

# Fundamentals of Color

Graphic Design





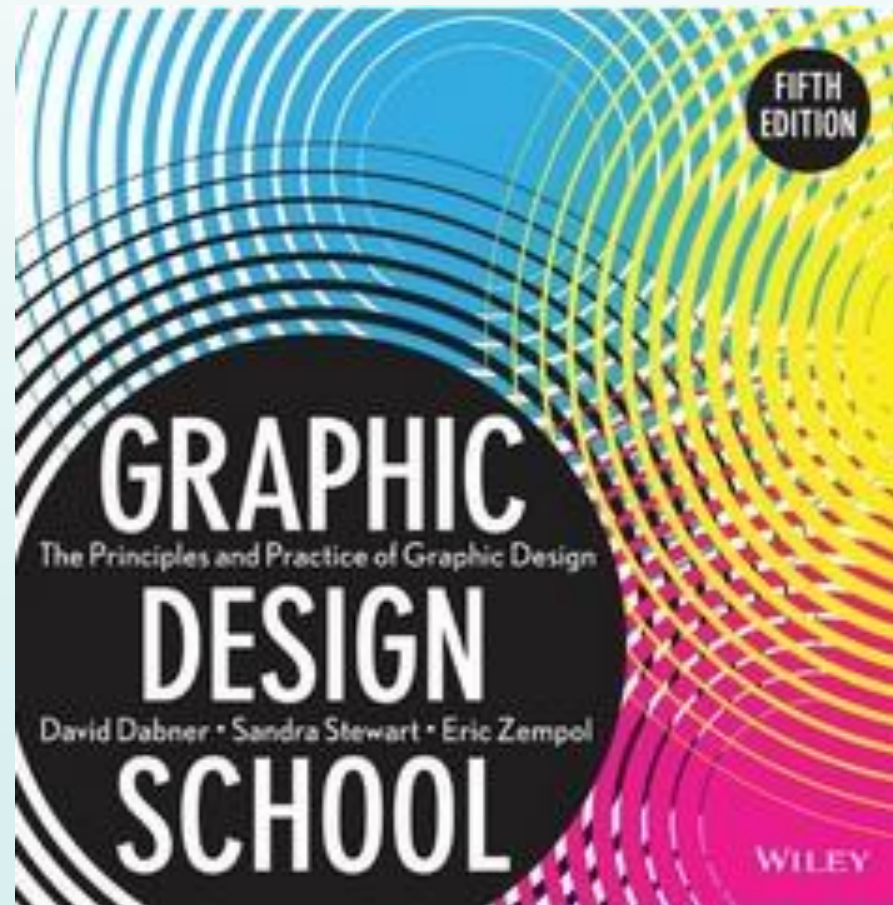
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# Textbook



