

Artist Talk  
October 28th 2020  
The story of becoming a teaching artist



## Let's Go Deep - A Personal Invitation to Join Me!

Hello! I'm so glad you are interested in learning more about Let's Go Deep and Color Theory! Before we jump into our Color Theory lesson, **I want to invite you to join the next cohort of participants in [Let's Go Deep](#)!** Registration is currently open, and the program starts January 2021!

What is Let's Go Deep you ask? In short, Let's Go Deep is an intensive creative mentorship program for artists to create a cohesive body of work. This introduction to Color Theory is just one segment from the [Let's Go Deep](#) library! Let's Go Deep is all about getting to the core of your own creative work, inventing an art practice that is truly your own, and producing a cohesive body of new work. I will lead from my lifetime of experience as a visual artist but I certainly am not the one with all the answers. YOU have access to everything you need to know inside of you. This is about your own collaboration with creativity itself.

Here's the skinny:

- The course will run January - June 2021.
- You will be guided to create your very own, new cohesive body of work!
- You'll become fluent in the language of visual art.
- It's empowering!
- One lesson every week for six months.
- One actionable bite-sized assignment for you to complete each week.
- It's a live class - every lesson is taught in real time via Zoom.
- You get happy-dancing personal feedback from me every time you complete an assignment.
- You'll be with an intimate cohort of other working artists and there's a group conversation following the lesson each week.
- When you sign up before November 15th you get 2 additional 1-on-1 mentoring sessions with me to enhance your experience in the course.
- Sign up now to get the most 1-on-1 time with me - don't miss out!

## Links

Learn more about the Basic Member program option and register for it on my website at:

<https://www.annamielca.com/lets-go-deep>

Learn more about the VIP Member program option and register for it on my website at:

<https://www.annamielca.com/lets-go-deep-vip>

Basic Member Level Payment Plans:

<https://www.annamielca.com/lets-go-deep-payment-plans>

VIP Member Level Payment Plans:

<https://www.annamielca.com/lets-go-deep-vip-payment-plans>

Testimonials:

<https://www.annamielca.com/testimonials>

Let's Go Deep FAQ

<https://www.annamielca.com/lets-go-deep-faq>

**Hope you can join me in January 2021 for Let's Go Deep! Thank you so much for inviting me to speak with you today!**

Ok, back to the Color Theory Lesson!

## Let's Go Deep - Introduction to Color Theory

I find color theory a fun topic. I hope you'll find it a wonderfully interesting subject, too. Let's dive in!

Here's an overview of how we'll cover color theory:

1. Summary: What is color?
2. Handy-dandy basic terms to know for understanding color.
3. Color qualities: hue, saturation, and value
4. Understanding tints, shades, and tones
5. Temperature of colors
6. Examples from art history
7. Additional color schemes

### What is color?

Color is our perception of light. Let's talk about **light** for a minute. White light is actually made up of every color, and when it hits a prism, it can be separated into the full spectrum of colors. The colors separate because they have different wavelengths. Violet has the shortest wavelength, and on the other end of the spectrum (literally), red has the longest wavelength. Think about wavelengths as a shape (little waves that are either small and frequent as in violet or long and less frequent, like in red). So, different colors of light actually have distinct shapes if you think about wavelength as a shape.

What allows us to see these wavelengths of color that are traveling as a part of the white light are the sensors at the back of our eyes. The cone cells in the back of our eyeballs allow us to perceive color. The rod cells in the back of our eyes help us see value contrast. If you think of the human eye as an empty orb, there is an opening at the front that opens and closes like a window shade to help moderate the amount of light that comes in. At the back of that orb, there's a "garden" of rods and cones: the photoreceptor cells. The color-sensitive cone cells help us to see color, and light-sensitive rod cells help us see in black and white, in dim light, and more.

What's cool about this is that because all of us have physiological differences, we all perceive color a little bit differently. It's also what explains selective color-blindness, where you are less sensitive to a certain wavelength of light. The most common is having a reduced sensitivity to green light or red light, sometimes referred to as red/green color-blindness. People with this condition have trouble

distinguishing between reds, greens, oranges, and browns. Browns could be the mixture of red and green. It's really interesting to think that your genetics or anatomy can affect the way you perceive the physical world!

Even to those of us who don't have color blindness, I urge you to look around during dusk or dawn. Without the full white light of daylight, notice how dull the colors of your garden or your neighborhood look.

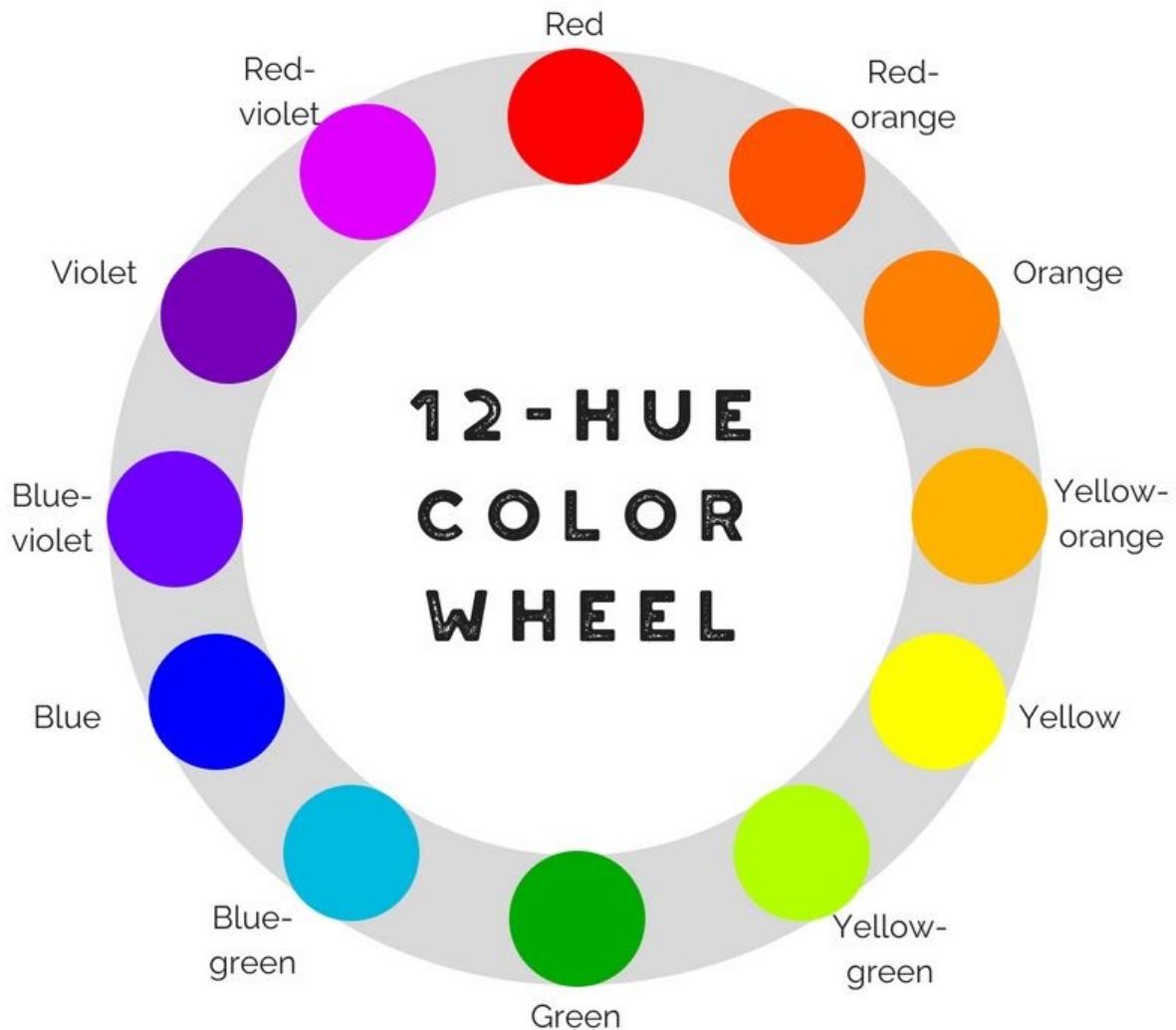
Finally, when you look at an object and you perceive it to be a certain color, such as a red tulip, know that the tulip is actually reflecting the red light wavelengths and absorbing the other color wavelengths. It's pretty mind-boggling!

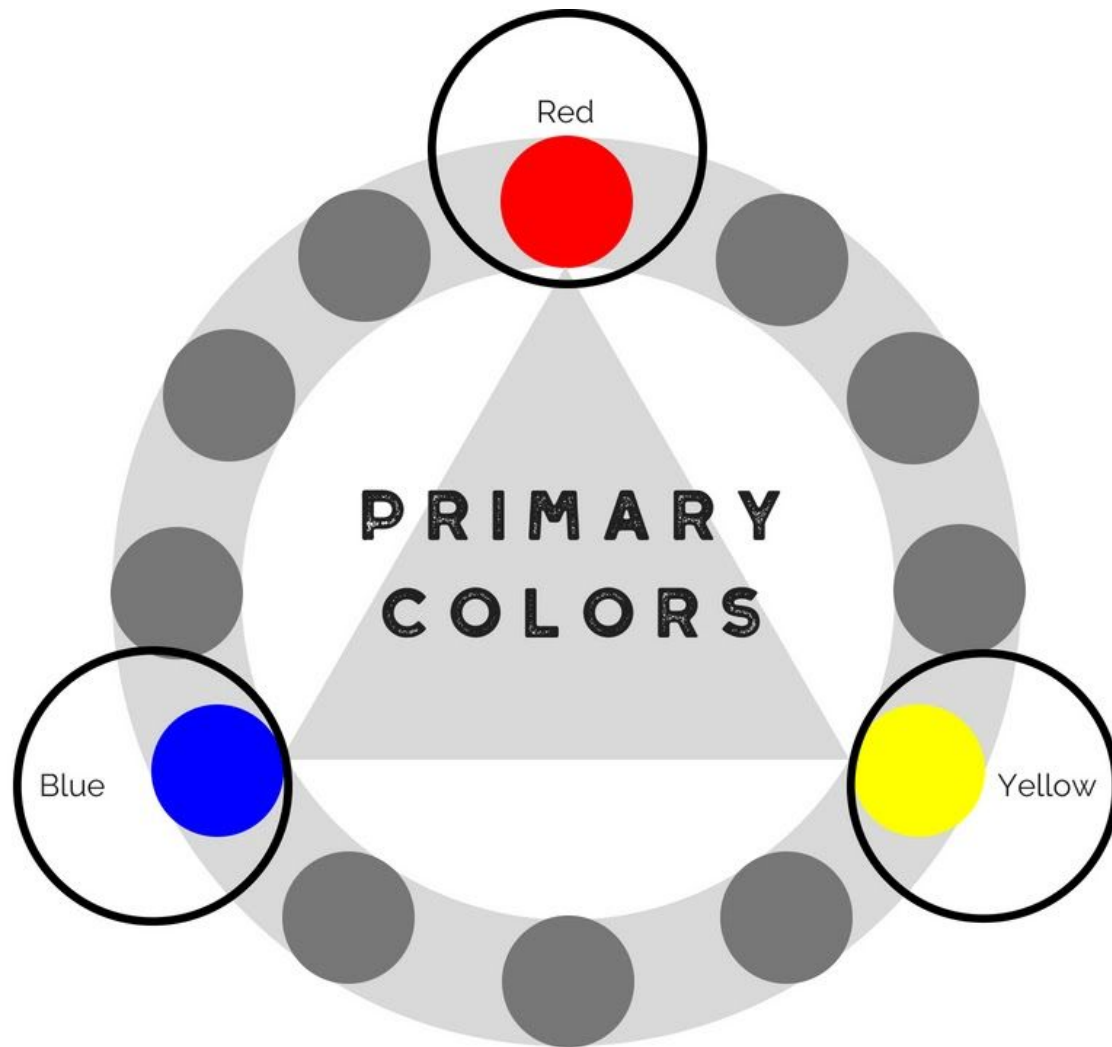
When you think about color at its essence, it is a perceived wavelength of light. However, when we translate that to visual art, we need to manufacture that out of pigments or materials or by capturing it with photographic means. So even though the definition of color remains the same, color becomes much more about rendering color with the tools and materials we have.

I'll be talking about color this month from my perspective as a painter, which I trust will be digestible to an artist of any medium. I'll be talking about color theory as it relates to fine art but I won't be getting into how it relates to computer graphics. All of these principles of color theory can be applied to computer generated ways of creating color, but in this class we're focusing on the more foundational aspects of color which I can best describe in terms of paint.

