

Watercolor Painting: The Basics of Color

Osher Lifelong Learning Institute
(OLLI) at Vanderbilt University

Winter 2023

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First Time I
Successfully
Mixed Colors...



Basic Characteristics of Color



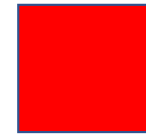
Green



High Chroma



Warm



Violet



Low Chroma



Cool



Hue = "name" of the color

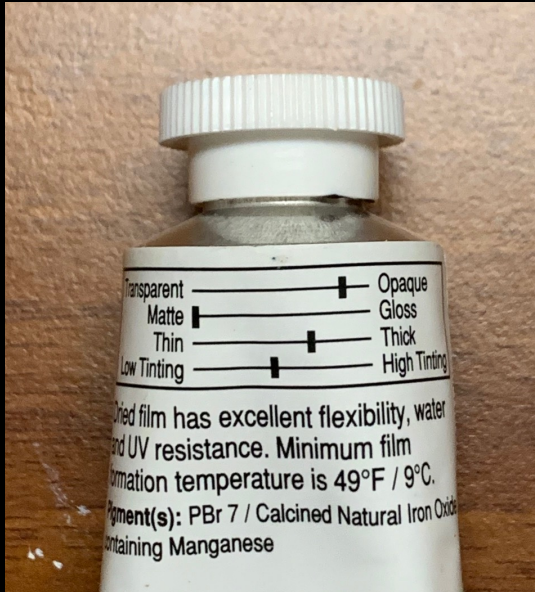
Chroma = intensity or purity of the color, or brightness/dullness

Temperature = cool or warm

Value = light or dark, place on a value scale



“ Color gets all the credit, but values do all the work”



Properties of color are not the same as the Properties of Paint!

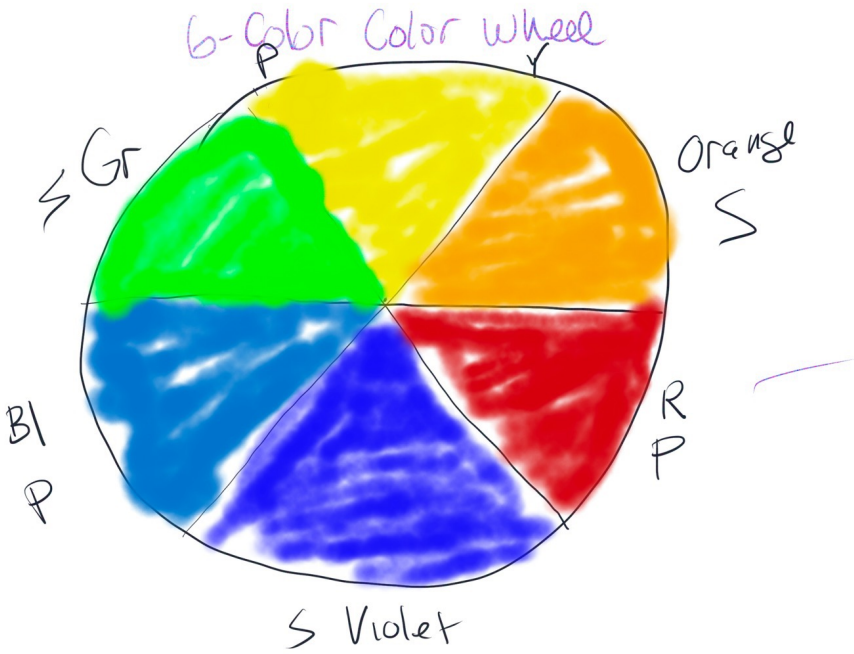
Basic qualities of Paint

- Hue
- Lightfastness
- Transparent/Opaque
 - Surface finish
- Physical consistency
- Tinting strength
 - Series



