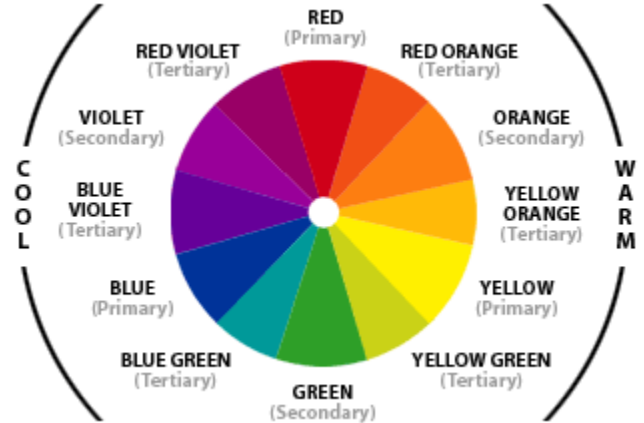


COLOR

All of the colors we can perceive are produced by the mixing of certain basis colors. There are three categories of colors:

- **Primary Colors** (Red, Yellow, and Blue) cannot be formed by the mixing of any other colors and can be said to be "pure" colors.
- **Secondary Colors** (Orange, Green, and Violet) are formed by the mixing of two or more primary colors.
- **Tertiary Colors** (Red-Orange, Yellow-Orange, Yellow-Green, Blue-Green, Blue-Violet, and Red-Violet) are produced by the mixing of two or more secondary colors.



Colors are further broken down in terms of their properties: hue, saturation and Value.

- **Hue** and color are synonymous terms and can be used interchangeably. Hue is color in its purest form. The colors of the color wheel are hues.
- **Saturation** and Chroma are synonymous terms and refer to the intensity of a color. Saturation is determined by how much or how little gray a color contains.
- **Value** is the lightness or darkness of a color. Lightened values are called *tints*, darkened values are called *shades* and medium values are called *midtones*.



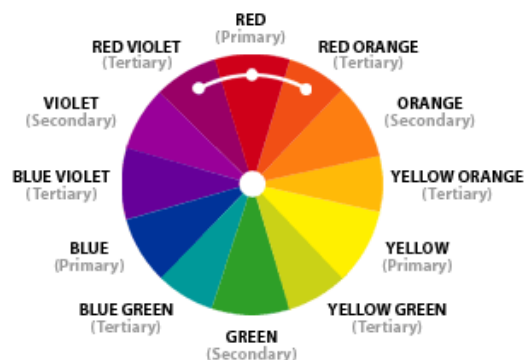
Monochromatic Color Scheme

The monochromatic color scheme uses variations in lightness and saturation of a single color. Monochromatic colors go well together, producing a soothing effect, and can use it to establish an overall mood. The primary color can be integrated with neutral colors such as black, white, or gray.



Analogous Color Scheme

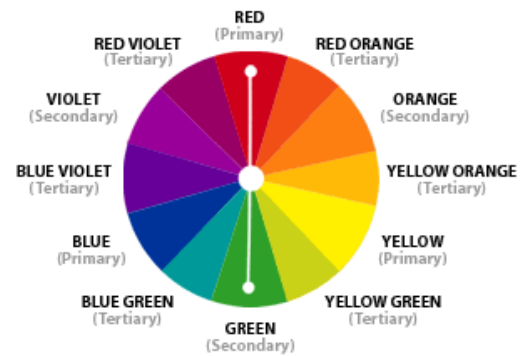
Analogous colors are colors that are in close proximity to each other on the color wheel that share similar hue and saturation. The graphic example on the right shows Red and two analogous colors of Red Violet and Red Orange. Analogous colors are most often used to achieve proper color harmony.



Complementary Color Scheme

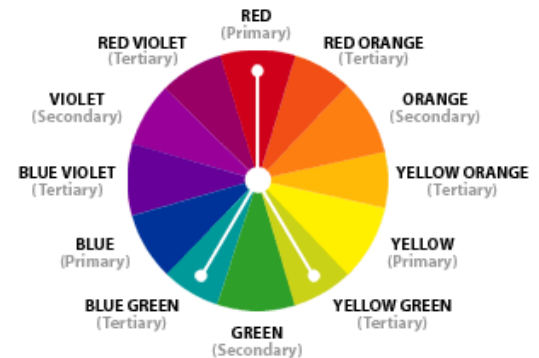
The complementary color scheme is made of two colors that are opposite each other on the color wheel. The complementary scheme is intrinsically high-contrast and draws maximum attention.

When using the complementary scheme, it is important to choose a dominant color and use its complementary color for accents. Using one color for the background and its complementary color to highlight important elements, you will get color dominance combined with sharp color contrast.



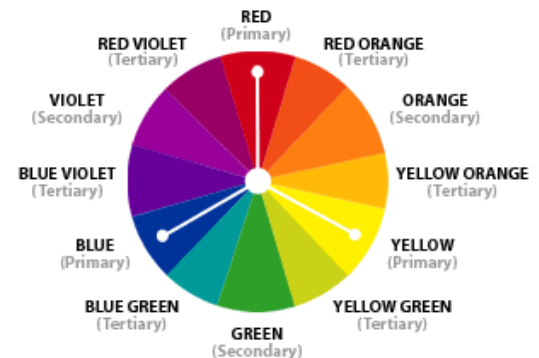
Split Complementary Color Scheme

The split complementary scheme is a variation of the standard complementary scheme. It uses a color and the two colors adjacent to its complementary. This provides high contrast without the strong tension of the complementary scheme.