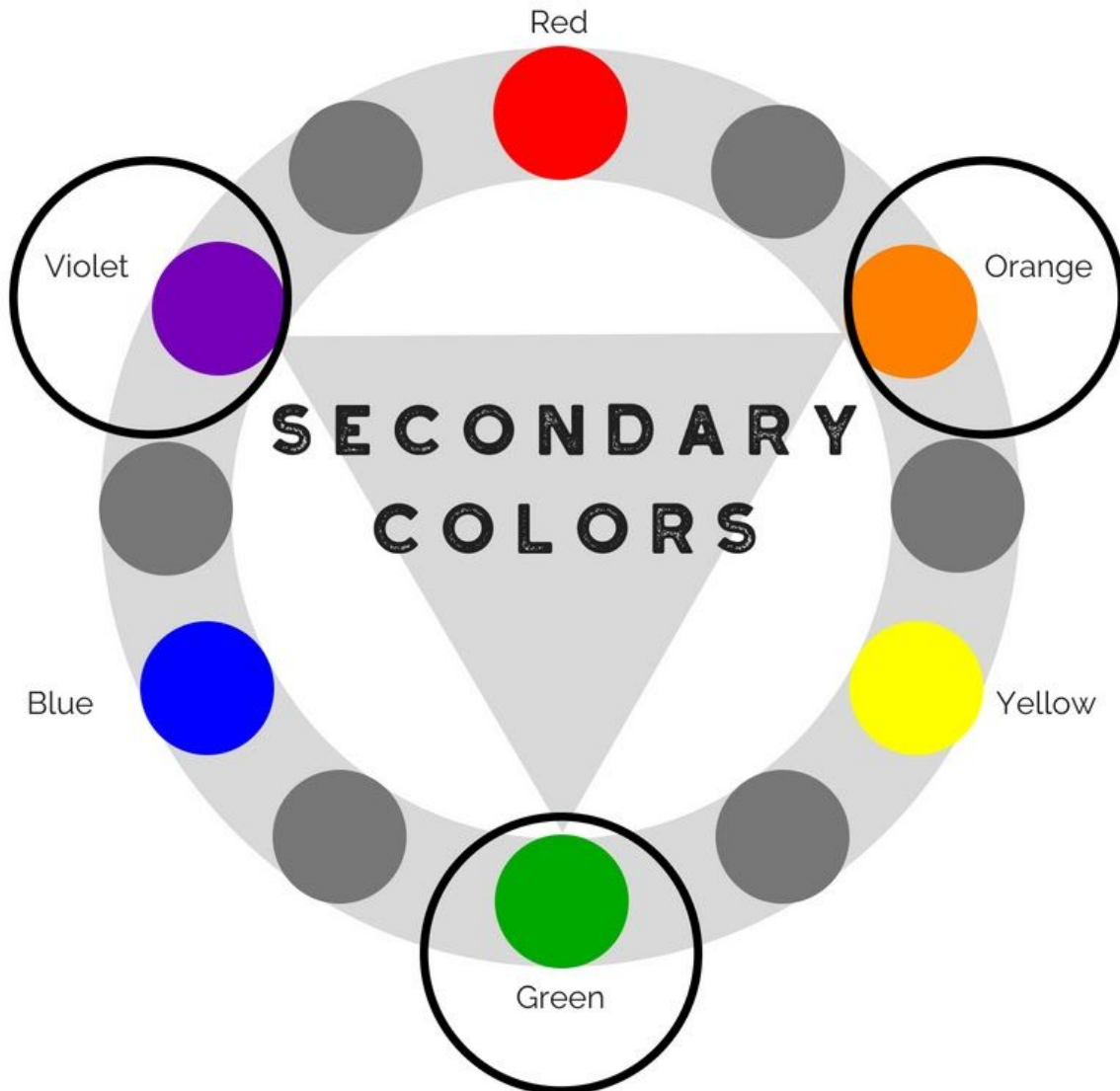
## Let's Go Deep - Color Theory Basic Terms

**Color wheel:** I'm sure you've seen a color wheel before. But did you know that color wheels can come in many shapes and forms? A color wheel is an easy way to see color relationships—the relationships of the primary, secondary, and tertiary colors. The most basic form is the 12-hue wheel shown here.



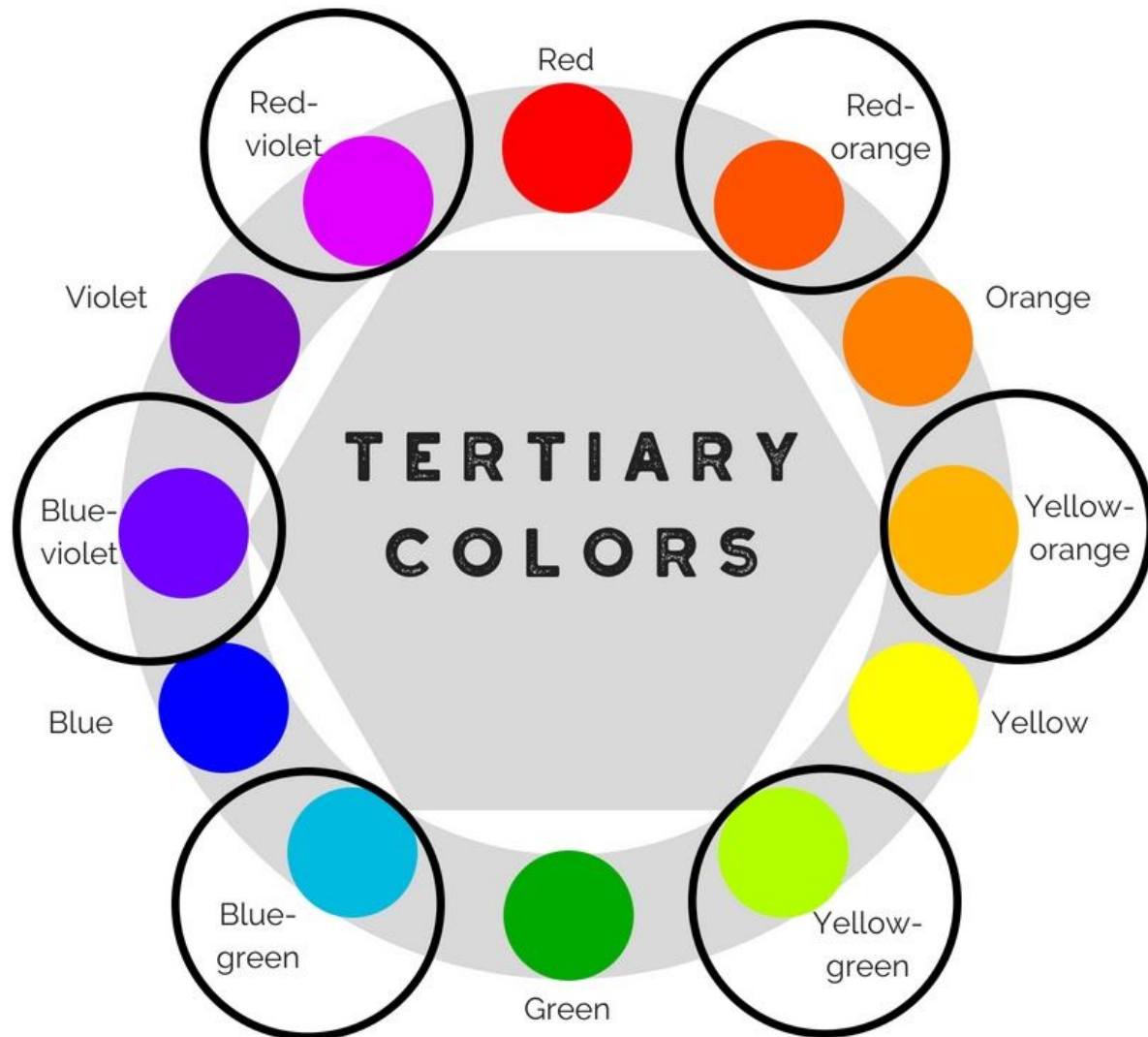


**Primary colors:** There are three primary colors: red, blue, and yellow. Primary colors are defined by the fact that they cannot be mixed or made from any other colors. You can't mix any colors together to create a true primary yellow, red, or blue. And these colors are the genesis from which all other colors are mixed. They sit at perfect thirds from each other on the color wheel, with three colors in between.

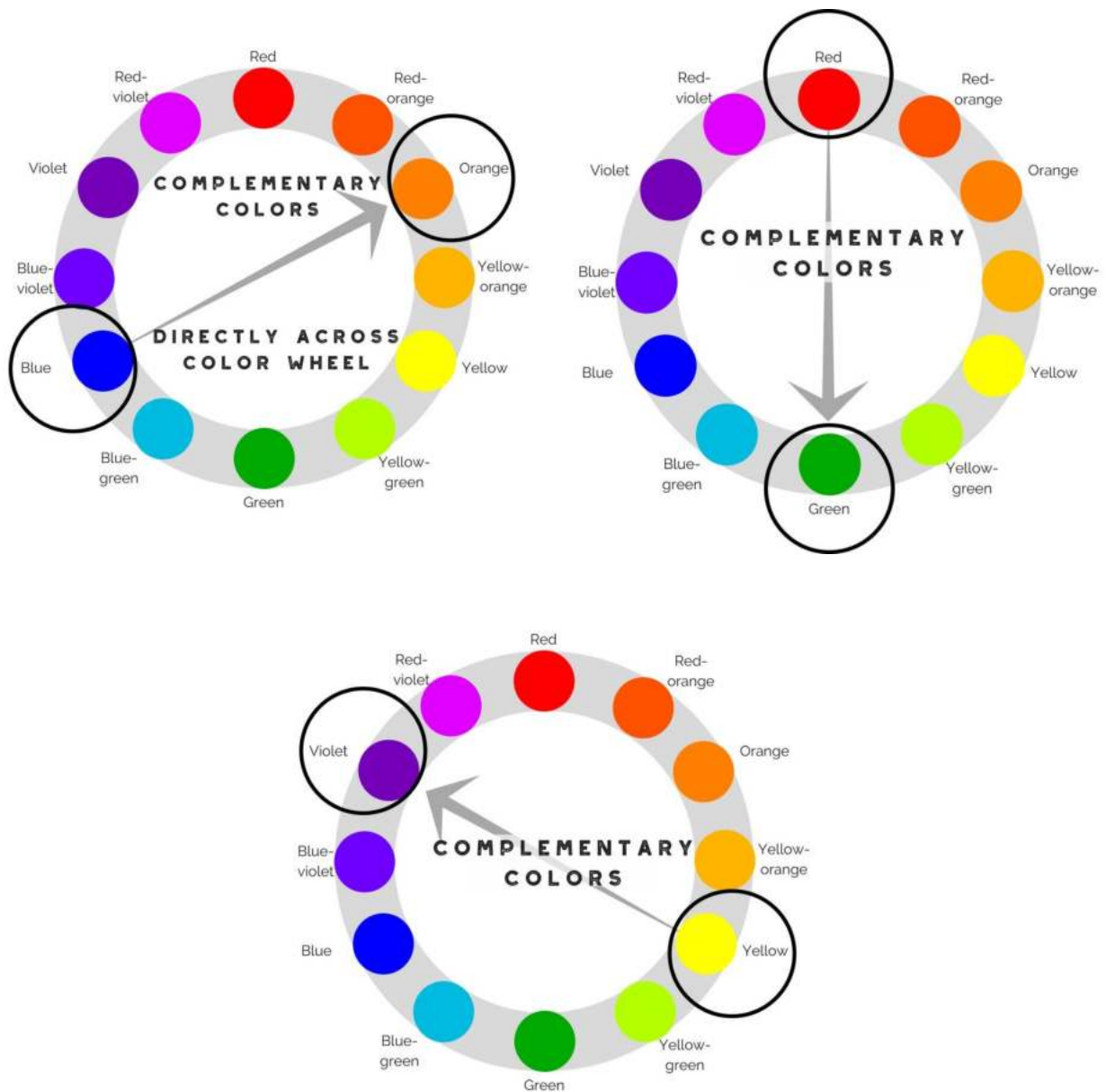


**Secondary colors:** These colors are made from the primary colors. They are located exactly in between the primary colors. The three secondary colors are orange (red mixed with yellow), green (blue mixed with yellow), and violet (blue mixed with red). Most of us learned this as children or know this intuitively, but it's great to review it because it gets more complicated than that very quickly! So please stay with me.





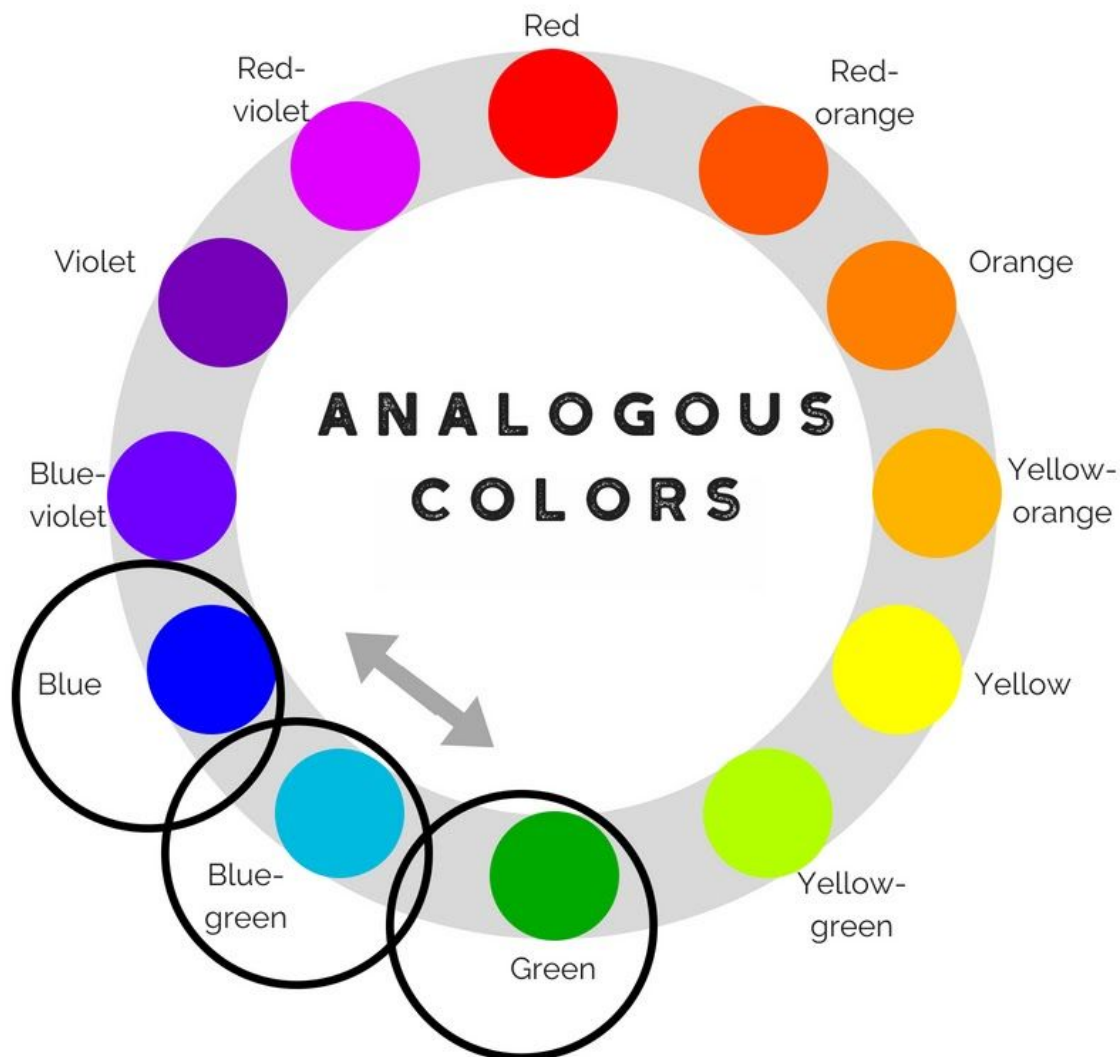
**Tertiary colors:** There are six tertiary colors in the basic 12-color wheel. Tertiary colors are created by mixing each primary color with its nearby secondary color. The nomenclature for tertiary colors is “primary color name-*dash*-secondary color name.” For example, if you mix blue (primary) and green (secondary), the resulting tertiary color is blue-green. The tertiary colors on the color wheel are blue-green, blue-violet, yellow-green, yellow-orange, red-orange, and red-violet.



