



Color & meaning





# PSYCHOLOGY

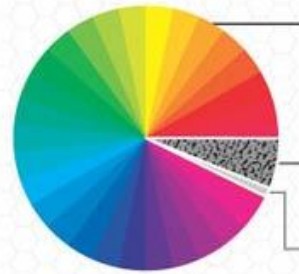
## OF COLOR

**84.7%**

of consumers cite color as the primary reason they buy a particular product.



### WHEN PEOPLE BUY



**93%**

look at Visual Appearance.

**6%**

look at Texture.

**1%**

decide on "Sound/Smell".



**80%**

think color increases brand recognition.

"Research reveals people make a sub-conscious judgment about an environment or product within **90 seconds** of initial viewing. Between **62%** and **90%** of that assessment is based on color alone."



**52%**

of shoppers did not return to a store due to overall aesthetics.

### OUTCOME OF THE USE OF COLOR

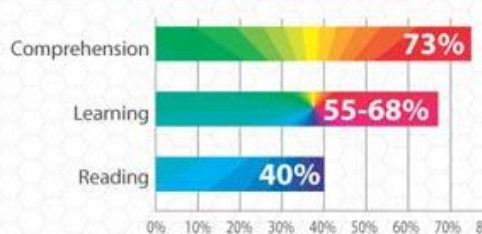


Ads in color are read up to

**42% more often**

than the same ads in black and white.

### COLOR CAN IMPROVE





# COLOR EMOTION GUIDE





RED

MEANS:

passionate  
**active**  
EXCITING  
**bold** energy  
youthful  
**physical**  
PIONEERING  
**leader** willpower  
confidence  
ambition  
**POWER**

BRANDS:



PINK

MEANS:

love **calm**  
**respect**  
**WARMTH**  
longterm  
**feminine**  
intuitive **care**  
assertive  
**sensitive**  
NURTURE  
**possibilities**  
UNCONDITIONAL

BRANDS:



PURPLE

MEANS:

**DEEP**  
creativity  
unconventional  
original  
**stimulation**  
individual  
WEALTHmodesty  
**compassion**  
DISTINGUISHED  
respectable  
**fantasy**

BRANDS:



NAVY

MEANS:

trust order  
**LOYALTY**  
**sincere**  
authority  
communication  
confidence  
**PEACE** integrity  
**control**  
responsible  
**success**  
CALM masculine

BRANDS:



GREEN

MEANS:

BALANCE  
**growth**  
**restore**  
sanctuary  
EQUILIBRIUM  
positivityNATURE  
**generous**  
**clarity**  
**prosperity**  
good judgement  
safetystable

BRANDS:



BLUE

MEANS:

**spirit**  
perspective  
**CONTENT**  
**control**  
**rescue**  
determination  
self-sufficient  
modern goals  
awarePURPOSE  
**OPEN**  
ambition

BRANDS:



ORANGE

MEANS:

**INSTINCT**  
WARMTH  
**gut reaction**  
**optimistic**  
spontaneity  
**extrovert**  
**social** NEW IDEAS  
**FREEDOM**  
impulse  
motivation

BRANDS:



boutique

# \_color science

Different cultures react to colors differently, and this brief overview focuses on the responses of people in the Western Hemisphere.



## \_favorite color by age group (%)



## \_font size in headlines (number of occurrences)



## \_body copy font size



## red



Red is recognized as a stimulant. Red is inherently exciting and the amount of red is directly related to the level of energy perceived. Red draws attention, and a keen use of red as an accent can immediately focus attention on a particular element.

## green



Green occupies more space in the spectrum visible to the human eye than most colors, and is second only to blue as a favorite color. Green is the pervasive color in the natural world, making it an ideal backdrop in interior design because we are so used to seeing it everywhere.

## indigo



Indigo, a deeper blue, symbolizes a mystical borderland of wisdom, self-mastery, and spiritual realization. So, while blue is typically the color of communication with others, indigo turns the blue inward to increase personal thought, profound insights, and instant understandings. Blue is the least "gender specific" color, having equal appeal to both men and women.

## brown



Brown says stability, reliability, and approachability. It is the color of our earth and is associated with all things natural or organic.

## orange



Orange, a close relative of red, sparks more controversy than any other hue. There is usually strong positive or negative association to orange and true orange generally elicits a stronger "love it" or "hate it!" response than other colors. Fun and flamboyant orange radiates warmth and energy.

## natural green



The natural greens, from forest to lime, are seen as tranquil and refreshing, with a natural balance of cool and warm (blue and yellow) undertones. Green is considered the color of peace and ecology. However, there is an "institutional" side to green, associated with illness and government issued green cards, that conjures up negative emotions, as do the "daisy" or "billboard" greens.

## purple



Purple embodies the balance of red's stimulation and blue's calm. This dichotomy can cause unrest or uneasiness unless the undertone is clearly defined, as which point the purple takes on the characteristics of its undertone. With a sense of magic and royal qualities, purple is a color often well liked by very creative or eccentric types and is the favorite color of adolescent girls.