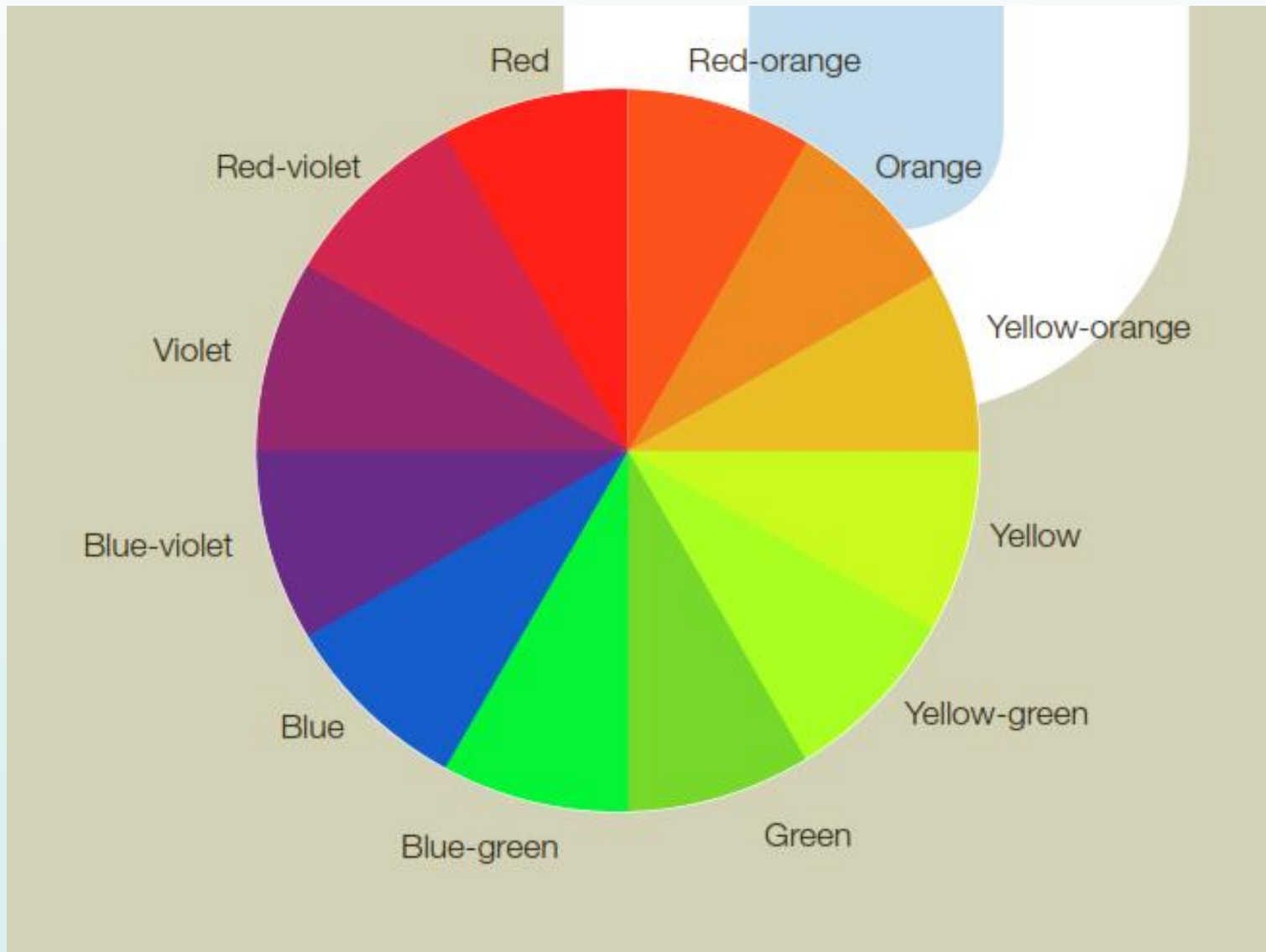


## Course Outline

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1. Color Terminology
2. Color Legibility, Contrast and Harmony
3. Color Associations
4. Assignments

# 1. Color Terminology





# 1. Color Terminology

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› To understand **how to choose color** for a specific purpose, designers must first

**develop knowledge of how**

**color works**, how colors are classified, and

the terms used to describe them

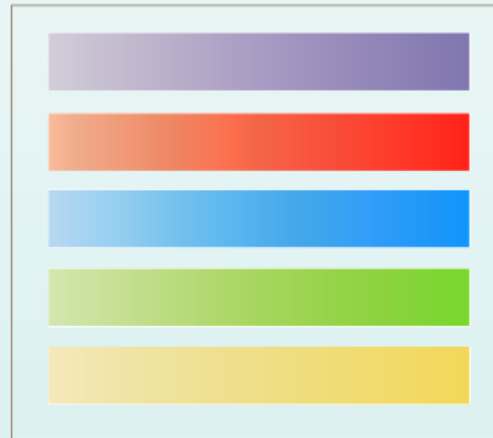


## 1. Color Terminology

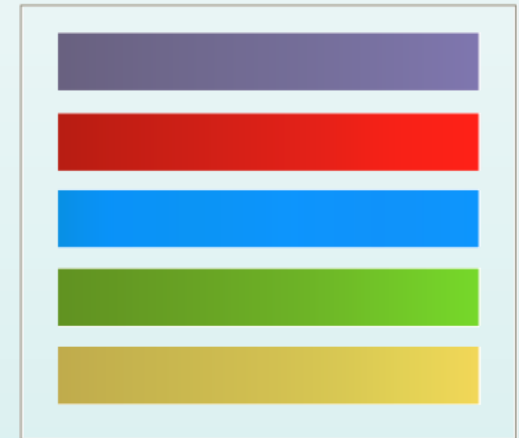
- › color is differentiated in three main ways: hue, tone, and saturation:



↑ **Hue** distinguishes one color from another. It is the generic name of the color—red, say, as opposed to blue.