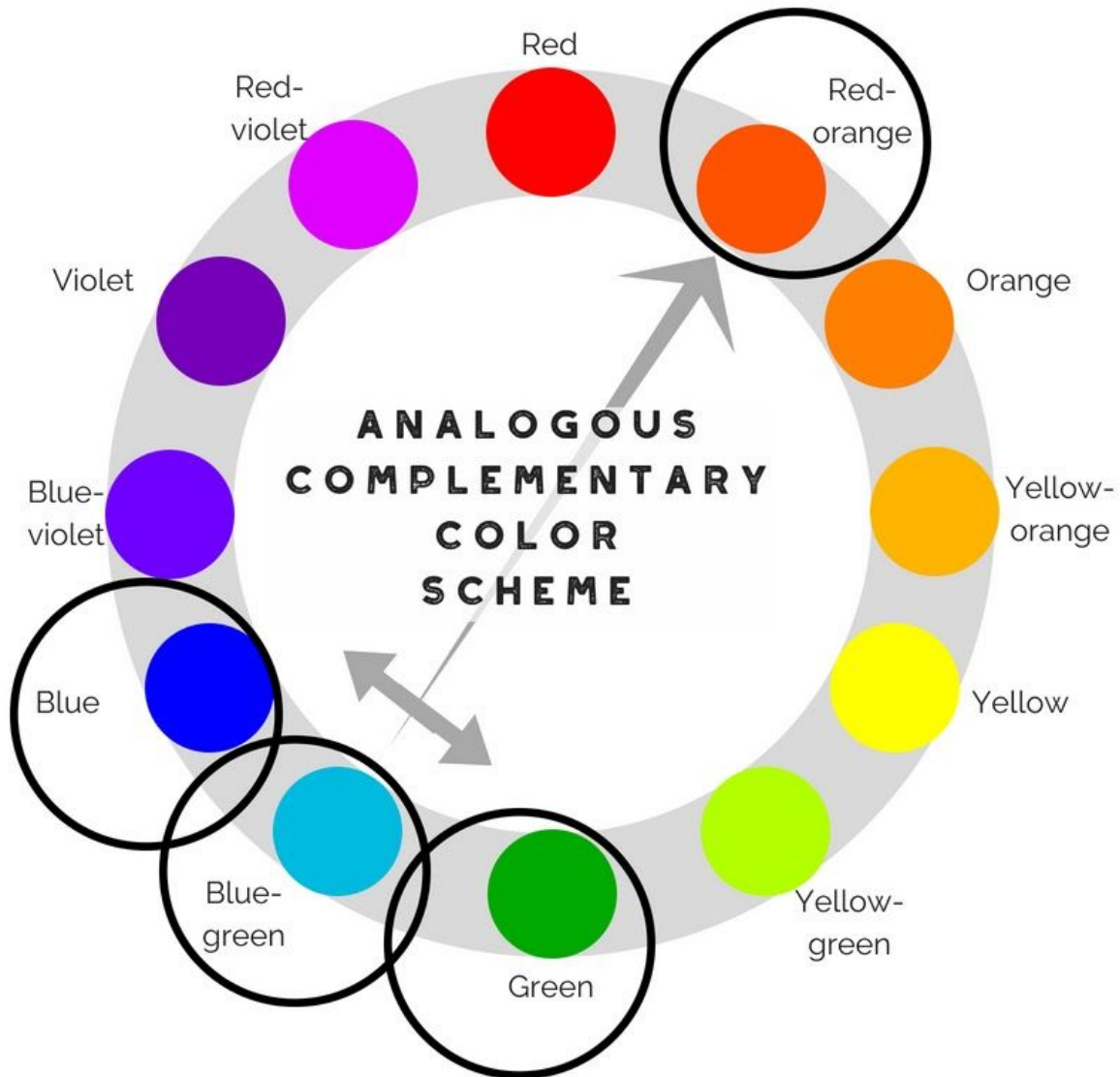
**Complementary colors:** Complementary colors are located directly across from each other on the color wheel. They could be called opposites. Complementary colors create the maximum color contrast, which visually excites the eye. There are some fun facts about complementary colors. Remember when we talked about value contrast in elements of basic design? Value contrast is just the difference between light and dark. As you'll recall, an area of high value contrast can be used to create a focal point and to excite the viewer's eyes, or to bring energy to your work. Now that you've taken off

your black and white filter and you're working with color, complementary colors are like the value contrast of color theory. Complementary colors serve the same function as value contrast: they are the most exciting combination of colors to our sensory receptors in our eyes. If you have red and its complement, green, next to each other, the viewer's eye will be drawn to that spot. Take a look around you right now. Is there anywhere that you can find red and green right next to each other? There are a lot of companies, sports teams, and even holidays that borrow complementary color schemes to create a visually-exciting look. Keep an eye out for complementary colors in the things you see: blue/orange, yellow/violet, red/green, etc.





**Analogous colors:** “Analogous” is just a fancy word for “similar.” Analogous colors are right next to each other on the color wheel, such as blue and blue-violet, or red and red-orange. Analogous colors can be used to create visual harmony and unity. It’s often soothing to see a bunch of similar colors used together in a piece, whereas with complementary colors it’s exciting and energizing to see the visual contrast between the colors that are opposite each other on the color wheel.



**Hot tips for using analogous colors and complementary colors:** If you notice that your work is primarily one color or one analogous color scheme (two or three colors in a row that are all neighbors on the color wheel), try adding a little “pop” of a complementary color to bring visual energy to the piece. For example, if I were painting in lots of blue-green, greens, and blues, this would mean I would bring in a little “pop” of red-orange to my work. This would create much more excitement in that area of the piece.

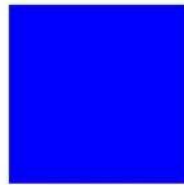
## Let's Go Deep - Color Qualities—Hue, Saturation, and Value

The qualities of hue, saturation, and value are three ways to more precisely describe a color.

### Hue

Hue is the specific name for a color within a color family. So, if blue is the color family, then turquoise, navy, cobalt, and ultramarine are examples of hues of blues. In common vernacular, people use the words “color” and “hue” interchangeably. I just want you to think about the fact that there can be a family of colors, like blue, and there can be many different examples of hues, with all of their specific color names and different appearances, that all fall within the family of blue colors.

### COLOR FAMILY: BLUE



Primary Blue

### HUES OF BLUE:



Sky Blue



Ultramarine Blue



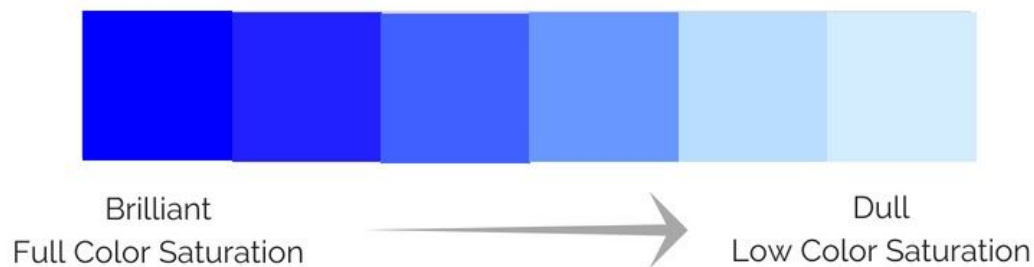
Cerulean Blue

Throughout history, paint and most other art materials have been made up of pigment and a binder. Some of the minerals and substances that were used to create paint and art materials in the past are no longer used for safety reasons or other reasons, but their names are still used as the names of the hues they created. Examples are cobalt blue, ultramarine blue, phthalo blue, cadmium yellow, and more. This is handy, because even if they're synthesized nowadays, you know that if you change between brands or even mediums, you can depend upon these hues to be relatively consistent. For example, cobalt blue used to be made from a form of real cobalt. It would give a rich, royal blue, whether it was being ground up and mixed into a watercolor binder, oil paint, or acrylic base. This hue is replicated today, although real cobalt is no longer being used. You can be assured that the gorgeous color of cobalt blue will be basically the same across different brands and all kinds of art materials.

I like to mix a greenish turquoise using phthalo green and titanium white. And I know that no matter what brand of paint I use and no matter whether I'm working in gouache, oil, or acrylic, this mixture will reliably give me the greenish turquoise I desire. If you get to know your paints and your colors, you can get to know your favorite recipes for reliable colors, and you can make them anytime out of any paint—because you know your hue!

## Saturation

# COLOR SATURATION

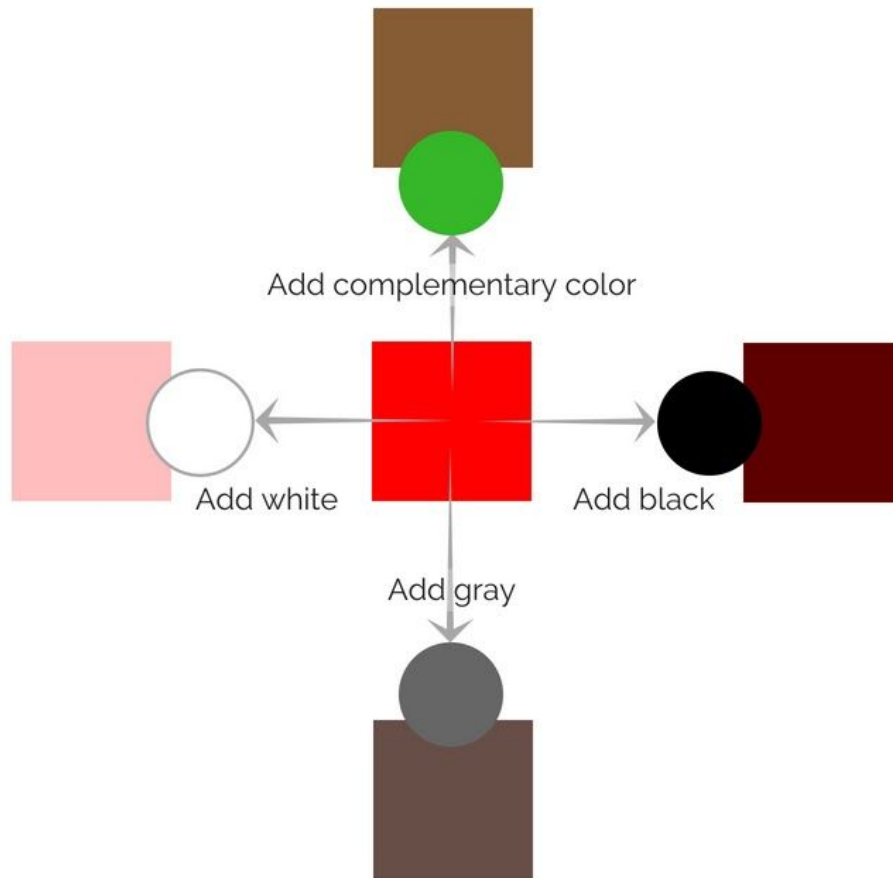


Saturation refers to the intensity of the color. Think of full saturation as a primary color coming straight out of the tube: that's a highly saturated color. A color with very low saturation will have a very low intensity of color, like an interior wall paint that is pale yellow. Highly saturated colors in our work give a sense of vibrancy, brilliance, intensity, and energy. They can also be too much! Low saturation of colors can be dull, neutral, faded, but they can also be calming.

Brilliant, full color saturation is often the way that paint comes out of the tube. When you use paint straight from the tube, you have to make an effort to lower the saturation of your paints, otherwise every color will be highly saturated. But making the effort to create neutrals is worth it. It gives the work room to breathe, and it allows the saturated colors that you do use to stand out, instead of compete with one another. **And I think this applies across mediums—if you notice that your colors are all brilliant and highly saturated, adding neutrals will create a sense of breathing space in your work.**



## HOW TO MAKE A NEUTRAL FROM A COLOR:



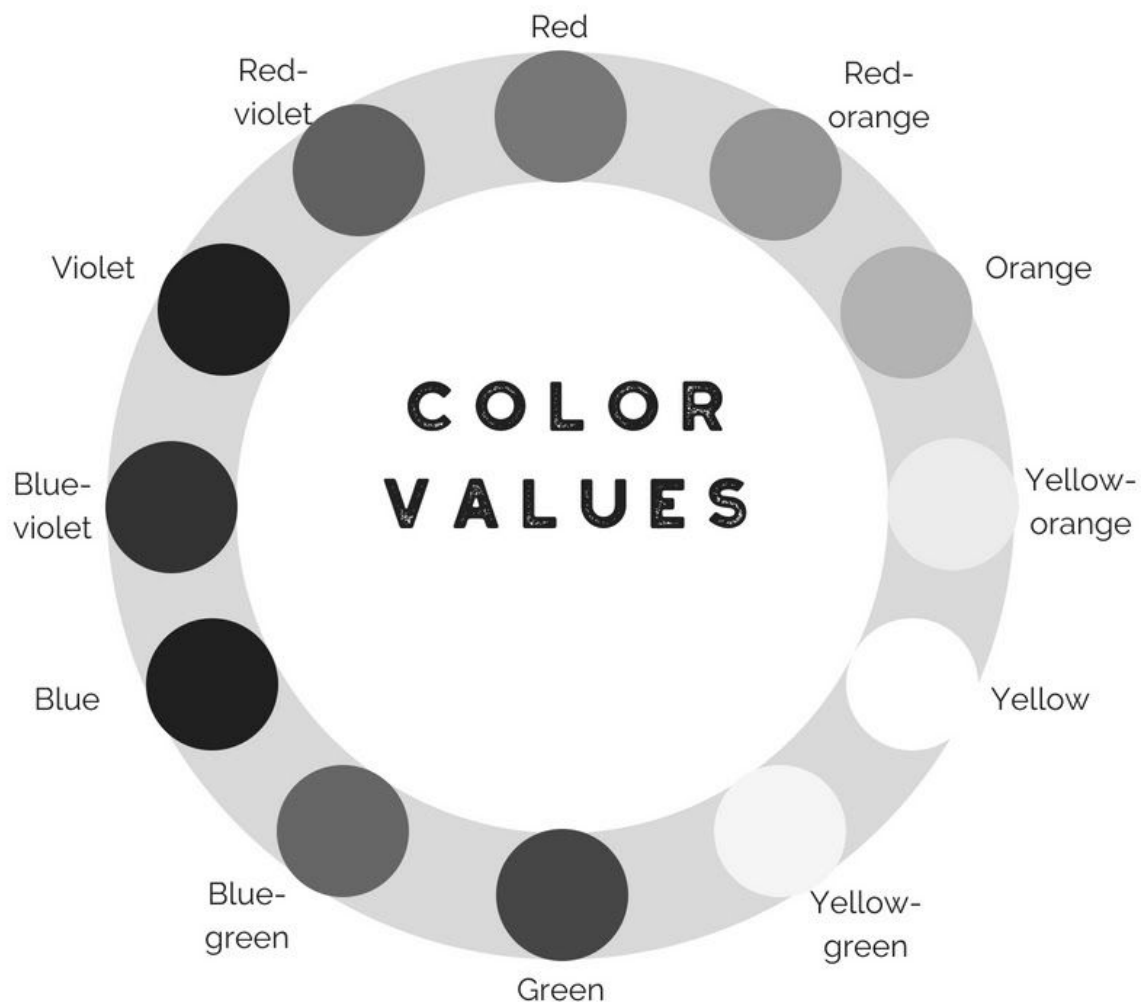
Four ways to make a neutral color:

- First, you can look at your color wheel and identify the complementary color to your color; then add it. So, if I had a brilliant red, straight out of the tube, and I looked at my color wheel, I'd see that green is directly across the color wheel. If I added a tiny bit of green to my red, it would muddy up my color and make that red just a little bit less saturated and dull its brilliance just a little bit.
- You can add some white to your color. In my example, adding white to my bright red would probably create a pinkish tone. This also changes the value - it becomes a lighter value.
- You can also moderate the saturation by adding black. In my too-bright red example, doing this would take away some of the brilliance of the intense red. This darkens the value a bit.

