

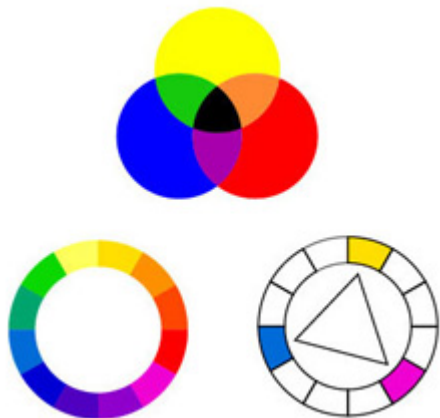
COLOR SELECTION *for Design Students*



Courtesy of the Boutons

Selecting Colors isn't Easy

The selection of color is something that is not easy. Both experts and novices find it difficult. Most design education programs have a course in color that introduce students to color and color selection. The human eye can recognize over 4 million colors. That makes color selection difficult.



Various color systems

Color Theory

There have been various theories of color that have evolved over the years to help and guide designers select color. The most popular version involves the concept of the color wheel, and concepts such as complementary and analogous colors and recommendations for selecting colors to create color schemes.

Links

<http://www.apple.com/pro/color/tools/checklist.html>

<http://www.worqx.com/color/index.htm>

<http://www.colormatters.com/colortheory.html>

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Color_theory

Color & Emotion

Colors have a powerful effect on human emotions. Color and emotions are intrinsically linked. Designers struggle to give their graphic or product emotive content while maintaining pleasant color schemes.

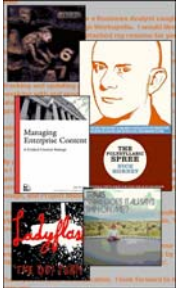
Very often this is difficult. Color schemes are based on creating distinctive regions of importance and bringing order into a complex composition. Designers often use mood boards to first define the emotive angle of their composition.



The rich color of roses evoke romantic emotions

Mood Boards

Mood boards are made of a concoction of pictures text and objects which inspire, target desires with a particular mood, to be used as a source of creative inspiration.



Weekly collection



Pictures exude moods

Pictures contain a cocktail of colors. These colors tend to be diverse rich and complex, unlike the colors that come off an RGB color palette. Most importantly, pictures contain powerful color emotions which can be applied to graphics.



The mood of the picture can be transferred to the graphic

Demos of how color schemes can be created from pictures can be seen at www.pic2color.com

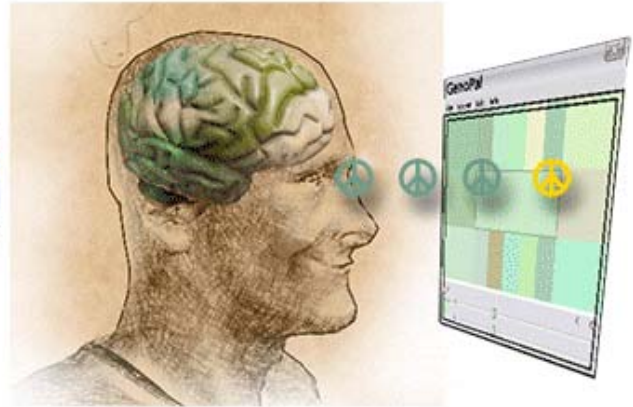


Sophisticated colors

The colors that we choose based on most computer software are based on RGB values – which were designed by engineers to give color to computer screens.



RGB Scheme

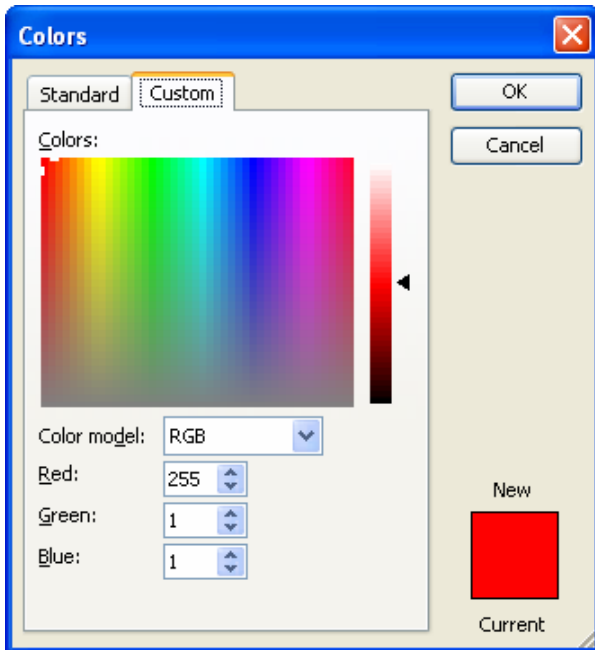


Lab Scheme

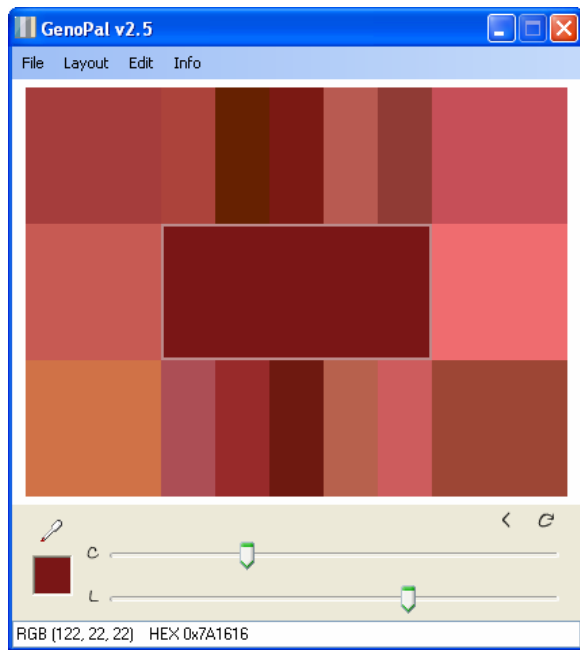
While the RGB system is good scheme to represent a spectrum of colors that the eye can see it is rather poor in its relation to how the eye perceives color. The sensitivity of the eye and the sensitivity of the RGB system are out of sync.

The LAB scheme is a better representative of our color sensibilities. It captures the full range of colors that we have been evolved to see. More importantly its sensibility is scaled according to the way we see colors. You get to see a larger and more harmonious spread of colors.

Colors selected from the RGB system tends to be saturated harsh and in conflict with each other. Whereas, complex colors tend to work with each other harmoniously.



RGB System



Perceptual color-based system

Color is in your mind

Finally it is important to realize, that despite all the scientific and aesthetic theories

Color is a property of objects that our minds create

In choosing color it is important to select colors that trigger the right response in your mind. You know the right color when you see it.