

COLOUR CHARACTERISTICS



COLOUR

INTRODUCTION

Colours are a powerful tool in design of buildings and spaces. Designed in combination with texture and pattern, and selected with purpose, colour can evoke strong emotional and behavioural reactions.

Perception of colour is heavily influenced by gender, cultural background and personal associations, but there are consistencies across most of your visitors that we can use to construct effective spaces.

Colour influences people's perception of your brand and product, and can put them in the right mood to purchase. Using your brand colours across your space helps customers trust that you are genuine and that your product will live up to your marketing because you have a consistent message. That message also helps them perceive your product's value and quality.

The secret to successful use of colour is its ability to connect all the elements in the space into a unified message. The combination of colours, intensity, texture and quantity balance is vital. Colour experts such as artists and designers are trained in understanding the application of colour and how they can affect our decisions, emotions and behaviour, and can advise on the best use of colour in your space.

WARM & COOL

A BASE PALATE

While colour reactions are not universal, in general red hues are perceived to be warming and blues are cooling. The intensity, combined with texture and weight can create varying effects.

WARM SPECTRUM

Generally, warm colours are reds, oranges and yellows. Used with texture and variation, these colours can help with motivation, energy, increase heart rate and metabolism, and provide a warm comfort or intense concentration for short periods.

As highlights, warm spectrum colours are eye catching. They can inspire energy and intense interest.

Used in large, solid areas warm colours can become too intense. Over use of red can produce over excitement, tending to aggressiveness. Yellow is cheerful but can quickly become exhausting and has been tied to eyestrain.

COOL SPECTRUM

Generally, cool colours are blues, purples and greens. These colours are deep and expansive, and used with texture and variation, they can help with calm, serenity, deep thinking and creativity.

As highlights, cool spectrum colours are grounding. They can inspire calm, a sense of sanctuary or freedom.

Used in large, solid areas cool colours can become too deep. Over use of blue can produce sadness and depression. Green is fresh and purple mystical, but they can become sickly and oppressive.



RED

Intense

- 🔥 Hot, exciting
- 🔥 Arousing, passion, exciting, bold, fearless
- 🔥 All about the details
- 🔥 Increased adrenaline and communication
- 🔥 Great for afternoon and night-life spaces
- 🔥 Strong first impressions
- 🔥 Fast paced dining / drinking spaces



BLUE

Calming

- › Space, stillness
- › Mental reflection, sobriety, security, serene
- › Best in spaces with great natural light
- › Great for using range of hues together
- › Used in large spaces and ceilings
- › Outward thinking - big picture thinking, groups



GREEN

Refreshing

- Tranquil, quiet, easy to focus, restful, comfort
- Flexible
- Great for lounging spaces, long term spaces
- Encourage kindness and sympathy
- Light greens are fresh
- Dark greens reflect meditation and optimism



ORANGE

Energetic

- Exciting, cheerful, stimulating, dynamic
- High energy and active spaces, kinetic spaces
- Keeps people from lingering too long
- Viewed as affordable, relatable
- Social communication and movement



WHITE / GREY

Pure

- ◊ Innocence, pure, simplicity, clean
- ◊ Open ideas, efficient, organised
- ◊ Grey- conservative, calm, passive, flexible
- ◊ Classic
- ◊ Never ages or goes out of style
- ◊ Can be paired with any colour respectively



BLACK

Compelling

- ◊ Confidence, powerful
- ◊ Elegance, dignity
- ◊ Great for tall ceilings
- ◊ Bold, classic
- ◊ Creates mystery and mood
- ◊ Can be used as a base to showcase colours



PURPLE

Exclusive

- Dignified, refined
- Spiritual, inspirational, dramatic
- Luxury, supernatural
- Great for intimate spaces
- Encourages small groups
- Can be used to create mystery



PINK

Playful

- Fresh, sweet, comfortable,
- Playful, loved
- Joyful, quirky
- Great for accent and surprise spaces
- Delicate and refined
- Youthful, upbeat



YELLOW

Spirited

- ♥ High-spirited, communication
- ♥ Stimulates the nerves and purifies the body
- ♥ Uplifting, fun
- ♥ Encourages creative thinking and conversation
- ♥ Great for outdoor spaces
- ♥ Pairs well with natural materials



BROWN

Organic

- ♣ Earthy, natural, practical, organic
- ♣ Neutral, bare, wholesome
- ♣ Masculine, strong qualities
- ♣ Pairs well with neutrals and whites
- ♣ Great for naturally lighted spaces
- ♣ Texture creates relaxed atmosphere

COLOUR IN PRACTICE

How to effectively apply colour depends on your brand. Warm and cool colours can be used together in many cases, but the first step is understanding the characteristics of each one. Using each colour to its advantage is best practice. Balance is key when combining colours with textures, patterns and surrounding elements in a space or design.

Start with your brand character and explore what that means for your space. If you don't know your brand character, take our quiz and start your journey. Getting the application of colour right can create powerful stories that resonate with your customers, visitors and guests.

Explore more
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