- Finally, you can straight-up add gray to change the saturation without changing the value too much.
- The two methods I use the most are adding gray and adding the complementary color.

## Value

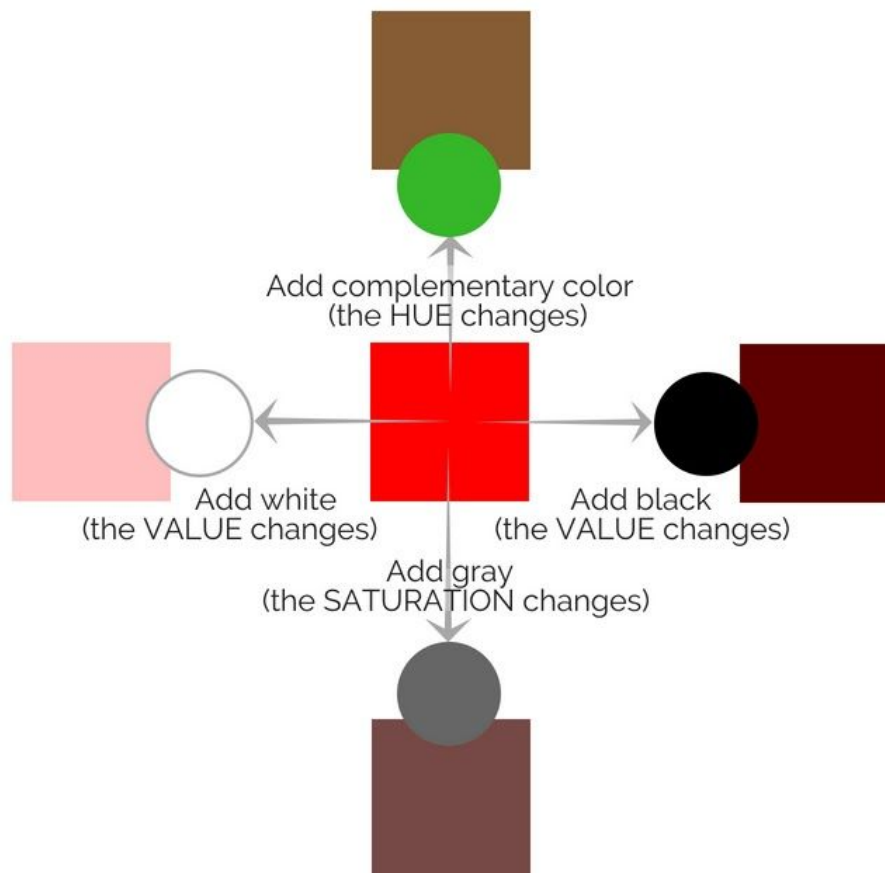
As you may recall from our previous lessons, “value” simply refers to light and dark. And “value contrast” just means the amount of difference between light and dark. When it comes to color, it can be hard to see value contrast right away. Remember that you can always pull out your smartphone and take a black and white photo of what you’re looking at. In grayscale, it’s easier to assess the value contrast.



Each hue can vary in value. Yellow is a great example of having a light value—even the most saturated primary yellow, right out of the tube is still going to have a lighter value than red or blue. We will look at tints, shades, and tones in the next section and that may add to our thoughts on value, but I think it's neat to look at the 12-hue color wheel and consider the difference in values in these colors in their most brilliant, unmoderated form.

Now that you've really looked at value and value contrast as basic design principles and you know how to whittle it down to black and white, I hope you feel empowered to use this tool. This is your chance to shine as you move into a more advanced mode: embracing color while keeping value contrast in mind.

## HOW TO CHANGE THE SATURATION, VALUE, AND HUE:



This chart summarizes hue, saturation, and value. It has the original color in the middle, and you can see the value change: As we add white to the hue, it becomes lighter. If we add more and more black to it, it becomes darker. On the other side, you can see how you can change the saturation, without so much impact on the value, by adding gray. Finally, you can change the hue by adding another color. In the example of creating a neutral, we added a bit of its complement.

## Let's Go Deep - Tints, Shades, and Tones

A **tint** = color + white. A tint lightens value.

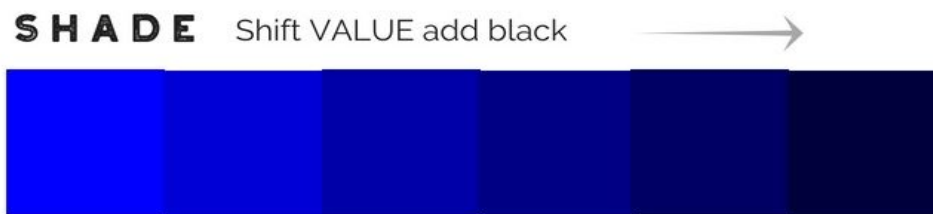
### TINT: ADD WHITE

**TINT** Shift VALUE add white →



A **shade** = color + black. A shade darkens value.

## SHADE: ADD BLACK



A **tone** = color + grey. A tone changes the saturation and/or brilliance of a color.

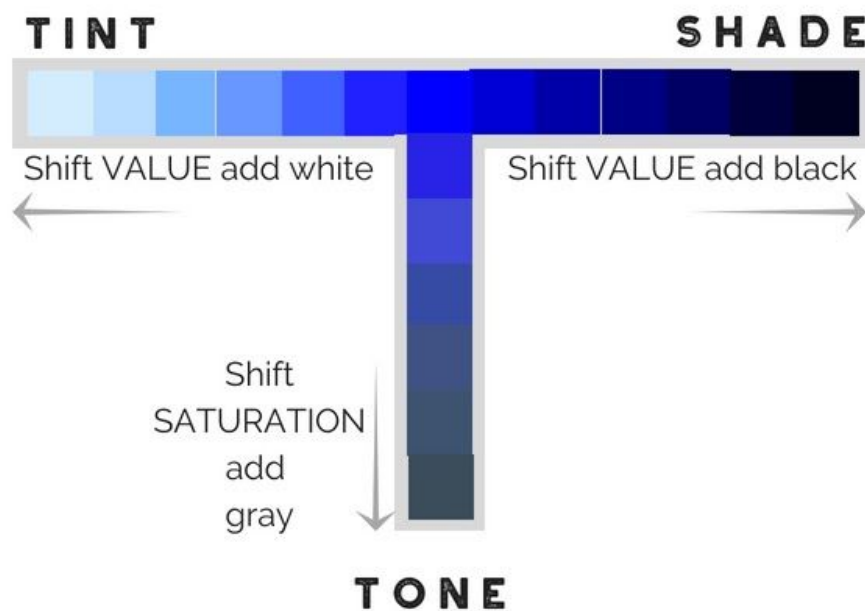
## TONE: ADD GRAY





Let's look at our chart again now that we know the definition of a tint, a shade, and a tone. We have the original color in the middle. By adding white, we are tinting our original color and lightening its value. By adding black to the original color we are creating shades. By creating shades, we are darkening the value of our original color. And finally, adding grey changes the saturation of our original color and creates tones.

## TINTS, SHADES, AND TONES: SHIFTING VALUE AND SATURATION



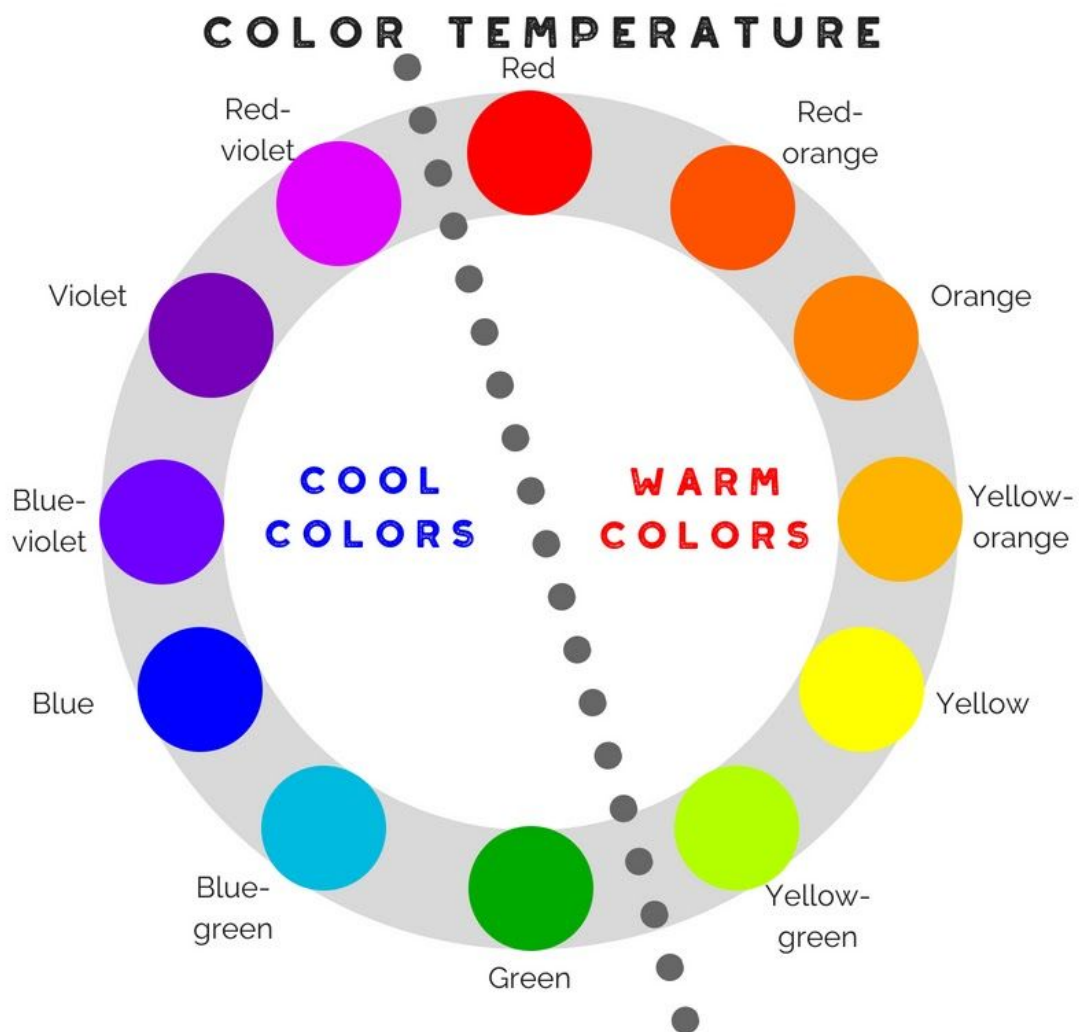
So, I want you to look at a different kind of color wheel when we talk about tints, shades, and tones. This is a 12-hue color wheel that includes tints, shades, and tones. This is when I get super excited about color, because anything is possible once you have the ability to modify your original color with a tint, a shade, and a tone!



I really want you to get yourself a color wheel this month. I'm going to show you mine in this month's video, and I'll explain how you can use it as a reference tool to see how a color may change, and to see color relationships. It really opens up your options for color combinations because you can work with different color schemes and still have quite a range of values by modifying the original color with tints, shades, and tones.

## Let's Go Deep - Temperature of Colors

The temperature of a color refers to how you feel when you see that color - whether it makes you feel warm or cold. Colors are divided into warm colors and cool colors. Warm colors are yellow, orange, and red. Cool colors are green, blue, and purple.

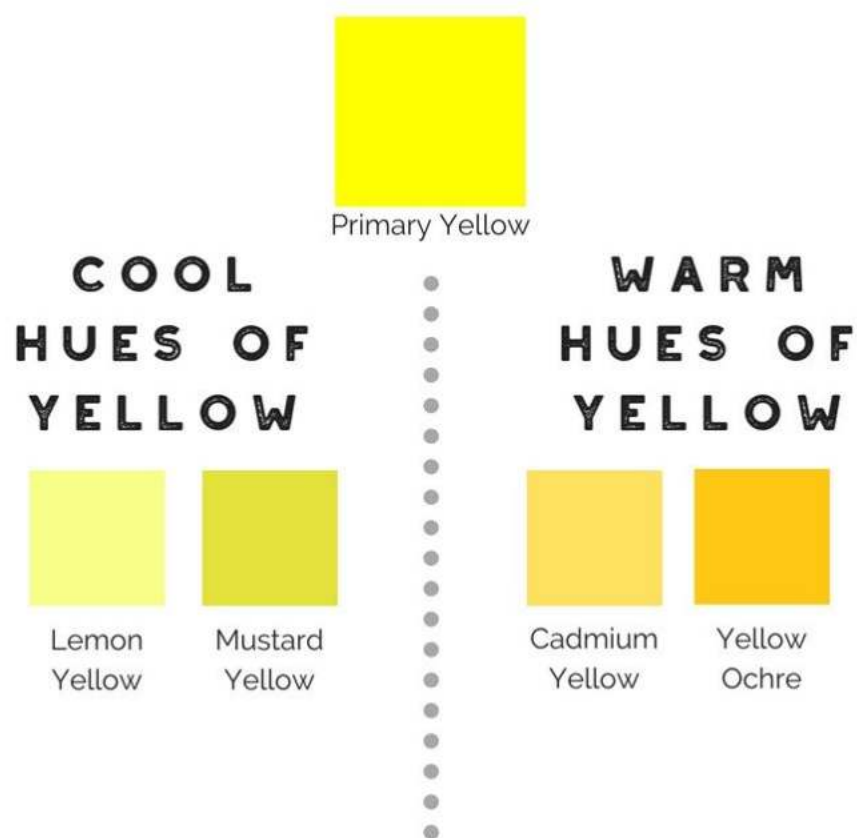


There is a lot of debate about where to divide between the warm colors and the cool colors on the color wheel, and honestly, I don't think you should stress over this. I divide it between red, and red-violet, and then green, and yellow-green.