↑ **Tone** (or value) is the relative lightness or darkness of a color. A color with added white is called a tint; a color with added black is called a shade.



↑ **Saturation** (or chroma) is roughly equivalent to brightness. A line of high intensity is a bright color, whereas one of low intensity is a dull color. Two colors can be of the same line but have different intensities.





# 1. Color Terminology

## GLOSSARY

**Additive color:** System used on monitors and televisions, based on RGB (red, green, blue). When combined, these form white light.

**Analogous color:** Colors that lie adjacent to each other on the color wheel—for example, blue and green.

**CMYK:** Cyan, magenta, yellow, key (black): the four colors that make up the full-color printing process.

**Complementary color:** Colors that lie opposite each other on the color wheel—for example, red and green.

**Gamut:** The complete range of colors available within one system of reproduction—for example, CMYK or RGB gamut.

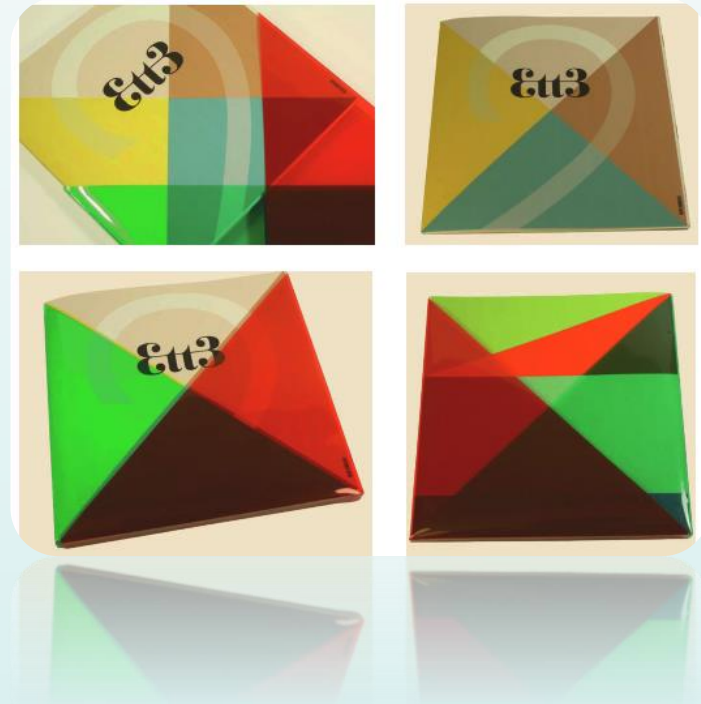
**Primary color:** Red, yellow, or blue.

