Color Harmonies

Color Schemes

- Scheme / Palette = selection of specific base hues
- Vary these hues through value, intensity, proportion
- Goal = Harmony
Color Schemes

- Simple Harmonies
- Opposing / Contrasting Harmonies
- Balanced Color Harmonies

Simple Harmonies

Achromatic
- Use of Black, white, or very low saturated hue.
Simple Harmonies

Monochromatic

- Use of a single hue with varying values and saturation.

Simple Harmonies

Analogous

- Color Family
- Beside each other on a color wheel
- Includes same hue.
Simple Harmonies

Analogous

Contrasting Harmonies

Complementary
• Perfectly balanced
• Opposite in the color wheel.
• Distinctive Strengths:
  – V+Y = wide value range
  – R+G = extreme agitation
  – O+B = wide temperature
Contrasting Harmonies

Warm / Cool

- 4 hues = neighboring pair of warm and cool
- Cool = V ⇒ G
- Warm = R ⇒ Y
- Either way = RV & YG depending on what it is paired with

Contrasting Harmonies

Double Complementary

- More structured than Warm/Cool
- 2 adjacent complementary pairs = 4 hue contrasting scheme
Contrasting Harmonies

Split Complementary
- 3 hues
- 2 = surrounding colors of a complement
- Can also be considered as a Balanced Color Harmony

Balanced Harmonies

Triad
- Color Chords
- Equilateral Triangle in color circle
- High Hue variety and balanced.
Balanced Harmonies

Triad

Tetrad
- Balanced 4 Hue Scheme
- Square or rectangle within color wheel
- High Hue Variety and Flexibility.
Balanced Harmonies

Tetrad

Keyed Color Harmony

Color Keys
• describe a range of value and saturation
• A palette can be created with all the same value or saturation keys.
Additional Color Harmonies

- **Simple**: Variation of 2–4 hues
- **High and Low Saturation**: all high or low saturation hues
- **Neutral with accents**: Achromatic with 1 or 2 accent strong hue
- **Light and Dark Value**: hues keyed to same value
- **Limited Hue Saturation**: 1-3 hues + greys (tones)
- **Chromatic Gradation**: pure hues + gradation between
- **Value Gradation**: 2-4 hues + light to dark value variations

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**Color Harmony in Art & Design**

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**Phenomena Shied and Green**
Paul Jenkins, 1969

**Analogous Scheme** with touches of Complementary color

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**Tetrad Scheme**

Emile Nolde, 1969

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AIIGA Atlanta Big Night Poster
Ted Fabella, 1969
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Complementary Scheme

Two Little Circus Girls
Auguste Renoir, 1879
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Monochromatic Scheme
with touches of achromatic for emphasis
Kansas City Events Posters
Jon Muller

Chromatic Gradation, Analogous, Triad Schemes

Thoughts of Summer
Robert Lazuka, 1999

Monochromatic Scheme
**Analagous Scheme**

**Ka-ching.com**
Website by Leila Lee Michell

**Complementary Scheme**

**Title.com**
Website by Leila Lee Michell
Spring in the Château du Repas
Noriyoshi Ishigooka, 1987

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Varying Schemes
Hafele America Company Ads
Charlie Elberson
Leila Lee Michell
Varying Schemes

Briarwood Mall Billboards
Perich & Partners

Resources
Color Workbook  Becky Koenig
Minimal Graphics  Catherine Fishel
Art Fundamentals  Ocvirk, Stinson, Wigg, Bone
Launching the Imagination  Mary Stewart
Fresh Styles for Web Designers  Curt Cloninger

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