One neat thing about warm colors is that they create a feeling that they're coming forward towards the viewer; they feel closer. Cool colors recede. Cool colors feel like they're traveling away from the viewer. If you're trying to create some visual perspective in your piece, consider using this neat visual trick - use warm colors on things that appear to be near, and cool colors to make things recede. Add that to your other ways to create perspective from the basic design lesson!

Another interesting thing to note is that within the color families, different hues can be relatively warm or cool in comparison to each other. For instance, in the yellow color family (which is generally thought of as a warm color), not all yellows are equally warm. Placed side by side, a warm orangey-red cadmium yellow would be a much warmer yellow than a cool, almost bluish lemon yellow.

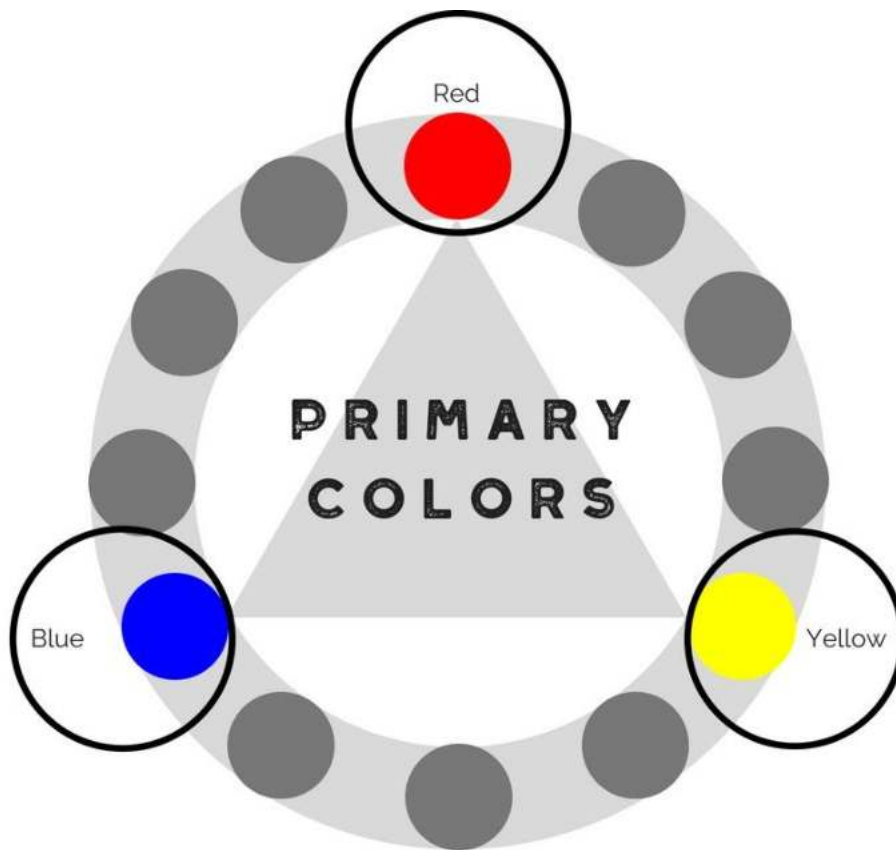
## COLOR FAMILY: YELLOW



## Let's Go Deep - Color Theory Examples from Art History

Now we're going to look at examples of different kinds of color schemes in artwork. This is where it gets fun!

### Primary Color Schemes



- Jason Leung's photograph, using red, yellow, and blue



Photo by Jason Leung on [Unsplash.com](https://unsplash.com)  
2018

- The Roman Glass Garland bowl



***Roman Glass Garland Bowl***

Roman, Early Imperial, Augustan  
Date: Late 1st century, B.C.  
Medium: Glass, cast and cut  
Metropolitan Museum of Art

- Kandinsky, *Kleine Welten V*



*Kleine Welten V (Small Worlds V)*

Artist: Wassily Kandinsky (French, born Russia)

Date: 1922

Medium: Woodcut printed in red, blue, yellow, and black  
Metropolitan Museum of Art



- Mrs. Teruyo Shinohara (and her pupils), *Bingata Panel with Chrysanthemums and Snow Circles*



*Bingata Panel with Chrysanthemums and Snow Circles*

Artist: Mrs. Teruyo Shinohara and her pupils (Japanese)

Date: 20th Century

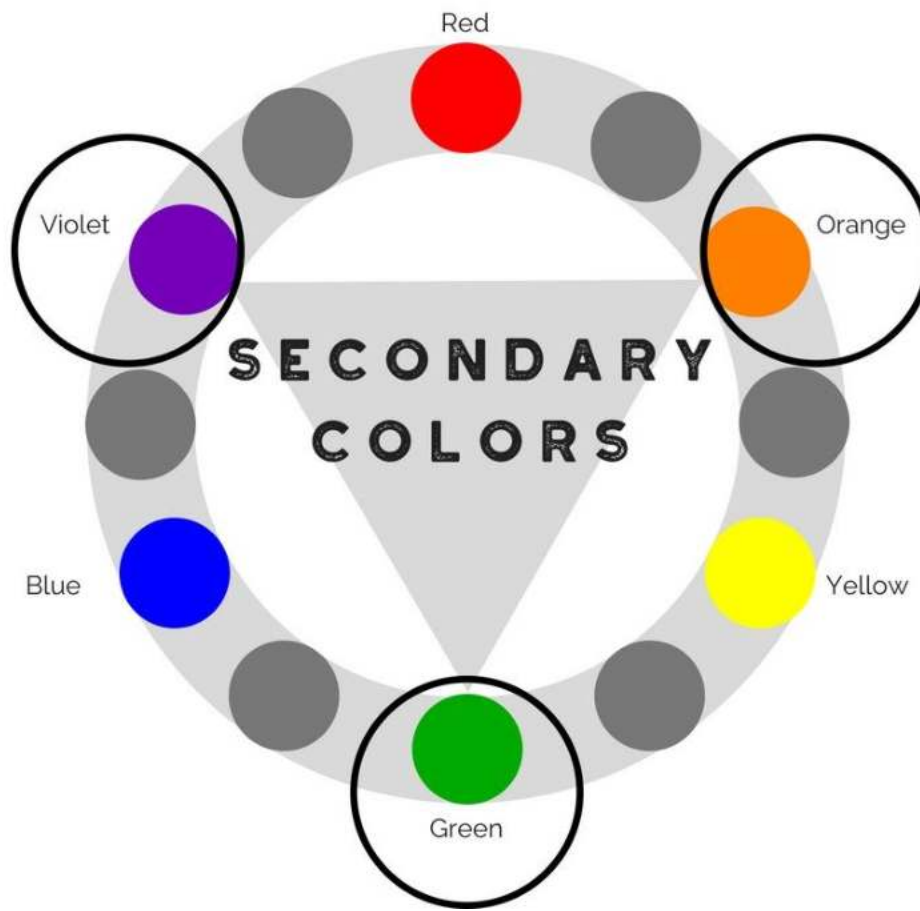
Medium: Cotton tabby

Metropolitan Museum of Art

You can see that even with a primary color scheme there's often a dominant color. For example, in the *Chrysanthemums and Snow Circles*, yellow is the all-over color, red is the dominant detail color, and there are just accents of blue.

So you decide on an overarching color scheme but you also need to decide on the proportions of each color: a dominant color and an accent color. That helps to create harmony in your color scheme.

## Secondary Colors



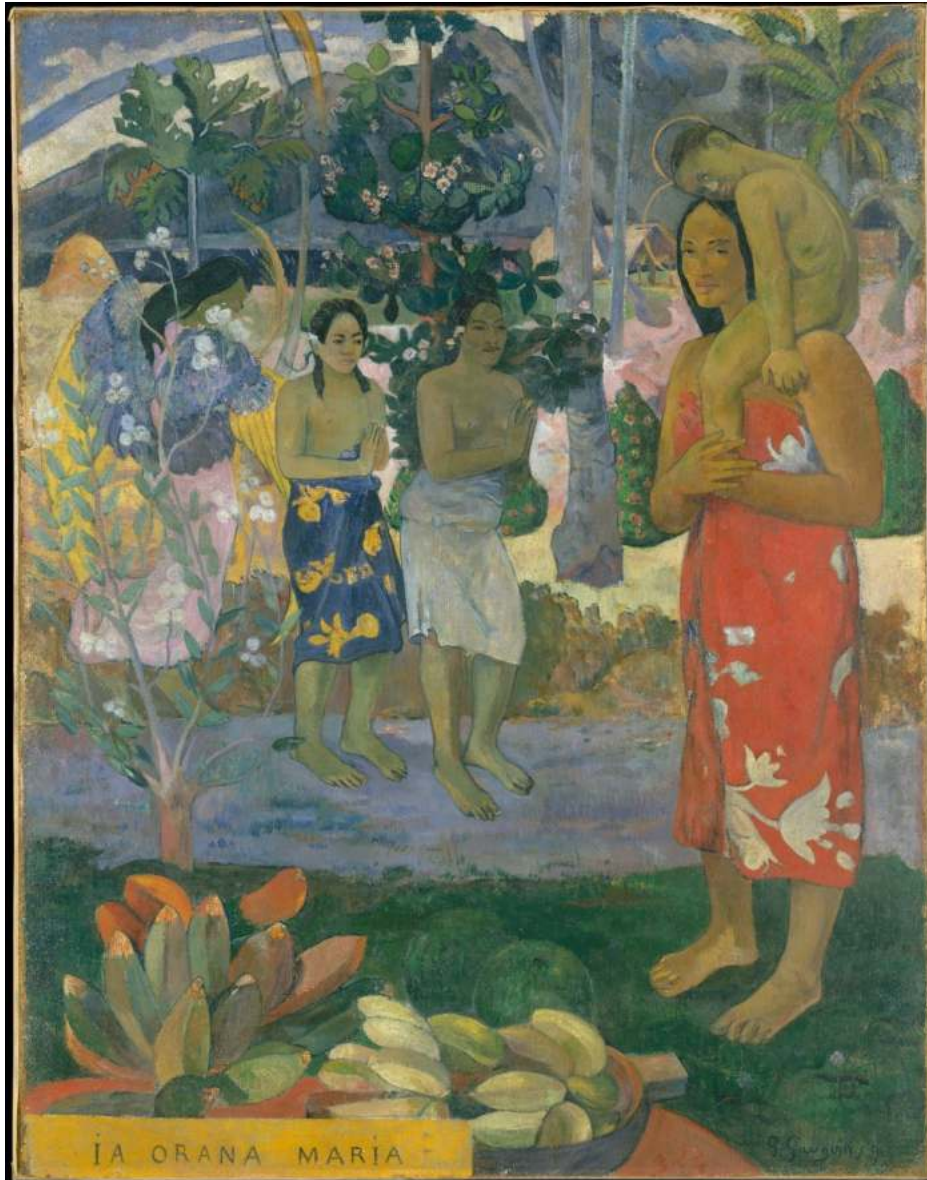
Remember that in the purest sense, secondary colors are violet, green, and orange. As we know, there are lots of hues within each of those color families.

- Photo by Aleksander Kanizaj: This is a beautiful example of green, violet, and orange.



Photo by Aleksander Kanizaj on [Unsplash.com](https://unsplash.com)  
2018

- Paul Gauguin, *Ia Orana Maria (Hail Mary)* and *Two Women*: Here you can definitely see a secondary color scheme that is predominately green and orange, and then the shade of violet is tending towards blue. The violet has been toned down so much that it allows the orange and green to really pop.



*Ia Orana Maria (Hail Mary)*

Artist: Paul Gauguin (French)

Date: 1891

Medium: Oil on canvas

Metropolitan Museum of Art



*Two Women*

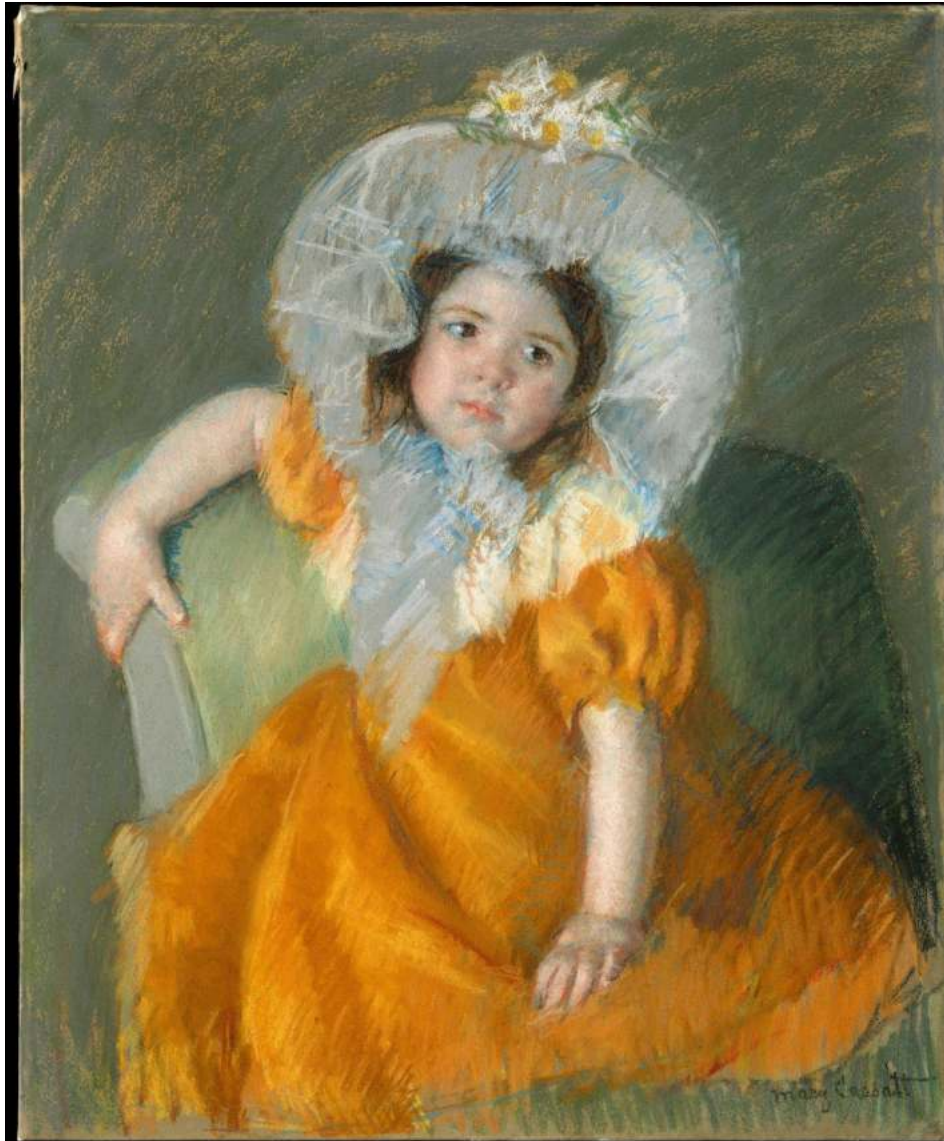
Artist: Paul Gauguin (French)

Date: 1901 or 1902

Medium: Oil on canvas

Metropolitan Museum of Art

- Mary Cassatt, *Margot in Orange Dress*: Again, we have orange and green, as well as some very neutral tones. I'm not really seeing any violet—perhaps in the lace around her head. This is a great example of using two of the secondary colors in a very prominent way.



