

Color Vocabulary

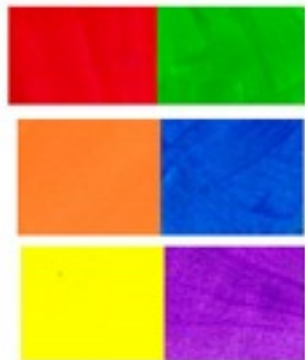
The Color Wheel

The color wheel is a device for illustrating relationships among colors. Though there are infinite variations of hue, we commonly refer to twelve of them around the color wheel: red, red-orange, orange, yellow-orange, yellow, yellow-green, green, blue-green, blue, blue-violet, violet (purple), red-violet, and back to red.

Primary colors – red, yellow, and blue – are the building blocks of other hues. They are equidistant on the color wheel.

Secondary colors are those made by mixing two primaries. Orange (red+yellow), Green (yellow+blue) and purple or violet (blue+red) are secondary colors.

Tertiary colors are those in between the secondaries and primaries: red-orange, yellow-orange, yellow-green, blue-green, blue-violet, and red-violet.



Complimentary Colors

Complimentary colors are pairs that are opposite on the color wheel and have the highest contrast in terms of hue: red/green, purple/yellow, orange/blue, red-orange/blue-green, and so forth, are all pairs of complimentary colors.



Analogous Colors

Analogous colors are those next to each other. Red, orange, yellow, for example; violet, blue-violet, and blue; green, blue-green, and blue, for example.

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Hue refers to what color a color is. Blue, green, red, pinkish-orange, yellow-green, etc. These are examples of hue.

Value refers to the lightness or darkness of a color.

Saturation or **Intensity** refers to the brightness or dullness of a color.

Tints are made by adding white to a color, so they are of lighter value than the color at full strength.

Shades are made by adding black to a color, so they are of darker value.

Tones are made by adding grey to a color.

Tints, shades, and tones are of lesser **saturation** than a color at full strength.



Recommended Palette of Artists' Paints

Red

- Cadmium Red Medium, Naphthol Red Light, or Pyrrole Red
- Quinacridone red or magenta, or some other Magenta

Orange

- Cadmium Orange or Pyrrole Orange
- Quinacridone Gold is sort of in the orange range. I can't make art without it, but maybe you can. Golden is the company that makes the best version of this, and now they call it "Quinacradone Nickel Azo Gold".

Yellow

- Cadmium Yellow Medium, or Hansa Yellow Light or Medium - good primary yellow.
- Indian Yellow Hue is a gorgeous transparent yellow-gold.
- Naples Yellow is opaque and muted.

Green

- Hooker Green, Sap Green, or Jenkins Green
- Pthalo Green, which is an intense bluish green
- Green Gold, a unique olive/yellow green, very transparent

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Blue-Green

- Phthalo Turquoise (transparent), or Cobalt Teal (opaque), or any turquoise that appeals

Blue

- Ultramarine (cool blue)
- Phthalo Blue, either shade (warm blue)

Purple

- Permanent Violet Dark, though you can usually get a successful purple by mixing your magenta with either of your blues.

Black

- Carbon Black, or use Blick Matte Acrylics black

White

- Titanium White, or use Blick Matte Acrylics white

Budget Palette – the bare minimum

Primary red (like Cadmium, etc.)

Magenta (much better for mixing)

Orange

Yellow

Green (light or permanent)

Turquoise

Warm Blue (pthalo)

Black

White

Get as many basic colors as you can afford in a professional quality paint. My favorite printmakers are Golden, Sennelier, and Holbein, but there are a lot of good brands available, and you should find what suits you in terms of consistency and availability. **Supplement your professional quality paints with student grade paints.** I use Blick Matte Acrylics for white and some neutrals. I recommend Nova Paints (available only at novacolorpaint.com) and Liquitex Basics for less pigment-rich paints of decent quality.