

VOCABULARY OF COLOR

Hue: this is the kind of color described as in redness, blueness, greenness, etc. It is the specific color red, blue, green, yellow.

Chroma: is a synonym for **hue** that is used to describe a color's primary property:

Chromatic: having hue

Achromatic: without hue

Polychromatic: having many hues

Monochromatic: having only one hue

(note: the average person can distinguish about 150 colors and every one can be described using one or two of only six words:

RED ORANGE YELLOW GREEN BLUE INDIGO VIOLET
(ROYGBIV)

Nearly all color samples include more than one hue but *one hue is dominant* and others are present in smaller proportion. This is readily seen when two colors in the same family are placed side by side.

Color Wheel: A tool for artists use in selecting and identifying color functions. Identifying complementary, analogous, primary and secondary colors. In some forms of the color wheel (see Itten, Munsell) toned, primary secondary and sometimes tertiary colors are included as well.

Primary colors: those that are irreducible in pigment: Red, Yellow, Blue.

Secondary colors: those that are mixtures of two primaries: Orange, Green, Violet.

Tertiary colors: those that are mixtures of unequal amounts of all three primaries or a primary and a secondary color (which therefore contains all primaries).

Analogous colors: a group of colors adjacent on the color wheel containing two primary colors but never a third. These usually are a primary color, a secondary color and any of the hues that lie between the two. It is a relationship between hues no matter what their value or saturation.

Complementary colors: Those colors that are opposite each other on the color wheel:

RED/GREEN

BLUE/ORANGE

YELLOW/VIOLET

Note: one is a primary and the other a secondary color in each complement.

Analogous Complementary colors: Can you figure out what analogous complementary colors are based upon the term *analogous* and *complementary*? **Try it!**

Value: the relative light and dark in a sample. Value is most easily understood as a series of steps from black to white without the presence of hue (chroma). Each step, in a series of steps, is a middle interval between the two on either side of it: half as dark as the one before it and twice as dark as the one following it. (*See chart for grey scale assignment.*)

Value equivalent: this is the grey that is exactly at the value of a given color without any trace of hue in it. A totally desaturated color. On the color wheel the value equivalent for yellow will be far lighter than that for blue, purple or red.

Saturation: this is the chroma or hue intensity. It is called the purity of the color at its most vivid.

Tint: a hue mixed with white.

Shade: a hue mixed with black.

Tone: a hue mixed with grey, *or* the hue's complement. It can also mean something like **cast** such as the red has a blue cast to it or a blue tone to it.

EFFECTS OF COLOR

Simultaneous contrast: this is an involuntary response when looking at a strong single color and then looking at a nearby neutral area. Looking first at the color then at the neutral color you will notice the eye will see the complement of the color just looked at. It will generate the missing complement to the color.

Contrast Reversal: a pattern in one color (with a central dot) when looked at for a few seconds will appear in a blank space near it when looked at also with a location dot. The image will be in reversed colors from the patterns original. With a red circle, for example, a cyan circle will appear; with a yellow diamond field, a pale violet color will appear. This will also occur with black and white patterns and images.

Other effects will be discussed in next session.