

What Colors to Use on

Your Website



1. Use a natural palette of colors.

They are more pleasing than any of their artificial counterparts. Combine them in order to get the emotional response that you want to get from your visitors. Unnatural colors, such as bright green, blue or red usually cause eye fatigue and chase visitors (i.e. prospects) away. Also you should be aware that primary colors like red, yellow or orange can work well for culinary promotion purposes.

2. Create a strong contrast between a page's background and its text.

The best combination for readability is black text on white background, but there are also other excellent combination. Besides white, other effective web site background colors are dark blue, gray and black. The situation is not the same for product promotions. When the product is the center of attention, desaturated colors are recommended.



3. Select an average of 3 different colors and use them consistently throughout the web site.

Chromatic harmony is one of the most important criteria in order to create a pleasant experience for the visitors. It is strongly recommended that a moderate number of colors should be employed; four or five is ok; more than that not only will they create inconsistency, by they will also cause an eye sore for the visitor making him skip important parts of the site.

4. Be sure to take into account people with visual disabilities.

Make sure that the message of your site reaches such people as well.



Old vs. Young People

People of different ages have different reactions to colors. People past a certain age will find web sites with more sober and restrained (and therefore relaxing to the eye) colors more attractive. Youngsters, on the other hand, will appreciate more vivid and brighter colors.

Men vs. Women

Men tend to prefer blue and orange to red and yellow, while women prefer red to blue and yellow to orange. Also, remember that it has been proven that women are able to perceive considerably more colors than men.



Nations and Colors

If your website addresses an audience larger than your country of origin or it is meant to attract prospects from a specific country, invest some time in researching the specific meanings of colors. For example, while white is a symbol of purity in Western cultures, it stands for bad luck and unhappiness in China, Japan, and India. While very appreciated in Japan, pink is frowned upon in India and East-European countries, where it is regarded as a 'non-manly' color.



Common Colors and Their Most Common Meanings

Red: energy, passion, excitement, power; also implies aggression, danger.

Blue: coolness, spirituality, freedom, patience, loyalty, peace, trustworthiness; can also imply sadness, depression.

Yellow: light, optimism, happiness, brightness, joy.

Green: life, naturalness, restfulness, health, wealth, prosperity; in certain contexts, can imply decay, toxicity.

Orange: friendliness, warmth, approachability, energy, playfulness, courage.

Violet: wisdom, sophistication, celebration.

White: purity, cleanliness, youth, freshness, peace.

Black: power, elegance, secrecy, mystery.

Gray: security, maturity, reliability.

Pink: romance, a feminine color.

Brown: comfort, strength, stability, credibility.



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