus the two others make three colors total.) The triads are our friends for choosing jewelry or other accessories.

Let's look at our yellow dress again. This time we're wearing it to a business meeting. What would be appropriate jewelry? Gold on yellow is too close -- it will tend to wash out. The whole outfit will look drab (more drab than if you didn't use the gold jewelry).

Silver will work, particularly if the silver is a bit pale and the yellow of the dress is very vivid. But you don't have to stick with gold or silver. There are

many colored gems and jewels out there. Try a sapphire necklace. The blue will nicely set off the yellow and both will sparkle. Or a red brooch. The red can tend towards orange for a brighter effect or towards blue for more contrast.

Now how about the vivid purple blouse you just adore? How to accessorize it? The purple is already such a bold color.

Well, we'll do exactly the opposite of what we have done with our yellow dress, since purple is yellow's complement.

For our purple blouse, if you want to be bold and outrageous, go for bright gold (yellow) or just plain yellow jewelry.

Silver will not work with the purple since the blue of the silver is too close to our purple color (as the gold was on the yellow dress). Of course red is wonderful with purple, just showing that every rule is made to be broken (with discrimination and taste, of course).

We can team our purple blouse with a tan skirt (tan being a form of yellow) and dress it down for a business meeting. We'll want our jewelry to be a little more subtle. In this case, rather than yellow, let's use the triad colors to purple -- orange or green. These may seem like bold choices, but remember you want your jewelry to be seen, not to blend into the woodwork.

How about an amber pendant? This would be sophisticated and would be set off wonderfully by the purple background without being garish.

Or an emerald brooch and earrings, or a green frog pin. The possibilities are endless within your basic color choices. If you stick with these color constraints, you will not go wrong.

Now let's consider the classic grey business suit. You may be thinking that your grey suit is neutral so you can choose any color at all. This is rarely the case and can be the cause of that ensemble that doesn't quite work.

Most greys tend towards blue (cool) or red/yellow (warm). So first determine if your suit is cool grey or warm grey. If you're having trouble with this (and it can be tough at first), try holding it up to other grey items in your house. You'll start to notice that it looks a bit redder (or yellower) or a bit more blue. This will help you determine the color bias of your grey suit.

Most warm grey used in clothing is a reddish grey. This is because red complements the complexion. But you will find some yellowish greys, particularly in garments with very sophisticated color.

Let's say our suit is a cool grey, so for the purposes of our color choice we'll consider it blue. The complement of blue is orange.

We want to keep this a business suit, so we'll pick the triad to each side of the orange to start with. Red and yellow. This tells us that gold will be a perfect choice for our grey suit. Silver is too blue and would wash out the outfit.

You may have noticed that gold tends towards red or yellow. If you are using more than one accessory with the gold, determine whether the primary gold jewelry you will be wearing is reddish gold or yellow gold.

This is done just as we did with the suit itself, by comparing it with other colors.

If the gold is reddish, then keep your other accessories in the red and yellow range. If the gold is yellow, keep the other colors in the yellow orange range.

Note, the description "yellow gold" is for any gold that is not white (silvery). Yellow golds range from a deep red to a very pale yellow, so be sure to check each piece of jewelry when putting together your outfit. A red gold and a yellow gold next to each other will look subtly wrong, unless they are carefully combined in a single piece by a master jeweler. A lack of understanding about the tendencies of gold to be manifested as different colors results in fashion mistakes that are hard to pin down.

So, let's say we've chosen a beautiful golden horse pin as our primary jewelry piece. We look at it and realize that it tends, ever so slightly, towards red. This makes the rest of our accessorizing easy.

We'll go for red and even towards the cooler reds (those tending towards purple, rather than towards the yellows and oranges). With our golden horse brooch and a deep slightly purplish red scarf our grey business suit stays business-like but acquires a powerful feminine appeal.

If you want more color, choose red's triads, blue or yellow.

So, when choosing the jewelry to complement any outfit follow three simple steps and you won't go wrong:

1) Determine the base color of your clothing. This is the dominant color. If you're wearing the purple blouse with a tan skirt the purple is the dominant

color.

If the outfit has a pattern, squint at it and try to see what color feels most dominant (this is an old artist's trick). If no particular color stands out, determine if the overall pattern is cool or warm as we did with our grey suit. Again squinting helps.

2) Find the complement of this color on your color wheel. If you really want to stand out, use the complement and stop at this step -- you're done!

3) Look at the triad colors next to the complement. These are most often the colors you will use for your accessories. If you want a brighter look you can use both triads. For a more subtle look, choose one or the other and then use variations on this color (the variations on any one color are almost endless).

That's it -- three easy steps that will assure that your outfits are always tres chic and save you hours trying to figure out what's just not quite right or choosing by hit and miss.

Of course, fashion colors change from year to year, but you now understand color combinations and how to put them together in wow combinations, whatever colors your starting with.

Coming in part two, how colors effect each other.

To see this page with color wheels and other illustrations that you can print for reference, go to <http://www.gorgeousanimaljewelry.com/fashion-colors.html>

Style on!