Color Wheel Demo-Six-Color Wheel

P=Primary
S=Secondary



Color Wheel Demo: Twelve-Color Wheel

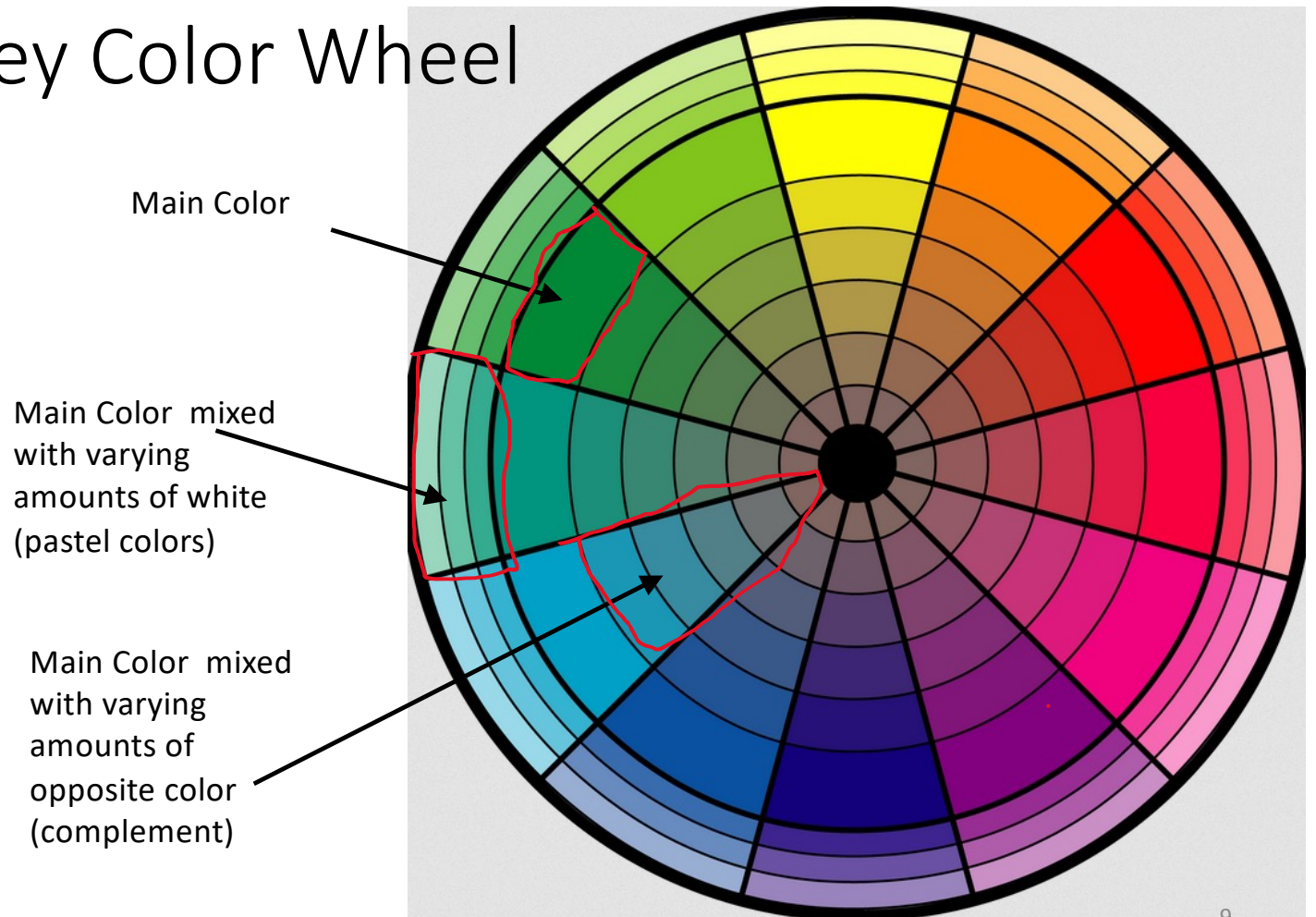
I did this color wheel before class on the ipad-I think the color separation is better in this one.



Relating Paints to the Color Wheel

- Good references for relating colors to names of paints
 - <http://drewharkey.com/research/color/color-wheel/>
 - Nice color wheel to work from, good discussion of color and color wheel
 - <https://i.pinimg.com/736x/21/fa/dd/21fadd38dc807449f97fa974134eae0e.jpg>
 - Lists the names various hues of paints related to their color
 - <https://www.handprint.com/HP/WCL/cwheel06.html>
 - Shows the names of paints on top of an ideal color wheel

