



Rectangular Tetrad - (Green Rectangle)

Six combinations can be formed which have different levels of sophistication depending on whether the more subtle pairs of Tertiary complements are selected compared to the pairs made of only Primary and Secondary colors.



Square Tetrad - (Purple Square) Square Tetrads always makes a bold statement since they combine a pair of Primary/Secondary colors with a pair of Tertiary colors.

Four additional ways of combining colors:



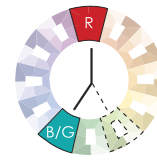
Analogous (Three to five colors adjacent to each other): Your starting color, plus the one or two colors on either side, make an Analogous combination. When using three Analogous colors you may mix all values, but as your combination widens, mixed values may become distracting. An Analogous combination will be sparked by a little of the Complement of the middle color.



Monochromatic (Any number of values of the same color): This is an easy and pleasing color plan enhanced by adding a little of the Complement for accent.



Color Guideline: Analogous and Monochromatic combinations provide much less contrast than multi-color combinations that include two or three Primary colors. Their strength is in creating peaceful, quiet, harmonious and less stimulating combinations. An easy way to start working with a color wheel is to use three to five Analogous colors, along with a little of the Complement of the middle color.



Counterpoint (Two-color combinations):

Combining your starting color with the color to the right or left of its Complement will produce a more interesting two-color combination.



Multi-color (Up to 12 colors): Use matching values from each color around the wheel. Try a six-color combination by using matching values of every other color. Compare matched values of the Primary and Secondary colors to one made up of all the Tertiary colors. Notice that the Tertiary combination looks more fashion-oriented.

REFINING YOUR COLOR COMBINATIONS

Even though the guidelines say the combination is harmonious, your first reaction to a color combination may be negative. This is because you still have two factors to consider: Value and Proportion.

The Value of Values

It can be distracting to look at several widely separated colors at once. However, when values match, such as all pastels or all jewel tones, the eye happily moves across the colors without the need to look away. Use the seven value numbers that are shown around each color on the Rainbow® Pick, Point & Match® Color Selector to help you match values. You may not always find the exact value, however try to stay within a three-value range.



Color Value Guideline: When the two colors of a Complementary or Counterpoint combination are used disproportionately, mixing values can be quite effective. Examples might be dark red berries on a bright green bush or pale coral trim on a deep blue/green sweater.

Color Value Guideline: When combining three or more colors (unless they are Analogous), mixing values results in a spotty look that is distracting. If you aren't sure if your values match, try this: Make a black and white copy of your chosen combination. If the copy has similar gray tones for each color, your values will match.

PROPORTION

As you look at your color combinations, remember that the division of space and the colors that fill the space are usually more pleasing when they are not used in equal proportion. There are mathematical formulas for determining space and color proportions, however the two statements below will serve as useful guidelines.



Color Proportion Guideline: Think of the colors you are assigning to your space as a gallon of your main color, a quart of your supporting colors and an ounce of accent.



Space Proportion Guideline: Space is more pleasing when it is divided into two-thirds, one-third instead of divided in half.

If you are using three colors, reserve 10% of your space for your accent, then divide the remaining space into one-third/two-thirds. For a four-color combination, divide the one-third portion into one-third/two-thirds.



OTHER COLOR CONSIDERATIONS

When deciding between color combinations, it is helpful to experiment with colored pencils, painting a section of your project or by wrapping yarn or fabric around a strip of cardboard before you commit to your final colors and proportions.

Warm colors are the yellow, orange and red range. They denote warmth, and make a color scheme look cheerful and exuberant. They come forward with vibrancy.

Cool colors are the green, blue and violet range. They denote coolness, and look calm, clean and inviting. They recede and are restful. Red/violet and yellow/green contain elements of both warm and cool colors. They become warmer or cooler as they are combined with colors which are warmer or cooler.

Neutrals such as white, cream, beige, gray, brown and black often have an undertone of color and may appear to be warm or cool depending upon the underlying color.

Light values (1-2) open up surroundings and are restful, light and airy.

Mid-range values (3-5) are strong, confident, youthful and active. These values denote youth and action. Gray, taupe and off-white are pleasing neutrals for this range. Mid-range values combined with black or white make a bold statement.

Dark values (6-7) or jewel tones are considered conservative, powerful and authoritative. They close up space and make it seem smaller. Black and charcoal are good background choices or neutral additions for darks.

Other color terms:

Color - A general term for what you see when light falls on an object. This may include objects that are black, white or gray.

Hue - Sometimes used interchangeably with color, it actually applies only to pure color.

Shade - Darkening a color by adding black.

Tint - Lightening a color by adding white.

Tone - Darkening a color by adding gray.

Value - The lightness or darkness of a color.