## gray



Gray is the color of intellect, knowledge, and wisdom. It is perceived as long-lasting, classic, and often as sleek or refined; it is a color that is dignified, conservative, and carries authority. Gray is controlled and inconspicuous and is considered a color of compromise, perhaps because it sits between the extremes of black and white. Gray is a perfect neutral, which is why designers often use it as a background color.

## white



White projects purity, cleanliness, and neutrality. Doctors don white coats, brides traditionally wear white gowns, and a white picket fence surrounds a safe and happy home.

## yellow



Yellow shines with optimism, enlightenment, and happiness. Shades of golden yellow carry the promise of a positive future. Yellow will advance from surrounding colors and instill optimism and energy, as well as spark creative thoughts.

## blue



Blue is the overwhelming "favorite color." Blue is seen as trustworthy, dependable, and committed. The color of ocean and sky, blue is perceived as a constant in our lives. As the collective color of the spirit, it invokes rest and can cause the body to produce chemicals that are calming; however, not all blues are serene and sedate. Electric or brilliant blues become dynamic and dramatic – an engaging color that expresses exhilaration. Some shades of blue may come across as cold or uncaring.

## pink



Pinks can be youthful, fun, and exciting, and some have the same high energy as red; they are sensual and passionate without being too aggressive. Toning down the passion of red with the purity of white results in the softer pinks that are associated with romance and the blush of a young woman's cheeks.

It's not surprising that when giving or receiving flowers, pink blossoms are a favorite. Pink is the color of happiness and is sometimes seen as lighthearted. For women who are often overworked and overburdened, an attraction to pink may speak of a desire for the more carefree days of childhood.

## black



Black is authoritative and powerful, because black can evoke strong emotions, too much can be overwhelming. Black represents a lack of color, the primordial void, emptiness. It is a classic color for clothing, possibly because it makes the wearer appear thinner and more sophisticated.



red

passion, energy, increases appetite



orange

joyous, social, active



yellow

optimistic, cheerful, happy



green

rejuvenating, healing, good health



blue

serenity, calm, peacefulness



purple

creativity, problem solving, sophistication



pink

romantic, love, softness



# Red

Red has more personal associations than any other color. Recognized as a stimulant, red is inherently exciting and the amount of red is directly related to the level of energy perceived. Red draws attention and a keen use of red as an accent can immediately focus attention on a particular element.

## Effects

Increases enthusiasm

Stimulates energy and can increase the blood pressure, respiration, heartbeat, and pulse rate

Encourages action and confidence

Provides a sense of protection from fears and anxiety

## Facts



Red is the highest arc of the rainbow.



Red is the first color you lose sight of at twilight.



The longest wavelength of light is red.



Feng shui recommends painting the front door of a home red to invite prosperity to the residents.



Bees can't see the color red, but they can see all other bright colors. Red flowers are usually pollinated by birds, butterflies, bats, and wind, rather than bees.



# Orange

Orange, a close relative of red, sparks more controversy than any other hue. There is usually strong positive or negative association to orange and true orange generally elicits a stronger "love it" or "hate it" response than other colors. Fun and flamboyant orange radiates warmth and energy.

## Effects

Stimulates activity

Stimulates appetite

Encourages socialization



## Facts



The interior dash lights on older model Suburu cars were orange.



Orange is the color that means "high" in the color-coded threat system established by presidential order in March 2002.



In the United States Army, orange is the color of the United States Army Signal Corps.



Safety orange is a color used to set things apart from their surroundings.



Agent Orange, an herbicide named after the color of its containers, was used in a systematic herbicidal program organized by the US military that ran from 1962 through 1971 in Vietnam.

# Yellow

Yellow shines with optimism, enlightenment, and happiness. Shades of golden yellow carry the promise of a positive future. Yellow will advance from surrounding colors and instill optimism and energy, as well as spark creative thoughts.

## Facts



During the tenth century in France, the doors of traitors and criminals were painted yellow.



Yellow signifies "sadness" in Greece's culture and "jealousy" in France's culture.



Yellow is psychologically the happiest color in the color spectrum.



The comic book character Green Lantern was afraid of the color yellow.



75% of the pencils sold in the United States are painted yellow.

## Effects

Stimulates mental processes

Stimulates the nervous system

Activates memory

Encourages communication





# Green

Green occupies more space in the spectrum visible to the human eye than most colors, and is second only to blue as a favorite color. Green is the pervasive color in the natural world, making it an ideal backdrop in interior design because we are so used to seeing it everywhere.

## Effects

Soothes

Relaxes mentally, as well as physically

Helps alleviate depression, nervousness, and anxiety

Offers a sense of renewal, self-control, and harmony

## Facts



The solid green flag of Libya is currently the only national flag of a single color.