Drew Harkey Color Wheel

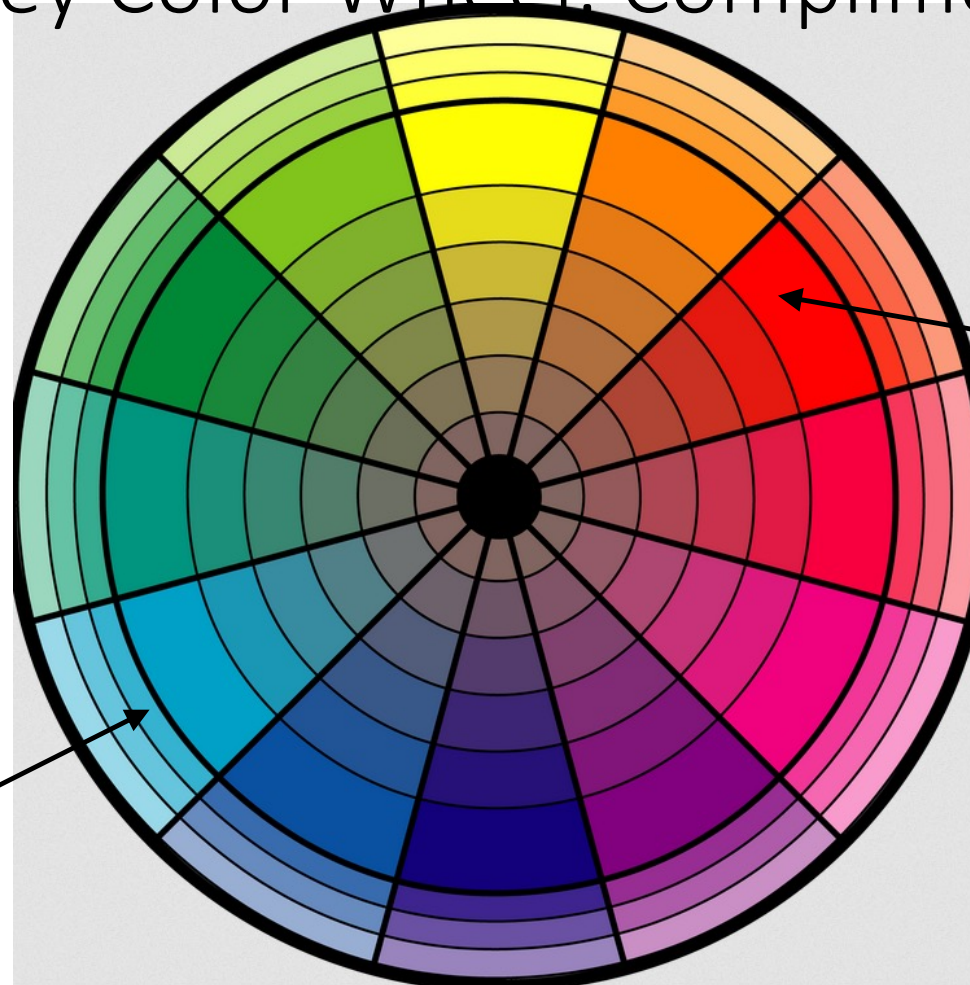


Drew Harkey Color Wheel: Compliments

Use complements to:
Dull down a color
Add contrast and vibrancy

Mixing Rule:
Far colors are dull when mixed,
Near colors are bright when mixed

Light blue is the complement of red-orange)