*Margot in Orange Dress*

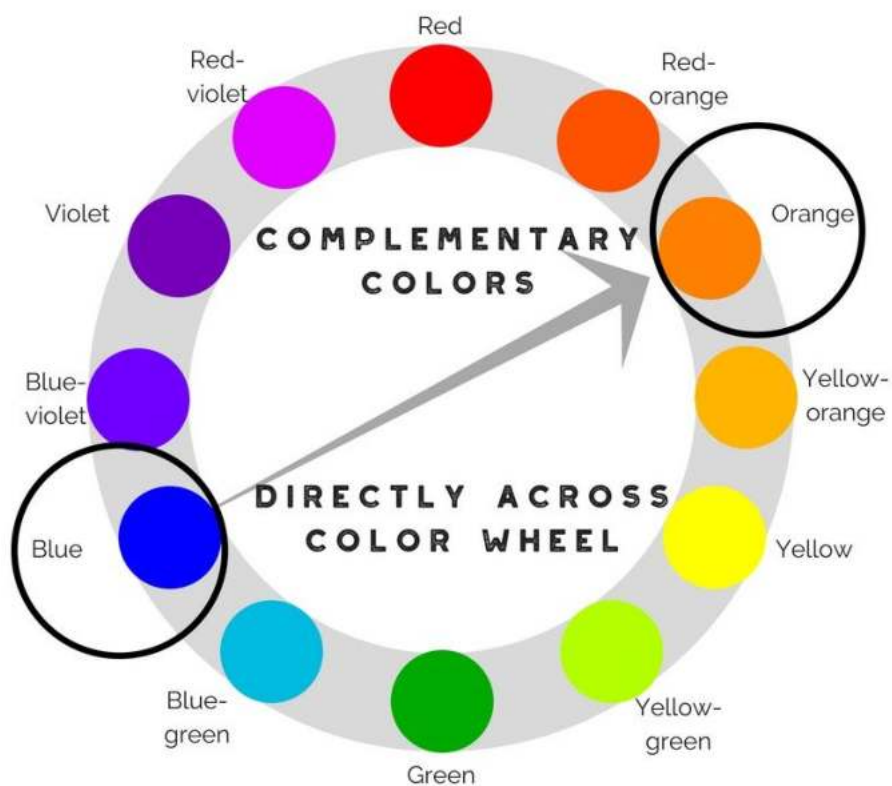
Artist: Mary Cassatt (American)

Date: 1902

Medium: Pastel on wove paper, mounted on canvas  
Metropolitan Museum of Art

## Complementary Color Schemes

As you'll recall, complementary colors are opposite each other on the color wheel, such as blue/orange.





### Complementary Blue-Orange Color Schemes

- Jason Leung's photo of jellyfish is a wonderful example of the contrast between blue and orange, creating visual excitement.



Photo by Jason Leung on [Unsplash.com](https://unsplash.com)  
2018

- Winslow Homer's *The Veteran in a New Field* gives us a different take on the juxtaposition of blue and orange—the colors are lighter than in Jason Leung's photo, and the contrast is just as dynamic and compelling. Here you can see that he has tinted the blue so that it's a much lighter value, and he has toned the oranges so they have lots of different shades and variations.



*The Veteran in a New Field*

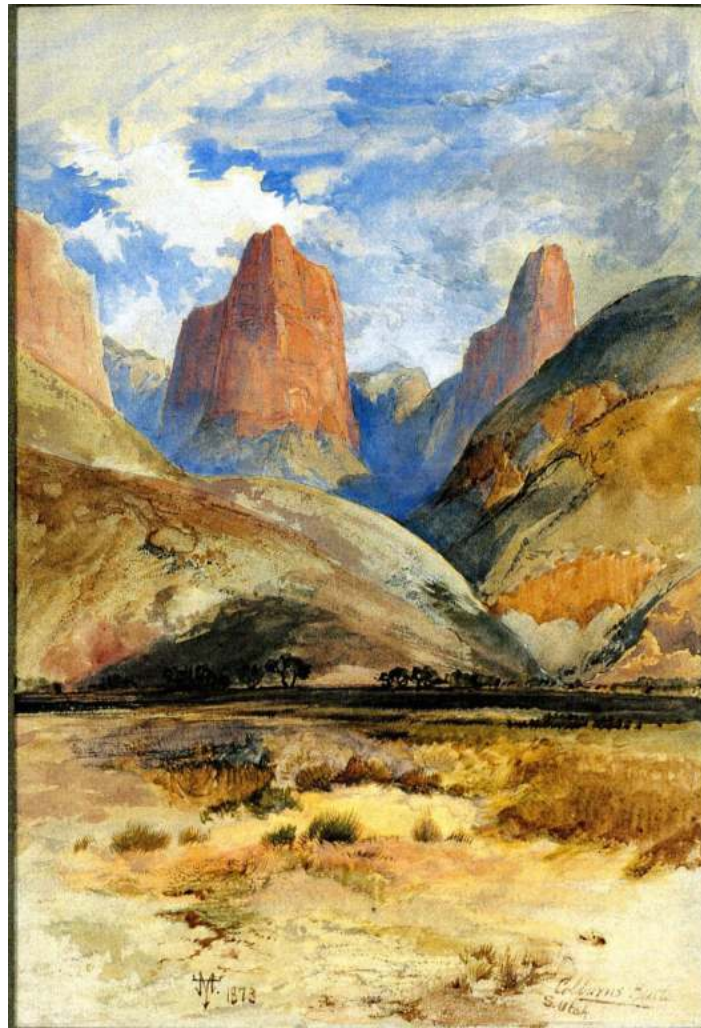
Artist: Winslow Homer (American)

Date: 1865

Medium: Oil on canvas

Metropolitan Museum of Art

- Thomas Moran, *Colburn's Butte, South Utah*: Here you can see the dynamic contrast of the blue sky with the orange landscape.



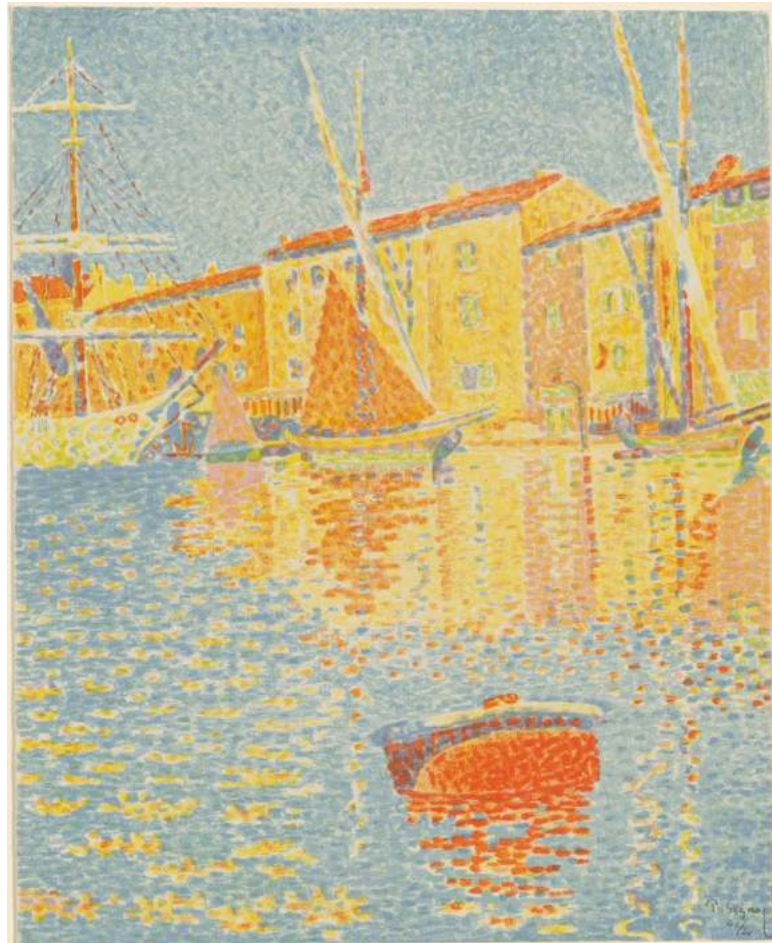
***Colburn's Butte, South Utah***

Artist: Thomas Moran (American)

Date: 1873

Medium: Watercolor, gouache and graphite on off-white wove paper  
Metropolitan Museum of Art

- Paul Signac, *The Buoy*: This application is very different, yet effective. Notice that we have a contrast between the orange and a very pale, tinted blue. Again, the orange has many variations of shades and tones. The blue, meanwhile, is pretty much all one color.



*The Buoy*

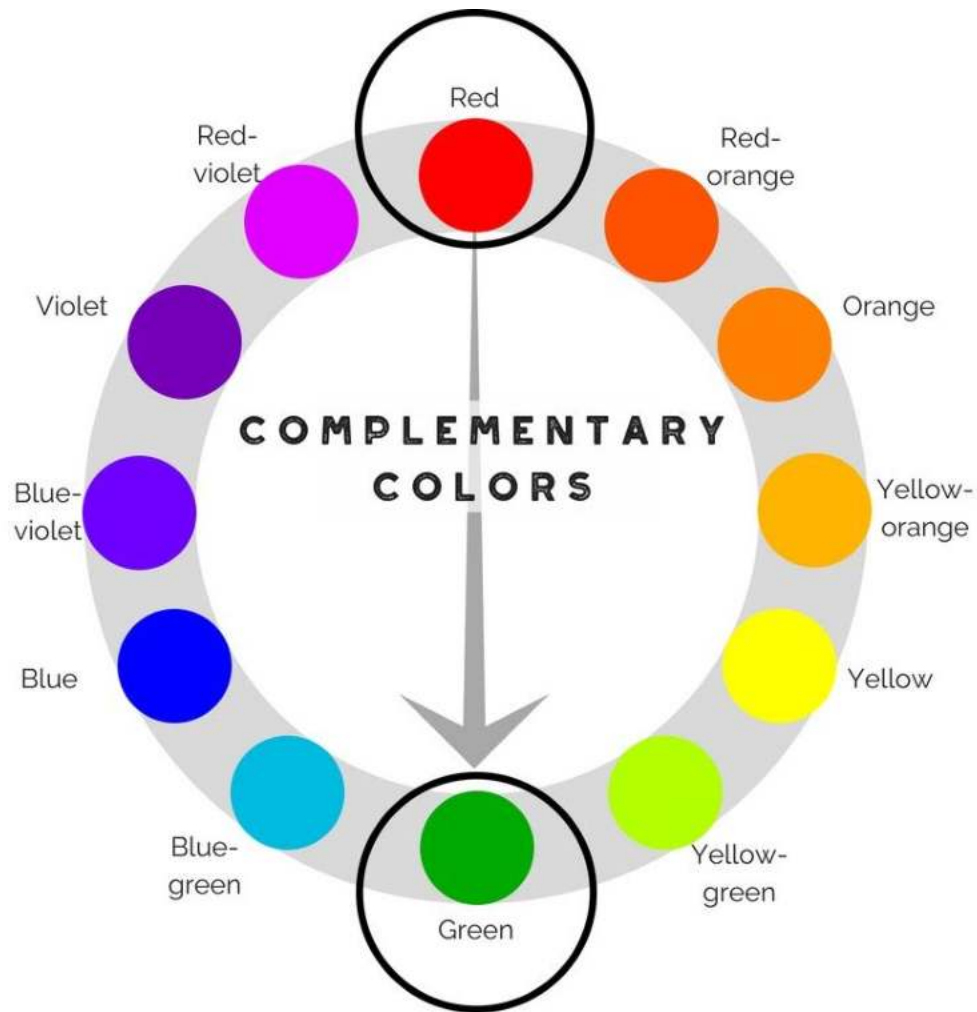
Artist: Paul Signac (French)

Date: 1894

Medium: 6-color lithograph print

National Gallery of Art

## Complementary Red-Green Color Schemes



- Ritchie Valens' photo of the beetle: the beetle just pops on the green background! This also really illustrates how a warm color comes towards the viewer while a cool color recedes.



Photo by Ritchie Valens on [Unsplash.com](https://unsplash.com)  
2016

- Paul Cezanne, *Madame Cézanne (Hortense Fiquet, 1850–1922) in a Red Dress*: Here, you can see that he's following a complementary color scheme with red being the main color and this bluish-green color in the background. My theory is that because it's not a straight-up green, it's a much more subdued example of complementary color. So, it's still a type of blue that's tending towards blue in some areas, but it's not as visually striking because none of the colors are at full saturation. Even the complement isn't a direct complement—it's slightly off towards the blue side, so it creates a less striking contrast. This all fits for the subtle mood of this painting. I also want to point out that the subject is dressed in a warm color, which makes her appear closer to the viewer and stand out from the background.



*Madame Cézanne (Hortense Fiquet, 1850–1922) in a Red Dress*

Artist: Paul Cezanne (French)

Date: 1888-90

Medium: Oil on canvas

Metropolitan Museum of Art

- Oscar Bluemner, *Little Falls, New Jersey*: You can see how his dynamic, saturated red really stands out among the areas of saturated green and tinted and shaded greens.