There is a superstition that sewing with green thread on the eve of a fashion show brings bad luck to the design house.



Green was the favorite color of George Washington, the first President of the United States.



Green is the color used for night-vision goggles because the human eye is most sensitive to and able to discern the most shades of that color.



NASCAR racers have shared a bias against the color green for decades. Reportedly, it began after a 1920 accident in Beverly Hills, California, that killed defending Indianapolis 500 champion Gaston Chevrolet. It was the first known racing accident in the United States to kill two drivers, and Chevrolet reportedly was driving a green car.

# Blue

Blue is seen as trustworthy, dependable, and committed. The color of ocean and sky, blue is perceived as a constant in our lives. As the collective color of the spirit, it invokes rest and can cause the body to produce chemicals that are calming.

## Effects

Calms and sedates

Cools

Aids intuition

## Facts



Blue is the least "gender specific" color, having equal appeal to both men and women.



Blue is the favored color choice for toothbrushes.



Owls are the only birds that can see the color blue.



People are often more productive in blue rooms.



Mosquito's are attracted to the color blue twice as much as to any other color.





# Pink

Brighter pinks are youthful, fun, and exciting, while vibrant pinks have the same high energy as red; they are sensual and passionate without being too aggressive. Toning down the passion of red with the purity of white results in the softer pinks that are associated with romance and the blush of a young woman's cheeks.

## Facts



In 1947, fashion designer Elsa Schiaparelli introduced the color "hot pink" to western fashion.



Pink encourages friendliness while discouraging aggression and ill-will.



Since the color pink is said to have a tranquilizing effect, sports teams sometimes use pink to paint the locker room used by opposing teams.



Studies of the color pink suggest that male weightlifters seem to lose strength in pink rooms, while women weightlifters tend to become stronger around the color.



Pastries taste better when they come out of pink boxes or served on pink plates (it only works with sweets) because pink makes us crave sugar.

## Effects

Bright pinks, like the color red, stimulate energy and can increase the blood pressure, respiration, heartbeat, and pulse rate. They also encourage action and confidence.

Pink has been used in prison holding cells to effectively reduce erratic behavior.

# Purple

Purple embodies the balance of red's stimulation and blue's calm. With a sense of mystic and royal qualities, purple is a color often well liked by very creative or eccentric types and is the favorite color of adolescent girls.

## Effects

### Uplifts

Calms the mind and nerves

Offers a sense of spirituality

Encourages creativity

## Facts



Purple was the royal color of the Caesars.



Purple was the color of the first dye made by man.



Purple is the color of Madison Square Garden and seating for VIP's was once covered in purple.



Purple is the color of the highest denomination = \$5,000



During the Silver Age of comic books, those with purple on their covers sold better.



# Gray

Gray is the color of intellect, knowledge, and wisdom. It is perceived as long-lasting, classic, and often as sleek or refined. It is a color that is dignified, conservative, and carries authority. Gray is a perfect neutral, which is why designers often use it as a background color.

## Facts



The New York Times is sometimes called "Gray Lady."



Gray represents non-involvement, giving it a formal authority.



Gray is associated with intellect and the brain is composed of "gray matter."



Gray is representative of pessimism.



The human eye can distinguish about 500 shades of gray.

## Effects

Unsettles

Creates expectations



# Black

Black is authoritative and powerful; because black can evoke strong emotions, too much can be overwhelming. Black represents a lack of color, the primordial void, emptiness. It is a classic color for clothing, possibly because it makes the wearer appear thinner and more sophisticated.

## Effects

makes one feel inconspicuous

provides a restful emptiness

is mysterious by evoking a sense of potential and possibility

## Facts



In England, taxi cabs are traditionally black.



Black implies weight -- people will think a black box weighs more than a white one.



The color black is associated with sophistication and power - tuxedos, limousines, judge's robes, and priests' attire are all typically black.



The color black is so widely regarded as sophisticated in fashion that the term "the new black" is often used to describe and give merit to a color trend.



One old wives' tale claims that if a woman is buried wearing the color black, she'll come back to haunt the family.



# White

White projects purity, cleanliness, and neutrality. Doctors don white coats, brides traditionally wear white gowns, and a white picket fence surrounds a safe and happy home.

## Effects

Aids mental clarity

Encourages us to clear clutter or obstacles

Evokes purification of thoughts or actions

Enables fresh beginnings

## Facts



A white flag is universally recognized as a symbol of truce.



According to Pantone Inc., white is the best selling color for the classic american t-shirt.



More shades of white are available commercially than any other color.



White clothing typically becomes translucent when wet.



The appearance of white in a dream is thought to represent happiness at home. White castles are a symbol of achievement, destiny perfectly fulfilled, and spiritual perfection.



Originally, scientists wore beige coats. In the late 19th century, medical professionals chose white ones. The color white was chosen because of the idea of hope and expectations for healing and recovery that the physicians would bring.





