

## Find the right colour combination for you

### Introduction

Ever entered a grey office building on a nice sunny day? And noticed that your mood changed rather dramatically? Not only the fact that you probably enter the building because you have work to do will affect your mood, but also the change in colours around you will have an effect on your state of mind. The blue sky, colourful neon lights or green trees influence you in a different way than the (usually) cream, grey and white surroundings of your work environment.

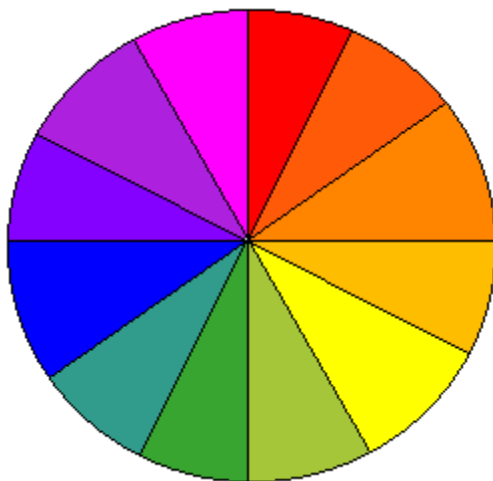
Colours have influenced us all our lives. When babies first open their eyes, they are not yet able to focus. They have to rely on the smell, sound and colour of things around them. They will recognise us by our sound and smell, and we in turn try to entertain them with noisy and very colourful toys. Colour will stimulate them from the beginning.

Using colour in the right way is very important in your living environment. Some colours will have a soothing effect, while other colours will stimulate you and make you active. Using the right colour combination therefore can make all the difference.

This guide will try and help you in the right direction. It will mainly focus on the use of colour in the kitchen, but you will soon find that the techniques and colour combinations used will be of use in the rest of your home as well!

### The colour wheel

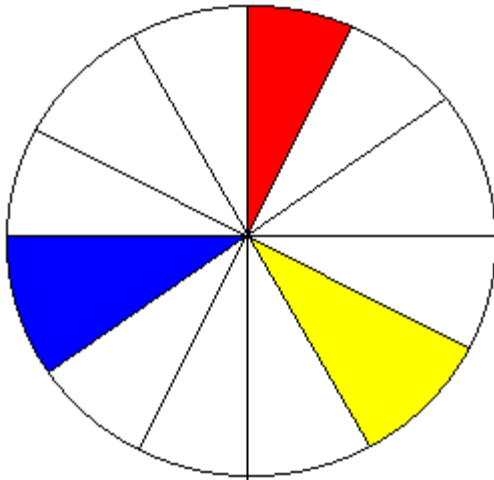
To find the right combination of colours that work for you it is important first to get to know the different colours and their effect on each other. The colour wheel is a great tool to learn about colours and the combinations that work best. Below is an example of a colour wheel:



The colour wheel is created by mixing two of the three primary colours (blue-red-yellow) together in different quantities and can be as complex as you want. Here we have decided for a 12-sliced colour wheel. It is not too complicated yet will still give you a good idea of how colours work together.

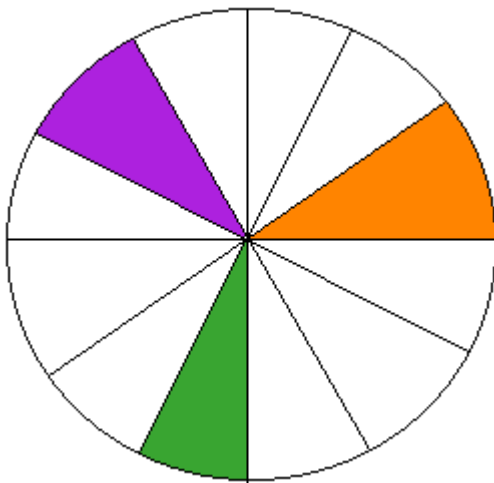
The colour wheel is build up of three types of colour: primary colours, secondary colours and tertiary colours.

**Primary colours:**



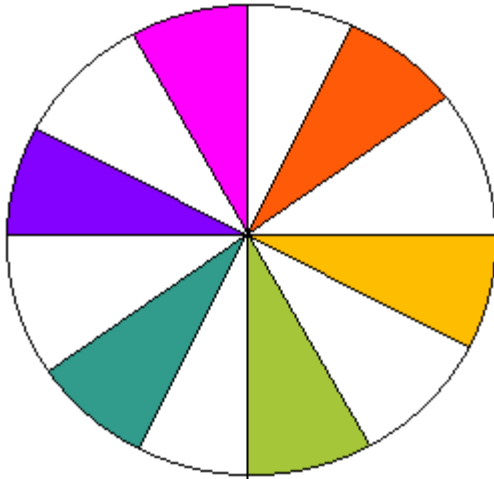
The primary colours are red, yellow and blue. It is not possible to make any of these three colours by mixing colours together.

**Secondary colours:**



Secondary colours are made by mixing two primary colours together in equal quantities, for example yellow and blue make green.

**Tertiary colours:**



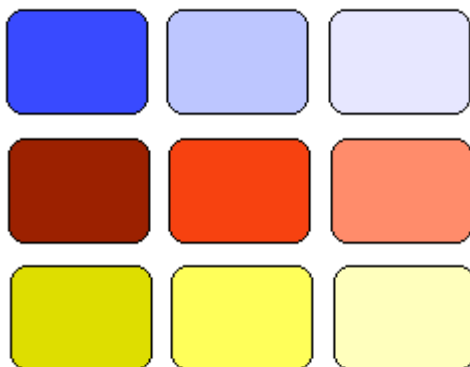
Tertiary colours can be created by mixing one primary colour and one secondary colour from the same part of the wheel.