*Little Falls, New Jersey*

Artist: Oscar Bluemner (American)

Date: 1917

Medium: Oil on masonite  
Metropolitan Museum of Art



- Bachiacca, *Madonna and Child*: She has the red blouse and other garments that are green, and yet the artist chose to place the most saturated green directly next to the red. I wonder if that was a purposeful choice—I'm not sure if I would want that; I think the value contrast of the figures is quite enough to draw the viewer's eye.



*Madonna and Child*

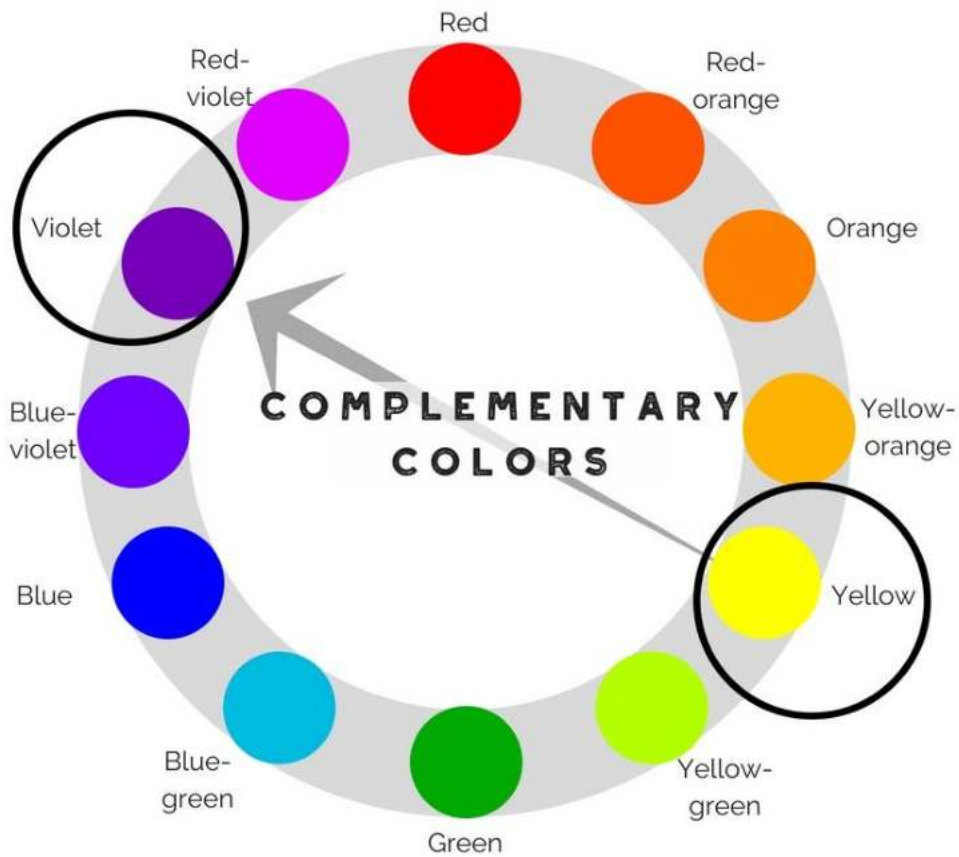
Artist: Bachiacca (Francesco d'Ubertino Verdi) (Italian)

Date: Possibly early 1520's

Medium: Oil and gold on wood

Metropolitan Museum of Art

## Complementary Yellow-Violet Color Schemes



In this combination, the yellow really jumps forward and the violet recedes into the background, as we will see in the examples.

- Hoover Tung's photo of the flower



Photo by Hoover Tung on [Unsplash.com](https://unsplash.com)  
2018

- John Singer Sargent, *Garden near Lucca*: The purple sky really creates a restful background to help the column to stand out.



*Garden near Lucca*

Artist: John Singer Sargent (American)

Date: ca. 1910

Medium: Watercolor and graphite on white wove paper  
Metropolitan Museum of Art

- Odilon Redon, *Etruscan Vase with Flowers*: You can see that several tones of one of the colors in the complementary pair (yellow) has been used for almost everything, and then the purple has been used as an accent pop.



*Etruscan Vase with Flowers*

Artist: Odilon Redon (French)

Date: 1900-1910

Medium: Tempera on canvas  
Metropolitan Museum of Art

- Claude Monet, *The Path Through the Irises*: Again, yellow is used as the overarching color.

The violet that he's chosen is almost a pink. There are some greens in the painting, which tones down the stark contrast.



*The Path Through the Irises*

Artist: Claude Monet (French)

Date: 1914-17

Medium: Oil on canvas

Metropolitan Museum of Art

- Paul Signac, *Evening Calm*: This is a beautiful, classic example of a complementary yellow-violet color scheme. Note how the yellow of the land in the foreground reinforces the closeness of it to the viewer.



*Evening Calm, Concarneau, Opus 220 (Allegro Maestoso)*

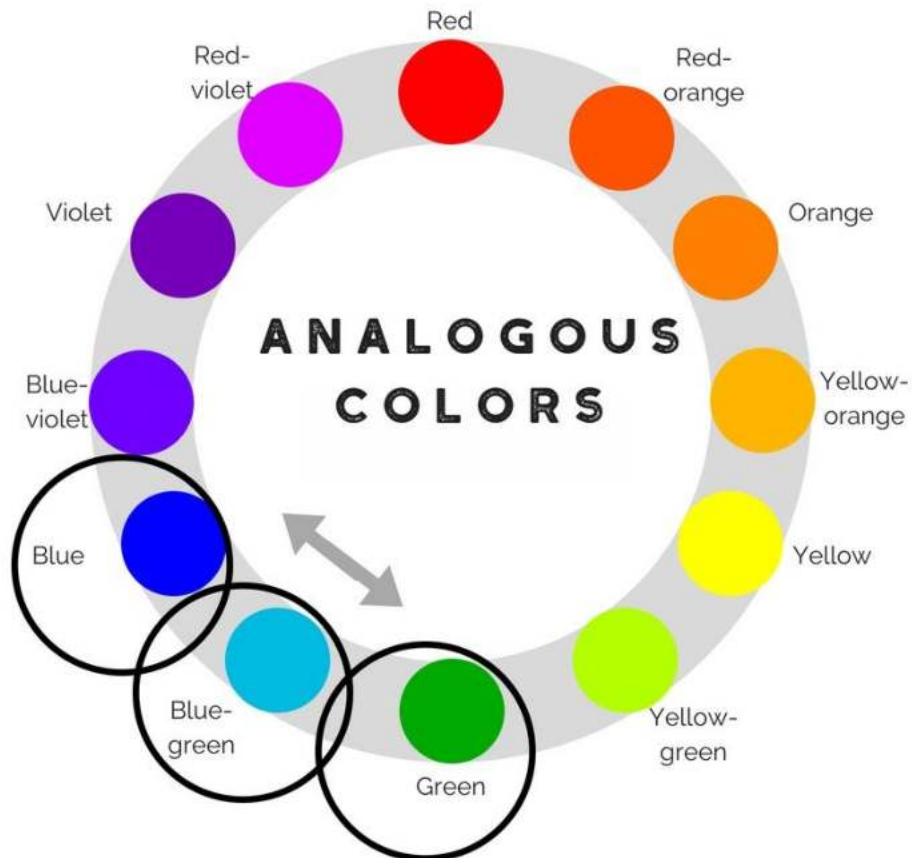
Artist: Paul Signac (French)

Date: 1891

Medium: Oil on canvas

Metropolitan Museum of Art

## Analogous Colors



Analogous colors are neighbors—they live right next to each other on the color wheel. Used together, they create a feeling of serenity, peace, harmony, and visual unity.



- Claude Monet, *La Grenouillère*: The colors in the painting are all in the green and blue color family.



*La Grenouillère*

Artist: Claude Monet (French)

Date: 1869

Medium: Oil on canvas

Metropolitan Museum of Art

- Mary Cassatt, *Mother and Child*: This is a very yellow painting, as are Fragonard's *Young Girl Reading* and the photo of kayaks.



*Mother and Child*

Artist: Mary Cassatt (American)

Date: 1905

Medium: Oil on canvas

National Gallery of Art



*Young Girl Reading*

Artist: Jean Honoré Fragonard (French)

Date: 1769

Medium: Oil on canvas

National Gallery of Art



Photo by Zbysiu Rodak on [Unsplash.com](https://unsplash.com)  
2018

- I included a piece of my art, which has a very blue-green color scheme.



*Layers of the Forest*

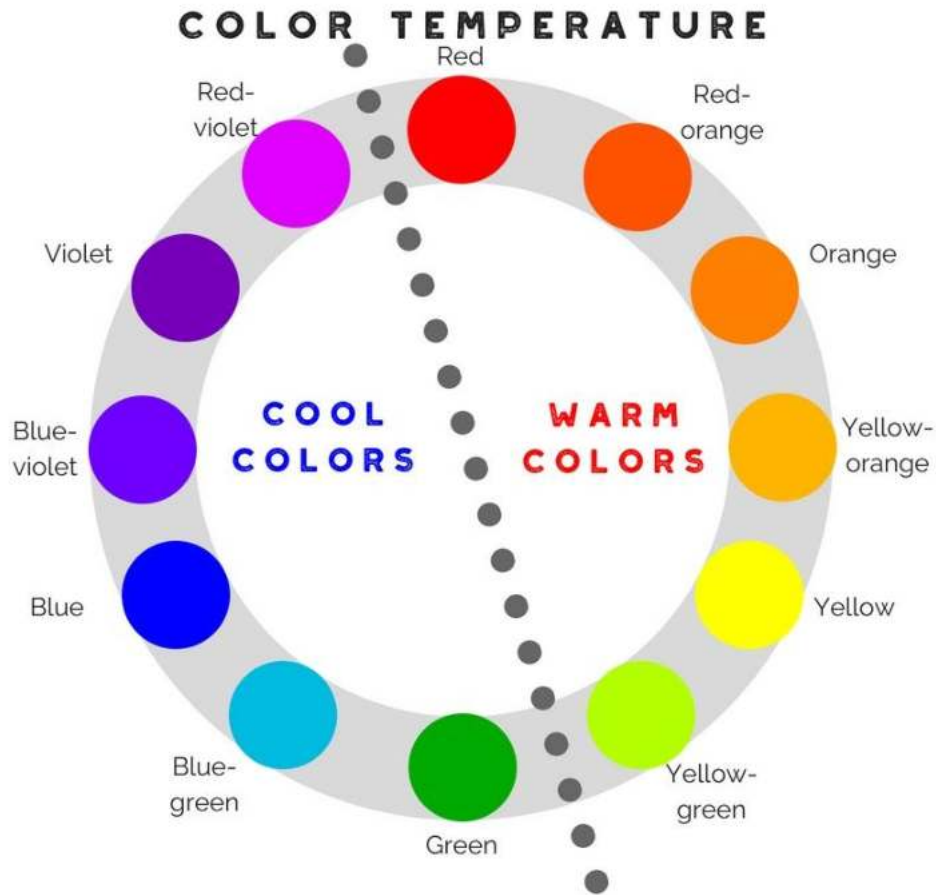
Artist: Annamieka Hopps Davidson

Date: 2016

Medium: Mixed media

Again, using an analogous color scheme creates a very harmonious feeling, but you also need to work with the other tools of basic design like value, contrast, focal point, and movement; otherwise, the painting can feel flat.

## Warm Colors



As you'll recall, the warm colors are red, orange, and yellow.

- Chris Barbalis' staircase photo



Photo by Chris Barbalis on [Unsplash.com](https://unsplash.com)  
2017

- Auguste Renoir, *Tilla Durieux* (Otilie Godeffroy, 1880–1971): This color scheme is very warm.



*Tilla Durieux (Otilie Godeffroy)*

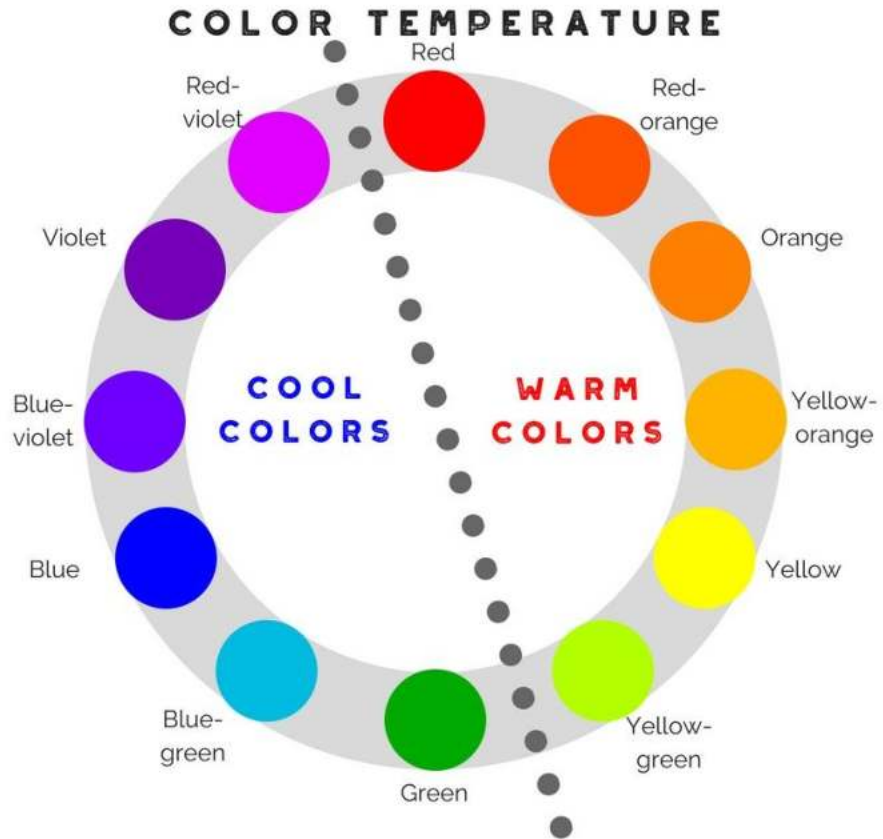
Artist: Auguste Renoir (French)

Date: 1914

Medium: Oil on canvas

Metropolitan Museum of Art

## Cool Colors



The cool colors are blue, green, and violet. Remember, if there's blue in it, it's cool.

