

Color Vocabulary

The Color Wheel

The color wheel is a device for illustrating relationships among colors. Though there are infinite variations of hue, we commonly refer to twelve of them around the color wheel: red, red-orange, orange, yellow-orange, yellow, yellow-green, green, blue-green, blue, blue-violet, violet (purple), red-violet, and back to red.

Primary colors – red, yellow, and blue – are the building blocks of other hues. They are equidistant on the color wheel.

Secondary colors are those made by mixing two primaries. Orange (red +yellow), Green (yellow+blue) and purple or violet (blue+red) are secondary colors.

Tertiary colors are those in between the secondaries and primaries: red-orange, yellow-orange, yellow-green, blue-green, blue-violet, and red-violet.



Complimentary Colors

Complimentary colors are pairs that are opposite on the color wheel and have the highest contrast in terms of hue: red/green, purple/yellow, orange/blue, red-orange/blue-green, and so forth, are all pairs of complimentary colors.



Analogous Colors

Analogous colors are those next to each other. Red, orange, yellow, for example; violet, blue-violet, and blue; green, blue-green, and blue, for example.

Hue refers to what

color a color is. Blue, green, red, pinkish-orange, yellow-green, etc. These are examples of hue.



Value refers to the lightness or darkness of a color.

Saturation or **Intensity** refers to the brightness or dullness of a color.



Tints are made by adding white to a color, so they are of lighter value than the color at full strength.

Shades are made by adding black to a color, so they are of darker value.

Tones are made by adding grey to a color.

Tints, shades, and tones are of lesser **saturation** than a color at full strength.

Recommended Palette of Artists' Paints

Red

- Cadmium Red Medium or Naphthol Crimson or Naphthol Red Light
- Quinacridone red, or some other Magenta (not Quin. Magenta)

Orange

- Cadmium Orange or Pyrrole Orange
- Quinacridone Gold is sort of in the orange range. I can't make art without it, but maybe you can. Golden is the company that makes the best version of this, and now they call it "Quinacridone Nickel Azo Gold".

Yellow

- Cadmium Yellow Medium, or Hansa Yellow Light or Medium

Green

- Light Green or Permanent Green (or whatever looks like a true green)
- Hooker Green, Sap Green, or Jenkins Green
- Pthalo Green, which is an intense bluish green
- Green Gold, a unique olive/yellow green

Blue-Green

- Pthalo Turquoise, or Cobalt Teal, or any turquoise that appeals

Blue

- Ultramarine (cool blue)
- Pthalo Blue (warm blue)

Purple

- Permanent Violet Dark, though you can usually get a successful purple by mixing your magenta with either of your blues.

Black

- Carbon Black

White

- Titanium White

Budget Palette – the bare minimum

Primary red (like Cadmium, etc.)

Magenta (much better for mixing)

Orange

Yellow

Green (light or permanent)

Turquoise

Warm Blue (pthalo)

Black

White