Red Orange is the complement of light blue

Drew Harkey Color Wheel: Temperature

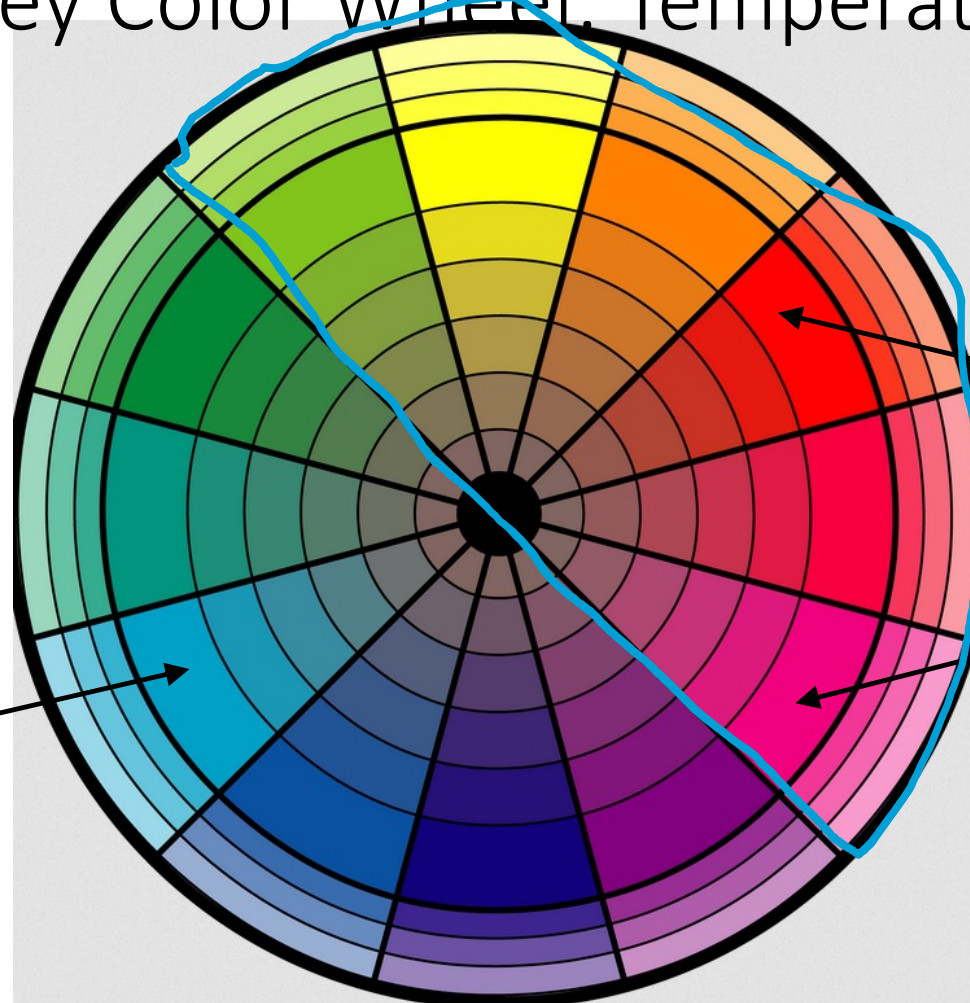
Rule of Temperature:

Warm advances towards the viewer,
Cool recedes from viewer

Aerial Perspective:

Things get cooler and bluer the further away they are from the viewer

Cool half of the color wheel: Blue considered coolest



Warm Part of color wheel
Yellow is warmest,
Followed by red

- Yellow**
- Banana
- Blond
- Buff
- Butter
- Canary
- Chamois
- Champagne
- Corn
- Cream
- Daffodil
- Dandelion
- Flax
- Gold
- Goldenrod
- Grapefruit
- Honey
- Jasmine
- Jonquil
- Lemon
- Maize
- Mustard
- Primrose
- School Bus
- Sunflower
- Titanium
- Wheat

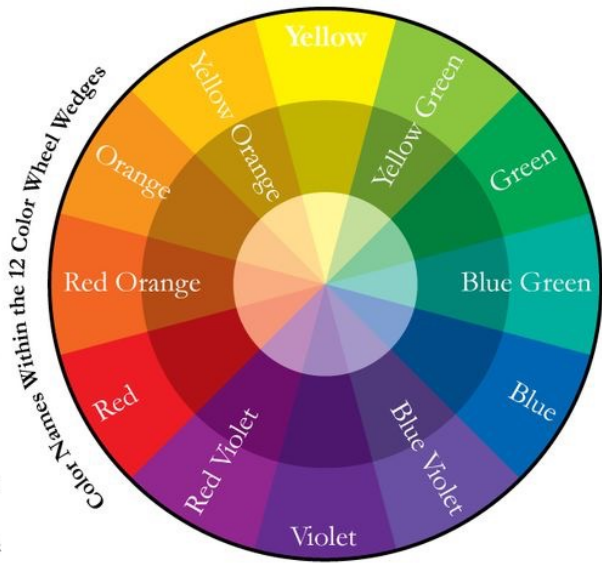
- Red Orange**
- Bittersweet
- Coral
- Papaya
- Persimmon
- Pumpkin
- Rust
- Salmon
- Tangerine

- Red**
- Barn
- Beet
- Blood
- Blush
- Bordeaux
- Bubble Gum
- Burgundy
- Cardinal
- Carnation
- Cayenne
- Cherry
- Chinese
- Claret
- Cotton Candy
- Cranberry
- Crimson
- Fire Engine
- Flamingo Pink
- Garnet
- Maraschino
- Pink
- Raspberry
- Rose
- Ruby
- Scarlet
- Strawberry
- Tea Rose
- Tomato
- Vermilion
- Watermelon
- Wine