- Alberto Restifo's photo of snow



Photo by Alberto Restifo on [Unsplash.com](https://unsplash.com)  
2014



- Edward Hopper, *Ground Swell*



*Ground Swell*

Artist: Edward Hopper (American)

Date: 1939

Medium: Oil on canvas

National Gallery of Art

- John Singer Sargent, *Marie Buloz Pailleron (Madame Édouard Pailleron)*: This has a very cool background, and her red hair really pops against it.



*Marie Buloz Pailleron (Madame Édouard Pailleron)*

Artist: John Singer Sargent (American)

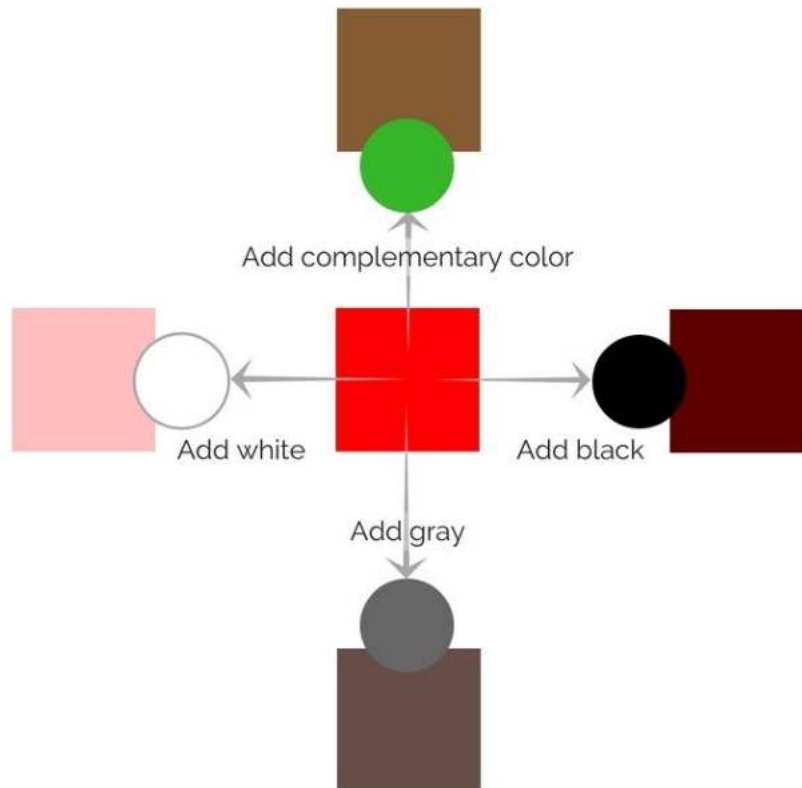
Date: 1879

Medium: Oil on canvas

National Gallery of Art

## Neutral Colors

### HOW TO MAKE A NEUTRAL FROM A COLOR:



In these color schemes, all of the colors have been tinted, toned, shaded, and/or had their complement added to them so they are no longer the brilliant saturated colors.

- Todd Aarnes's photo



Photo by Todd Aarnes on [Unsplash.com](https://unsplash.com)  
2018

- Thomas Moran, *The Grand Canyon: Head of the Old Hance Trail*



*The Grand Canyon: Head of the Old Hance Trail*

Artist: Thomas Moran (American)

Date: 1892

Medium: Watercolor, pen and black ink, gouache, and graphite underdrawing  
on light gray wove paper

Metropolitan Museum of Art

- James McNeill Whistler, *Arrangement in Flesh Colour and Black: Portrait of Theodore Duret*: Look how the orange fan in the subject's hand really pops against all of the neutral tones of the rest of the painting.



*Arrangement in Flesh Colour and Black: Portrait of Theodore Duret*

Artist: James McNeill Whistler (American)

Date: 1883

Medium: Oil on canvas

Metropolitan Museum of Art

- Claude Monet, *The Portal of Rouen Cathedral in Morning Light*



*The Portal of Rouen Cathedral in Morning Light*

Artist: Claude Monet (French)

Date: 1894

Medium: Oil on canvas

The J. Paul Getty Museum

- Rembrandt, *Self-Portrait*



*Self-Portrait*

Artist: Rembrandt van Rijn (Dutch)

Date: 1660

Medium: Oil on canvas

Metropolitan Museum of Art



- Georges Seurat, *Landscape at Saint-Ouen*



*Landscape at Saint-Ouen*

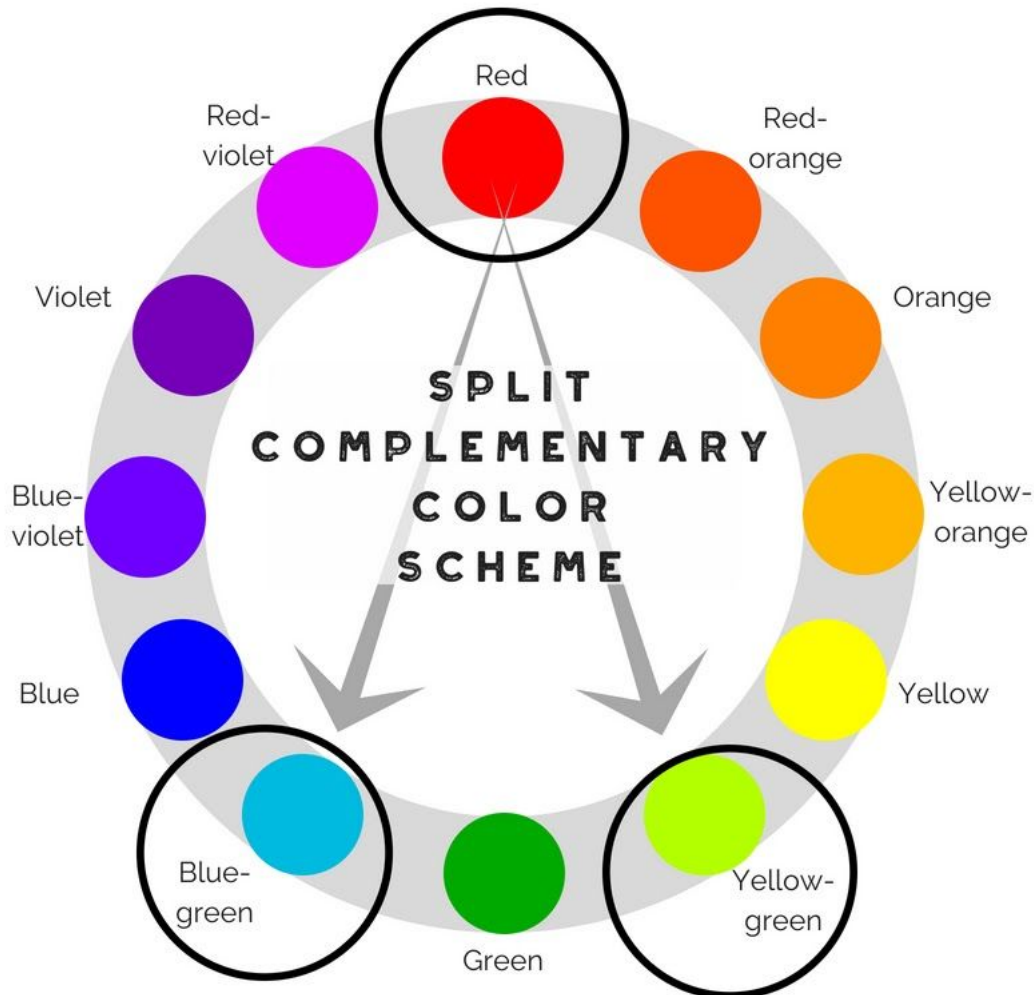
Artist: Georges Seurat (French)

Date: 1878 or 1879

Medium: Oil on wood, mounted on wood  
Metropolitan Museum of Art

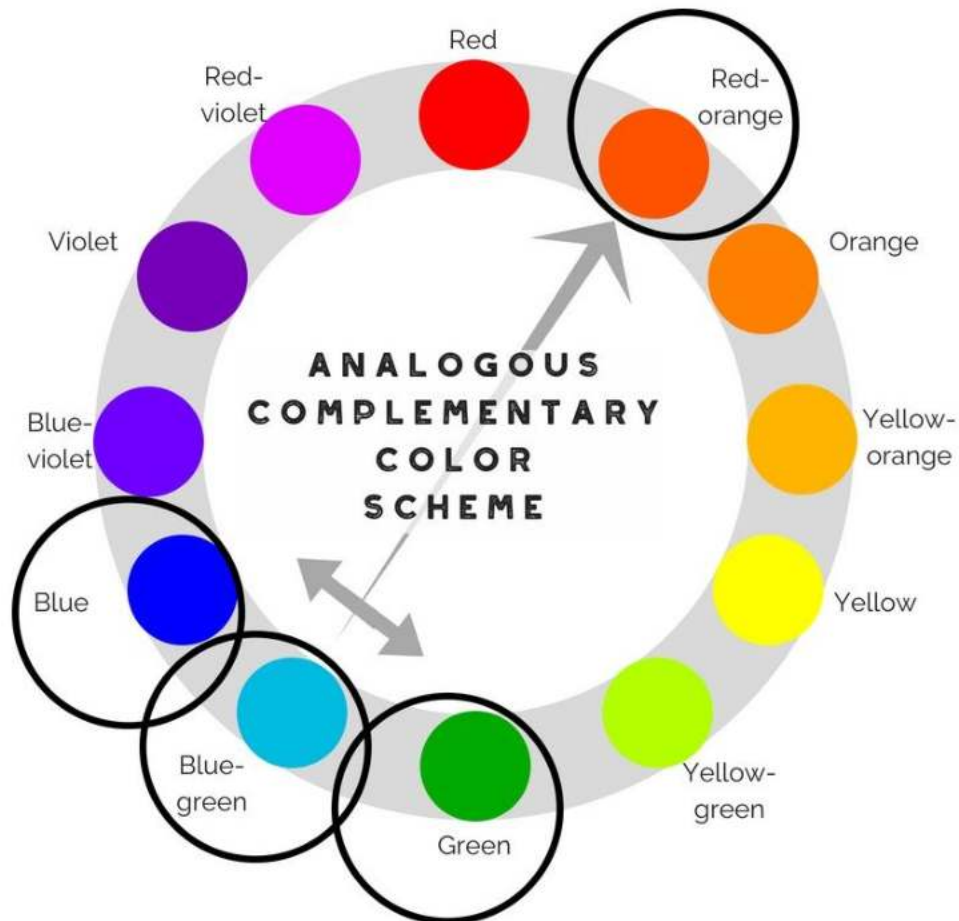
## Let's Go Deep - Additional Color Schemes

There are a few more types of color schemes that we haven't discussed yet that I'd like to mention, in case you want to try them out:

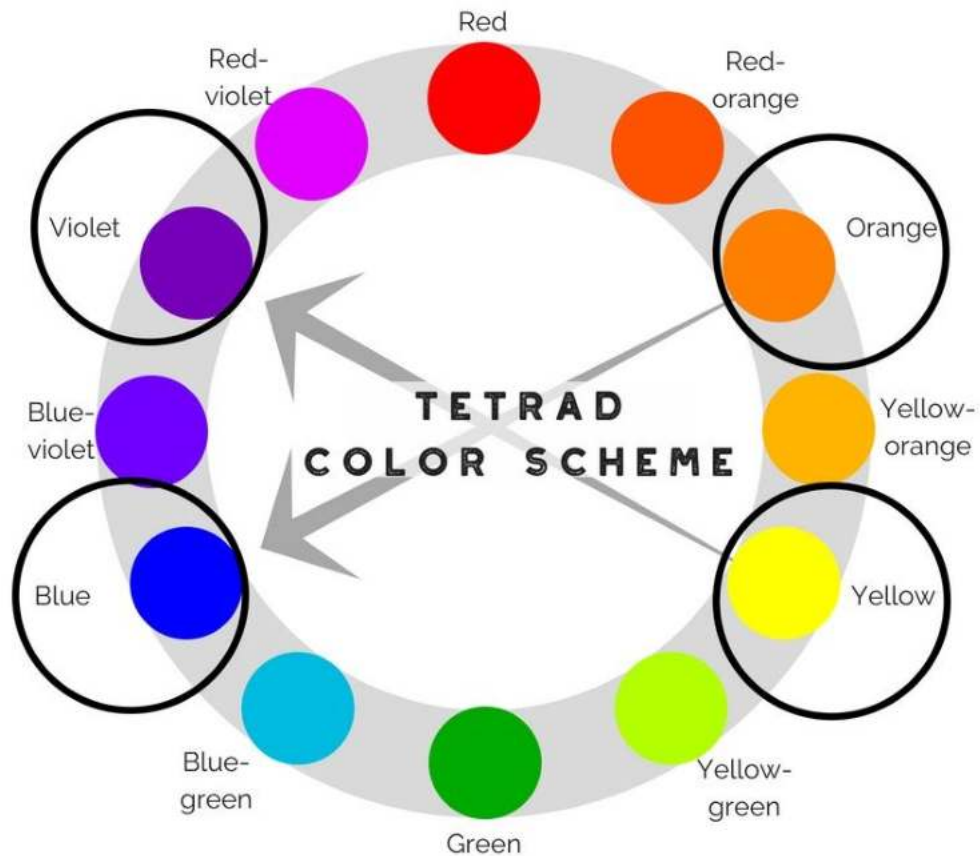


- A **split complementary color scheme**, in which you choose a main color and then you look across the color wheel at its complement and pick the colors that are on both sides of it. You don't use the actual complementary color. This calms down the contrast just a little bit. For example, if you choose red as your main color, straight across to green is the complement. But in a split complementary color scheme, you do not use the complement, but rather the tertiary color to either side of the complement. So in this example, you would look to each side of

green - choose blue-green and yellow-green. I think that most of the time when people are doing a complementary color scheme, they end up doing some variation on this anyway.



- Similar to this is an **analogous complementary color scheme**, in which you pick three side by side colors as you would in a regular analogous color scheme, and then you'd pick the one color that's directly opposite them. For me, that would be like picking blue, blue-green, and green, and then picking orange.



- Finally, I want to mention that you could try a **tetrad color scheme**, which is a little challenging. You pick two colors that are one color apart on the color wheel, and then you also bring in the complement of each one. So it's like you're doing two simultaneous complementary color schemes with colors that are only one color apart on the color wheel. Talk about vibrant! My tip for you, if you choose this one, is to choose one predominant color, and one accent color, and just use small amounts of the other two.

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### Image Collection Databases

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<http://www.getty.edu/museum/>

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<https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection>

National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.

[https://images.nga.gov/en/page/show\\_home\\_page.html](https://images.nga.gov/en/page/show_home_page.html)