

Color

Color is a very powerful thing! It can boldly or subliminally effect our mood, appetite, even spending habits. You may not realize it, but your favorite colors may be a response to their impact on your body. Do you want the colors in your home to encourage lively conversation? Try bright red in the living room. Rest and relaxation? Muted greens, purples and tans to name a few, promote serenity and stress reduction. Want to suppress your appetite? Blue is a color used to advertise frozen foods. Who wants to eat a frozen pizza? It must be red hot with yellow melting cheese and a bolden brown crust to be appealing. But let's get into color for your decor.

Every color, millions in fact, is created from a combination of just three primary colors - red, yellow and blue. White is the presence of all colors (as you see reflected through a prism). Black is the absence of color.

Secondary colors consist of green, orange and purple. Tertiary colors are a further breakdown mixture of yellow-orange, red-orange, red-purple, blue-purple, blue-green and yellow-green. The list of combinations is endless. The further you progress into the color wheel, the more difficult it becomes to color match. The human eye simply can't distinguish every possible color. As an example, computer screens can display 16.8 million colors, nearly eight million more than our eye can detect. Tints, tones and shades can make the color identification process even more complex, even to those with an exceptional eye for color. These shades and tints create the biggest challenge in trying to match colors within your decor.

Choosing primary colors, or those in close proximity to yellow, blue or red on the color wheel are easier to match. These colors are most vibrant and are most often used in clean, simple contemporary design schemes. A splash of primary color can make a dramatic statement to accentuate an area or accessory you want to call attention to. Primary colors can denote a flamboyant, self-confident personality. Caution: extensive use of primary colors can over stimulate and cause agitation.

Complementary colors are located directly across from each other on the color wheel. Yellow-purple, blue-orange and red-green are primary color examples. These colors create a vibrant look when used at full saturation (no tints) to accentuate and make something stand out. It takes a careful balance of these colors to work in harmony. Complementary colors together at full strength can become overwhelming to the eye.

Some examples of color meaning:

Red: Confidence, Vitality...

Blue: Youth, Spirituality...

Gray: Maturity, Security...

Yellow: Wisdom, Happiness...

Gold: Wealth, Prosperity...

Brown: Order, Convention...

Orange: Endurance, Vitality...

Purple: Royalty, Mystery...

Pink: Beauty, Love...

Various shades and hues effect the meaning of color. Do a little research on your own. It's very interesting.

If you are looking to incorporate a new accessory into a space and want to coordinate to an existing color scheme, there's an easier way to get the color right. Find the color you like in a piece of trim, carpet scrap, paint can, picture, or an accent piece you already have. Take that item to your local paint store and match it against their extensive selection of color chips. Select your favorite matching or complementary colors and grab a few of their free sample swatches. You'll want more than one because the color sections are small. Cut out and tape together several matching swatches to form a larger piece. It's visually easier to work with and compare against accessory options. Now you're ready to shop!