

Basic Color Principles

Color experts have developed some practical principles for using colors harmoniously. Understanding a few of these basics will help you create your own color combinations. Some of these basics are described on the next few cards.

Color is well founded in science, but it is also largely subjective. Understanding color principles will help you make informed decisions about color; however, remember that your creations are personal, and it's important for you to be happy with the results.

The Four Qualities of Color

These are characteristics by which differences in color are measured.

HUE is the identity of a color—red, yellow, blue, etc.



VALUE is the lightness or darkness of a color. Differences in value can create contrast and emphasis.



TEMPERATURE measures how warm or cool a color *feels*. For example, blue-violet is a cool color, while red-violet is a warm color.

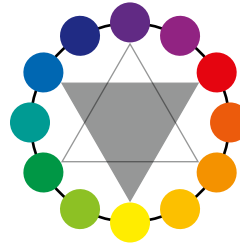


SATURATION measures the brightness or dullness of a color. Saturation could also be called intensity or energy.



Color Wheel

The color wheel visually organizes the relationships between different hues. The basic color wheel is made up of the following three groups of colors:



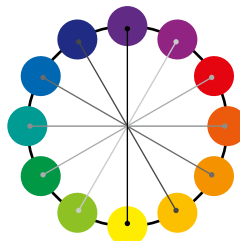
PRIMARY colors are the three basic colors from which all other colors are created (blue, yellow, and red).

SECONDARY colors are the three colors created when primary colors are mixed together (green, violet, and orange).

TERTIARY colors are created by mixing a primary color with a secondary color (such as yellow-green or blue-violet).

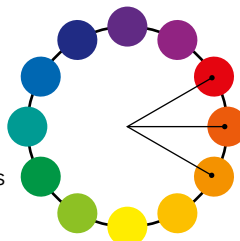
Complementary Colors

Complementary colors are opposite each other on the color wheel. Complementary colors are high-energy combinations that bring out the best in each other.



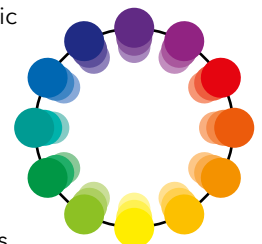
Analogous Colors

Analogous colors are next to each other on the color wheel. Because analogous colors are closely related, they generally look good together.



Monochromatic Colors

A monochromatic scheme uses shades of the same color or a color plus a neutral. A monochromatic scheme is always a classic choice.



DYNAMIC DUOS are Stampin' Up! colors in monochromatic schemes.



If a Dynamic Duo is available for a specific color, it will be listed on that color card.

tip: Dynamic Duos work well for choosing color schemes for stamping Two-Step Stampin'™ images or for choosing card stock and ink combinations.

Neutral Colors

Black, white, gray, and sometimes brown are considered neutral colors.

Neutrals aren't shown on the color wheel because, as the name implies, they're neutral—they don't fall into any color group. Neutrals go well with many colors.

Neutrals are excellent main colors and accent colors because they can unite diverse color combinations and help tone down strong colors that might be too overpowering in large amounts.

Neutrals can be soothing, sophisticated, or dramatic, depending on the other colors you use with them.

tip: Using a neutral as your main color can increase the emphasis and intensity of accent colors you choose.

Color Savvy

If you want to know more about how to use color harmoniously, read on.

COMMUNICATING WITH COLOR

Think of color as a language—it helps you convey a message by setting the mood for your project. Just as you make a statement with words or images, you make a statement with color.

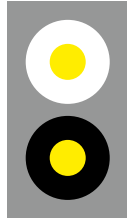
For example, you'd probably use a different color scheme for formal wedding invitations than you would for a child's birthday party invitations. Color can set the mood you want.

If words are *what* you say, then color is part of *how* you say it.

RELATIVITY

Colors are relative to each other and can greatly influence other colors' qualities. For example, a warm color next to a cool color will look warmer; a lighter color will look even lighter next to a dark color; a saturated color will appear more intense when paired with a less saturated color.

For example, a bright yellow on a bright white background will make the yellow appear less intense, while the same yellow on black will make it appear more intense.



COMBINING COLORS

Until you become comfortable creating color combinations, you might want to start with just two colors: your main color and one accent color.

The color swatch directly below the main color in each color card's **CREATIVE COMBINATION** is a **POWER PAIR** accent color. Power pairs are often complementary colors, and it's hard to go wrong when you use them together.

For best results, use only about half as much accent color as the main color.

If you want to use three colors, use only about half as much of the third color as the second color.

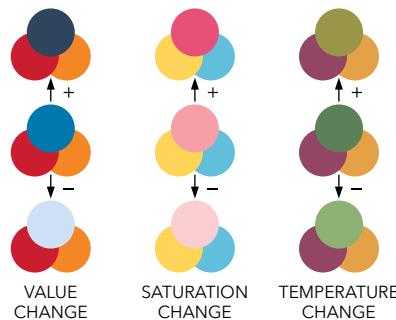
tip: Yellows are good partners in general and will work in a pinch as a third color in combinations.

SUBSTITUTIONS

In many cases, you can substitute colors of a similar hue for those in the combinations presented. For example, if a combination contains Garden Green, there is a good chance that you could substitute Old Olive and have a great set of coordinating colors.



Apply the concepts discussed in "Relativity" while looking at substitution possibilities. When you swap a color out, evaluate the effect created by the new color's difference in value, temperature, and saturation. A value change could create more, or less, contrast—possibly changing emphasis. It is generally a good idea to maintain similar temperatures in combinations—your substitution might feel out of place if it is drastically different in temperature. A saturation change can create a combination that is either brighter or more muted.



The most powerful color tool is your sight—it has been said that the human eye can distinguish over 10 million colors. The purpose of the information presented here is to give you a common vocabulary by which to organize and communicate your thoughts about color. Now, go inspire, create, and share!

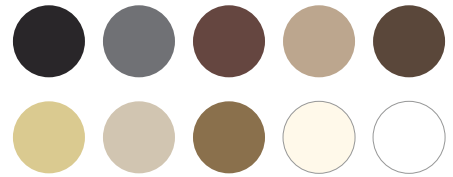
Brights Collection



QUALITIES:

- Higher saturation
- Varied values
- Varied temperatures

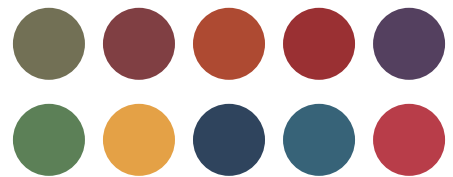
Neutrals Collection



QUALITIES:

- Lower saturation
- Varied values
- Varied temperatures

Regals Collection



QUALITIES:

- Higher saturation
- Darker values
- Varied temperatures

Subtles Collection



QUALITIES:

- Lower saturation
- Lighter values
- Varied temperatures

Your Combinations

You can create swatches using our card stock and 1/2" Circle punch, markers, or ink.