- Yellow Orange**
- Amber
- Bisque
- Butterscotch
- Cantaloupe
- Caramel
- Cheddar
- Gamboge
- Mango
- Naples
- Ochre
- Peach
- Safety
- Saffron
- Topaz

- Red Violet**
- African Violet
- Boysenberry
- Byzantine
- Byzantium
- Fuchsia
- Heliotrope
- Lilac
- Magenta
- Maroon
- Mauve
- Mulberry
- Orchid
- Plum
- Puce
- Purpureus
- Thistle

- Orange**
- Apricot
- Burnt Orange
- Burnt Sienna
- Cadmium
- Cadmium
- Carrot
- Copper
- Orange Peel



Color Names Within the 12 Color Wheel Wedges

Color Wheel

Fully saturated color (outside)
Tone: black added (middle)
Tint: white added (center)

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- Violet**
- Amethyst
- Aubergine
- Black Raspberry
- Concord
- Damson
- Eminence
- Grape
- Lavender
- Purple
- Royal Purple

- Blue**
- Azure
- Baby
- Blueberry
- Bluebonnet
- Celestial
- Cerulean
- Cobalt
- Cornflower
- Delft
- Denim
- Iceberg
- Imperial
- Indigo
- Lapis
- Liberty
- Midnight
- Navy
- Phthalo
- Prussian
- Royal
- Sapphire
- Ultramarine
- Winsor

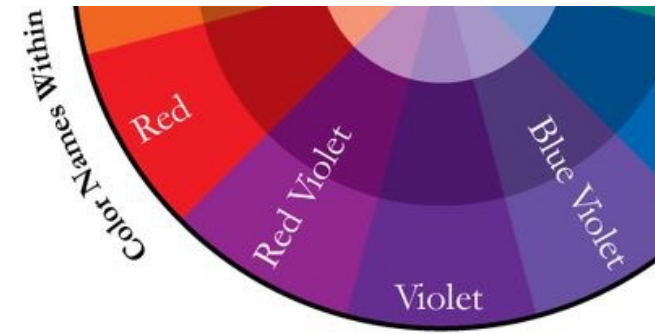
- Blue Green**
- Aqua
- Aquamarine
- Azure Mist
- Bottle
- Cadet
- Cyan
- Peacock
- Persian
- Pine
- Robin Egg
- Sea
- Sky
- Teal
- Topaz
- Turquoise
- Viridian

- Green**
- Celadon
- Emerald
- Forest
- Grass
- Hunter
- Jade
- Jungle
- Kelly
- Laurel
- Loden
- Mint
- Shamrock
- Spring

- Yellow Green**
- Apple
- Army
- Avocado
- Celery
- Chartreuse
- Citrine
- Citron
- Fern
- Lemon-lime
- Lime
- Moss
- Neon
- Olive
- Pea
- Sage
- Sap
- Tea

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See link previous slide



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- Navy
- Phthalo
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- Sapphire
- Ultramarine
- Winsor

- Blue Violet**
- Bluebell
- Eggplant
- Iris
- Periwinkle
- Purple Heather

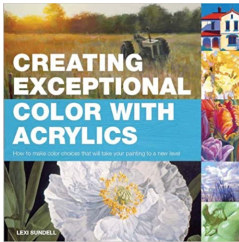
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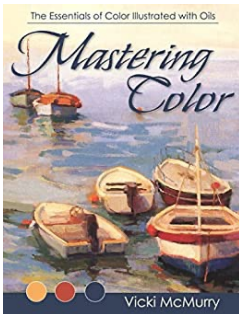
This is the entire color wheel I did before class. You can see the names of the paints that I used for each section, the paint name and the color name. I did make a mistake-my cadmium yellow has some purple mixed in with it so to the pure/ideal color is not correct. Also I got the yellow/blue-violet and blue-violet/Yellow complements switched, so they are on the wrong side, and I expanded the yellow section for three shades of yellow and no light red. Try to make your complement mixtures 75%/25% roughly to start.



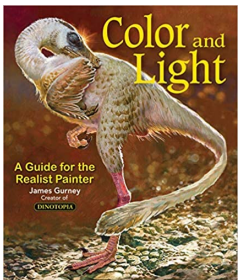
Bibliography



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- By Lexi Sundell



- **Mastering Color: The Essentials of Color Illustrated with Oils**
- By Vicki McMurry



- **Color and Light: A Guide for the Realist Painter**
- By James Gurney