Apart from the obvious colour mixes above, it is the intensity of a colour that is very important for its effect. Mixing a colour with black or white results, respectively, in different shades and tints of the same colour. Which gives a whole new avenue of possibilities and combinations of course. Just think about pastel colours and their enormous popularity!

## Typical colour combinations

### Monochromatic colour combinations

This colour combination will be achieved by using only one colour, but applying it in different shades and tints. Just a few examples:



Looking at these colour combinations you will probably sense different reactions in yourself. The lilac combination generally has a soothing effect, while the reds will want to warm you. The citrus-like colours of the last example will probably have a refreshing impact on you. Imagine the difference each of these combinations would have on your living environment!

### Analogue colour colour combinations

These combinations are made when three neighbouring colours of the colour wheel are combined in a scheme:



or



### **Triad colour combinations**

A triad colour combination combines three colours that lie at equal distances from each other in the colour wheel. They are stimulating and bring the best out of each other.

The triad colour combination with the three primary colours:



And here with the three secondary colours:



### **How to choose the perfect colour combination for you**

Like explained before, different colours will have a different effect on your mood. It is therefore important to define which atmosphere you want to create in the room you are going to decorate. For example, a bedroom is for most people a place to rest and relax. Therefore colours you find peaceful and relaxing would work the best. On the other hand, a playroom for the kids should be a stimulating and creative environment, begging for bright and cheerful colours.

It can sometimes be very overwhelming, having to choose a completely new colourscheme for your room. Defining and writing down the colours you think of when you think of the mood for the room is a good start, as is collecting cut-outs from magazines of colour combinations and rooms you like the look of.

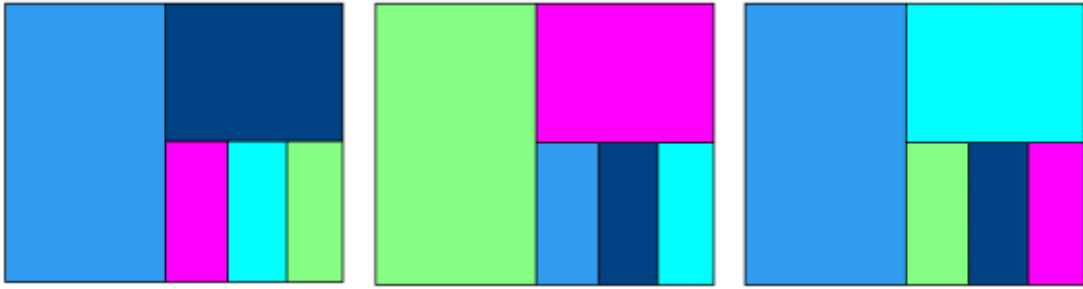
It is however not only important to decide which colours you want to choose for a room, but also where you want to use these colours. Will you use them for the large areas of your room, such as walls, floors and ceilings, or will they be accent colours that may come back in cushion covers, appliances or soft furnishings? The effect of a colour not only depends on the colour or its shade itself, but also on the area you will use it for. For example, bright red as a wall colour might be too much of a good thing for most people, but red cushion covers or a red painting might just be the accent a room needs to warm up.

Have a look at these examples and see what a different feel the same colours in different quantities can have!

**Example1**

**Example2**

**Example3**



Example1 is a very sophisticated combination of the four colours. The blue and dark purple colours give it a grown-up feel, while the fuschia, aqua and bright green accents give it a bit of sparkle.

In Example2 the major roles have been given to the two most expressive colours in this scheme, making it suitable for a child's playroom.

Example3 focuses on the refreshing properties of the aqua and the blue combined, while the dark purple and the fuschia working together to add colour to the scheme. This combination would be suitable for a modern office or bathroom.

Below are a few examples of kitchens and the colours used in their design. I hope you can get some inspiration from it!



This colourscheme gives the kitchen a very homely and cosy feel, without making it too sweet. The use of natural materials gives it a very rustic feel (image courtesy of Appletree Kitchens, Cardiff).



This kitchen feels light and airy because colours from the same part of the colourwheel have been used to create this peaceful scheme. The kitchen gets its substance through the creative use of colourful tiles and the practical island in the middle (image courtesy of Premier Kitchens, Peterborough).



This incredibly vibrant kitchen works surprisingly well! The blond wood and stainless steel units are the perfect antidote to the hot pink walls and green curtains. Also note the pink worktop, made of special lava stone (image courtesy of Winning Designs South, Pulborough).

## **Conclusion**

Colour is such a personal thing, it is difficult to say what is a good and what is a bad colour combination. Everybody's taste is different, and so different people will be attracted to different colour combinations. But be brave and don't compromise on your choice of colours. Choose the colours you feel comfortable with and use them to your heart's content. After all, it is your living space, you have to live with it, so live it!

Below are some good links to websites about colour, design and advice on how to accessorize and colour your home without spending too much money. Enjoy!

### **Winning Designs**

We design and install custom built and standard, traditional and contemporary, kitchens, bedrooms, bathrooms, bookcases and home offices.

### **Premier Kitchens & Bedrooms**

Offering a kitchen to suit everyone's needs and tastes.

### **Appletree Kitchens**

Vibrant new ranges for 2003 now available at Appletree Kitchens!

### **UK Style Moodboard Designer**

This tool will help you determine the colour combinations for your home! Also visit the rest of the UK Style website, with lots of tips and tricks of the DIY trade.

### **Dulux Mousepainter**

THE way to design your home! You can choose between kitchen, bathroom, bedroom, living room and much more, with a wealth of colours and furnishings to choose from.

### **Homestagers UK**

The professional homestagers website with loads of tips and advice on how to prepare yourself and your home for that all-important sale!

### **Period Style Guide**

Find out about your favourite period and try to create the style!