**Secondary color:** A mix of any two primaries: orange, green, or violet.

**Spot color:** Any flat color, like Pantone or Toyo colors, printed as a solid, and not made up of CMYK.

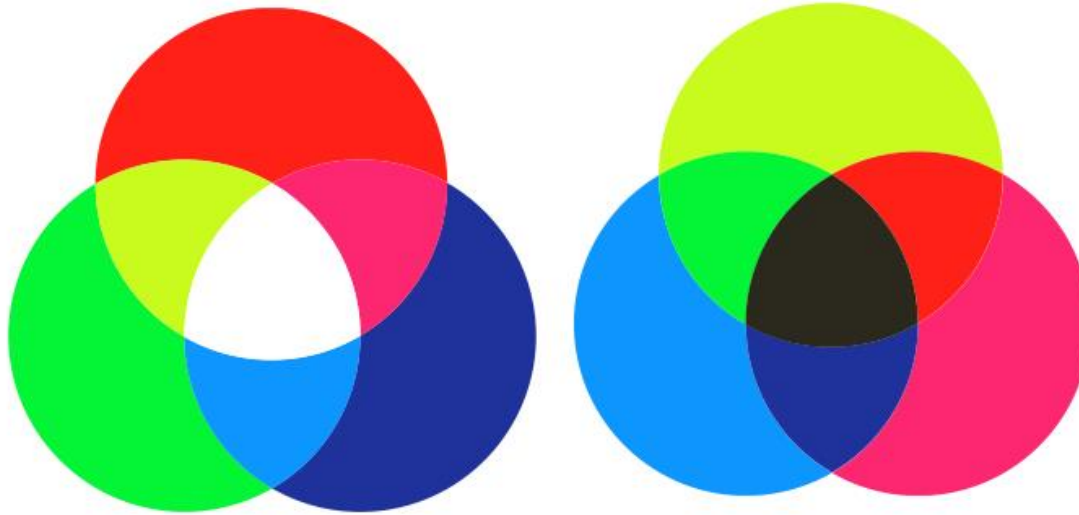
**Subtractive color:** System used in printing, based on CMYK colors.

**Tertiary color:** A mix of any two secondaries.





## 1. Color Terminology



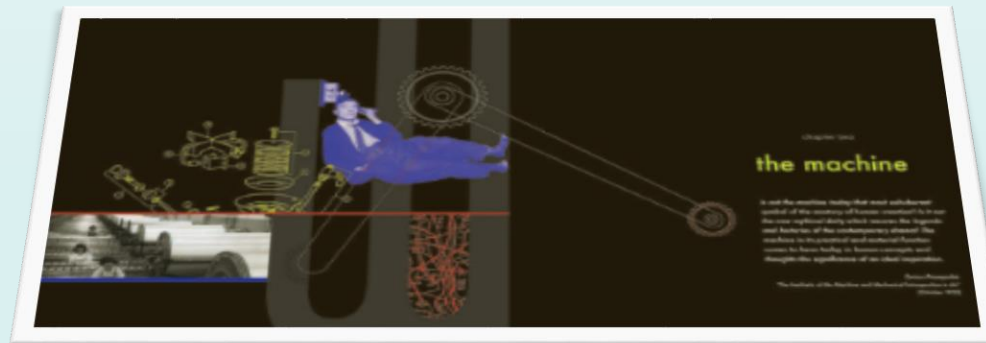
← **On-screen color** Additive primaries and RGB light are used to create colors on computers, televisions, and monitors. Combined, the additive primaries result in white light.

← **Printing primaries** Subtractive primaries and CMYK—cyan, magenta, yellow, and key (black)—are the primaries used in printing. When combined, subtractive colors make black.

