

# Color Schemes

Color plays an important role in **design** and **everyday life**. It can draw your attention, create an emotional response, and even communicate without saying a word. So how do we know which colors work well together and which ones don't? The simple answer is color theory.

Color theory is the **collection of rules and guidelines** which designers use to communicate with users through appealing color schemes in visual interfaces. To pick the best colors every time, designers use a **color scheme** and refer to extensive collected knowledge about human optical ability, psychology, culture and more.

Colors should be chosen to deliver an enhanced aesthetic appeal and a better user experience. That means it's a good idea to think about what color scheme you will use at the start of the design process. The way that colors are combined can either add to the look and feel or detract from it.

## Let's Learn About The 7 Main Color Schemes:

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# Monochromatic



The **monochromatic** scheme is based on the colors created from different tints (created by adding black or white to the original color), tones and shades of one hue. In theory, it's the simplest of all the schemes. A monochromatic scheme is commonly used in minimal designs because one hue should result in a less distracting layout.

On the other hand, this scheme means that you cannot use multiple colors to help visualize information in a user interface (UI). That is the only price of simplicity.

# Analogous



The **analogous** scheme is based on three colors located next to each other on the color wheel (e.g., yellow-green, yellow and yellow-orange). This scheme can easily be found in nature — just think of trees in the autumn as the leaves change color.

# Complementary



**Complementary** color schemes use one (or more) pairs of colors that, when combined, “cancel each other out” or “neutralize” one another. For example, when you combine the two colors, they produce white or black (or something very similar from the greyscale). For that reason, this scheme is also known as the “opposite color” scheme.

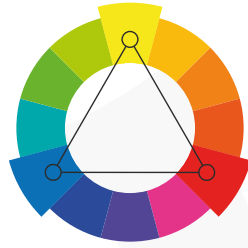
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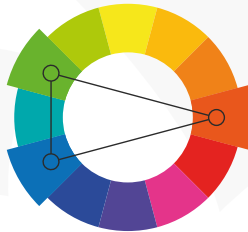


# Triadic



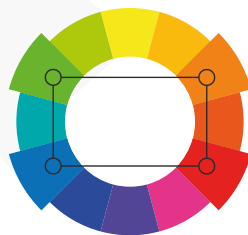
The **triadic** scheme is based on the use of three colors at equal distances from each other on the color wheel. The easiest way to find a triadic scheme is to put an equilateral triangle on the wheel so that each corner touches one color. The three colors will be exactly  $120^\circ$  from each other. These schemes are considered to be vibrant (even when the hues themselves are not) — they keep the harmony but deliver a high level of visual contrast.

# Split-Complementary



This is a combination of the use of a **complementary** color scheme and an **analogous** color scheme. In essence, complementary colors are chosen and then the colors on either side of them on the color wheel are also used in the design. It's considered to soften the impact of a complementary color scheme, which can, in some situations, be too bold or too harsh on the viewer's eye.

# Tetradic



**Tetradic** schemes utilize two sets of complementary pairs (four colors total). These can create very interesting visual experiences, but they are hard to keep in balance. Why? It's because one color of a tetradic scheme needs to dominate the other colors without completely overwhelming them. An equal amount of each color often leads to a very awkward look, the last thing you want your users to see.

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# Square



The **square** scheme is a variant of the tetradic scheme. Instead of choosing two complementary pairs, you place a square on the color wheel and choose the colors that lie on its corners. Therefore, you'll find four colors that are evenly spaced at 90° from each other. Unlike the tetradic color scheme, this approach often works best when all the colors are evenly used throughout the design.

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- How to use grid systems to improve your work

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