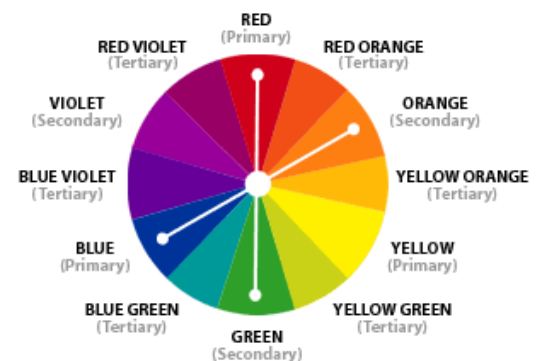
Triadic Color Scheme

The triadic color scheme uses three colors equally spaced around the color wheel. It offers strong visual contrast while retaining balance, and color richness. The triadic scheme is not as contrasting as the complementary scheme, but it looks more balanced and harmonious.



Tetradic Color Scheme

The tetradic (double complementary) scheme is the richest of all the schemes because it uses four colors arranged into two complementary color pairs. This scheme is hard to harmonize; if all four colors are used in equal amounts, the scheme may look unbalanced, so you should choose a color to be dominant or subdue the colors.



COLOR SCHEMES

Color comes not only from flowers ~ but also the plant foliage and the color of your garden planters.

Keep in mind that the perception of color varies from person to person and can greatly be affected by surroundings.

- **Lighting:** Light changes the saturation of color. Red turns dull at twilight while white begins to glow.
- **Surface Texture:** The texture of a leaf or flower will affect how the light hits it and therefore how the color is perceived. The smoother the surface, the more light is reflected and the more saturated the color appears.
- **Proximity:** Colors lose their definition at a distance. A monochromatic garden can turn into a blur. Conversely, too much contrast close up confuses the eye and makes for an unsettling garden.
- **Color Interactions:** Just putting a contrasting color next to a flower will change the way we see its color. Gray can muddy true reds. Violet can become hotter next to a vivid orange.
- **Age:** Colors change as plants mature. Sometimes the color will change entirely.



COLOR COMBINATIONS

Yellow ~

Yellow and blue create an exciting combination that makes you think of spring and new beginnings.

Yellow and purple can combine to create two different effects. If a bright yellow is used with a deep purple, the effect will be dramatic. If you choose a pale yellow with a lavender color, you will create a classic, subdued, somewhat romantic look in the garden.

Red and yellow together create a bold, attention-grabbing color mix.

Pink ~

Pink and orange create a southwestern look in your container garden - a beautiful combination to enhance terracotta planters.

Pink and blue combinations are one of the easiest color schemes to work with because of the abundance of flowers to select from. This romantic color grouping creates a garden flower pot that is very easy on the eye.

Purple ~

Blue and purple are cool colors that look wonderful in shade or partial shade. To make this color combination pop, use in front of a light background.

Orange and purple produce an energetic contrast. If you want to be bold and different, this combination may work for you in flower pots on your patio or deck. Add burgundy for a rich, vibrant look, or lilac to soften the contrast.

White ~

White and green lend a feeling of lightness and a restful look to your garden flower pots. These colors are also very effective when placed into a grouping of boldly-colored plants. They will prevent the strong colors from overpowering the container garden.

White and blue is another easy-to-create combination. There is a wide variety of plants to choose from that will make your garden light and cheerful.

When working with color combinations in your flower pots, don't forget green. Green is restful to the eyes and does not compete for attention or dominate in the garden. Green creates a void that allows our eyes to travel from one part of the garden to the other.

White flowers blend well with most colors and can provide a transition between colors that do not normally work well together. White flowers can create a beautiful display in garden planters in the evening when combined with well-placed, soft lighting.

Shady areas can appear brighter by using light-colored plants.

Colors for a shady garden:

light pink
light yellow
lavender
pale blue
white flowers

Surround dark plants in the shade with lighter-colored plants so they don't disappear into the background.

Garden planters in the full sun can handle brightly colored flowers. Pastels will appear faded and washed out in bright sunlight.

Colors for a sunny garden:

reds
oranges
bright yellows
deep blues
purples

To create a unified look throughout your container garden, try to stick to two or three colors. Consider not only the flower color, but also the color of the plant foliage and even the planter. Color preferences are purely personal and unique ~ express yourself with the colors you choose for your garden.

CALMING OR ENERGETIC

Pastels and muted colors such as soft pink, lavender, lilac, peach and pale yellow set a peaceful and tranquil mood. Pastel flowers look best when viewed from a short distance and look washed out in the bright, mid-day sun. Pastel colors can be used in distant parts of the garden to give the illusion of being even further away.

Bright colors such as red, orange, magenta and bright yellow will energize the garden, show well in the bright sunshine and attract your eye from a great distance. Bright colored flowers will steal the show if combined with less intensely colored plants.

Sources: Elements of Garden Design - Working with Color
By [Marie Iannotti](#), About.com

http://www.all-about-planters.com/articles/planters_basics.html