## 2. Color Legibility, Contrast and Harmony

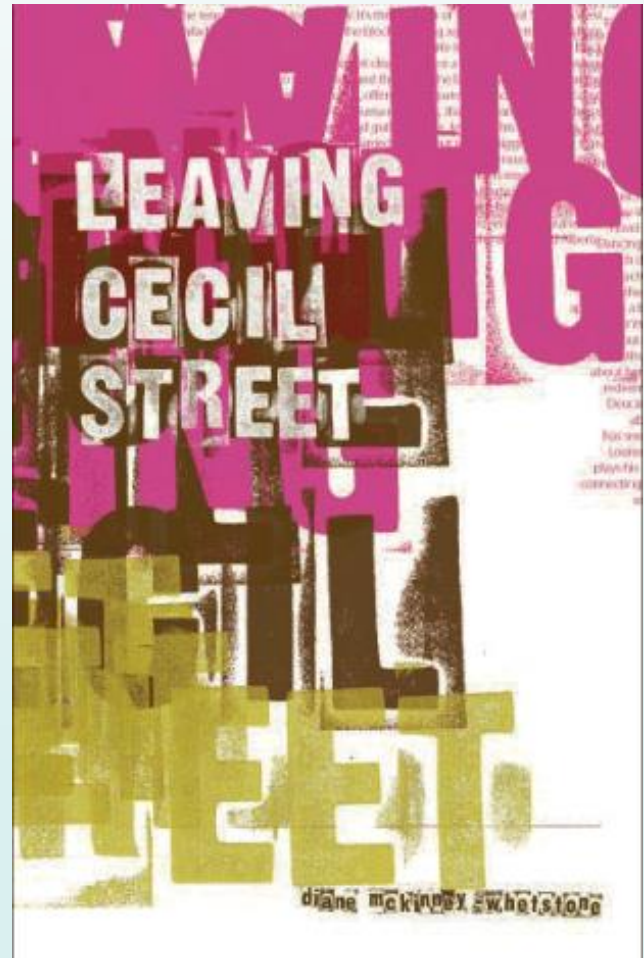
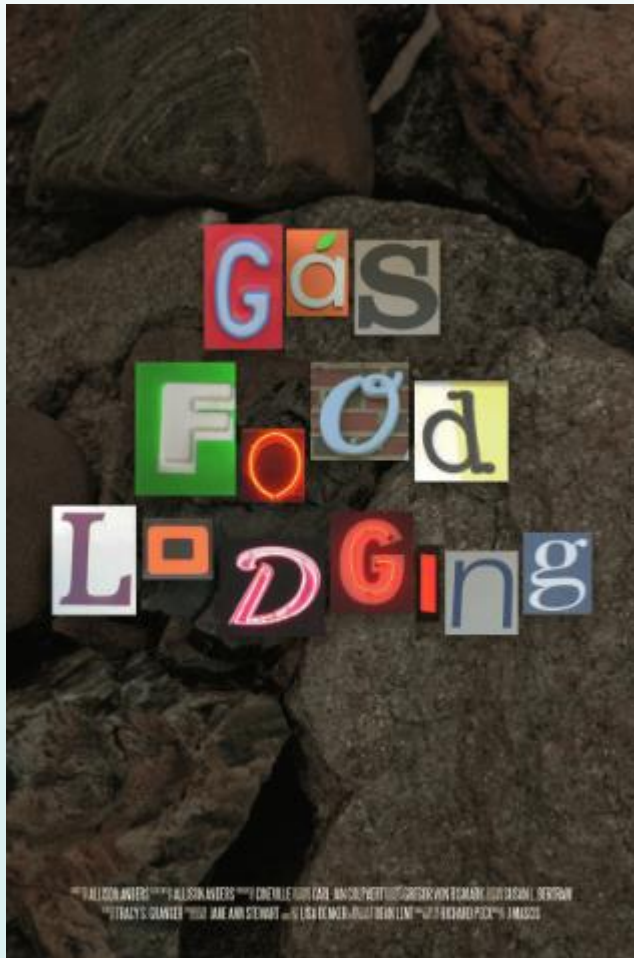
## 2. Color legibility, contrast, and harmony

- › Knowledge of the context in which finished work will be perceived vary greatly depending viewed is fundamental to the use of color in graphic design.
- › How that color is, and how legible it is, will g on whether it is viewed on a screen or in a print-based medium.





## 2. Color legibility, contrast, and harmony



# 3. Color associations



### 3. Color associations

Why are certain colors preferred, or seen to be more effective?





### 3. Color associations

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› It is because colors have, throughout history, come to hold particular associations that most likely **derive from nature**, and have, over time, become rooted in **human psychology**





## 3. Color associations

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### Color Theorists

- › **Josef Albers (1888–1976)** proposed that colors are never stationary; that is, they are constantly changing in relation to the colors surrounding them.
- › **Johannes Itten (1888–1967)** created color experiments based on contrasts such as temperature or hue, and associations based on seasons.
- › **Wassily Kandinsky (1866–1944)** developed his color usage in terms of spiritual moods and relations to musical instruments and sounds. His paintings are a synthetic color expression of sound.
- › **Wilhelm Ostwald (1853–1932)** set up an order of colors based around the concepts of harmony and disharmony.

# 4. Color as information



## 4. Color as Information

- › Color is a powerful tool, especially in information design, where it is used to help the designer organize data into various structures, and to aid the experience of “reading” a design





# 4. Color as Information





## Reference

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