

Colour and Style

Colour theory

- The primary colours are blue, red and yellow. They cannot be made by mixing other colours.
- The secondary colours are green, purple and orange. They are made by mixing equal amounts of primary colours.
- Tertiary colours are made by mixing equal amounts of a primary and a secondary colour, such as red-orange.
- Hues are versions of a colour made by mixing unequal amounts of colours.
- Complementary colours provide the greatest contrast when placed next to each other, such as yellow and purple.
- Analogous colours are neighbours on the colour wheel, such as orange and red.
- Warm colours are made using mostly reds and yellows and cool colours are made using mostly blues and yellows.
- A tint is a colour mixed with white.
- A shade is a colour mixed with black.
- A tone is a colour mixed with grey.



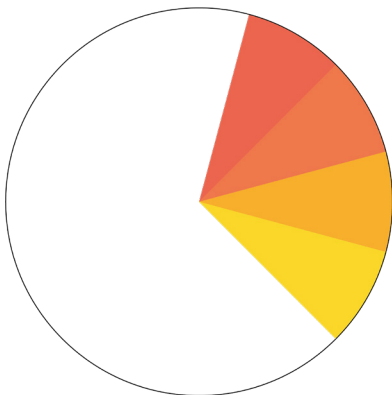
Primary and secondary colours



tertiary colours



complementary colours



analogous colours

Colour palettes

The term ‘colour palette’ refers to the range of colours usually used by a particular artist or art movement. Different art movements are known for using colour in particular ways and having different colour palettes.

Impressionism

Impressionists use soft, pale colours with tints to capture the feeling of light in their paintings. Their artwork is more about capturing the impression of a moment in time rather than exact details.



The Skiff (La Yole) by Pierre-Auguste Renoir, 1875

Fauvism

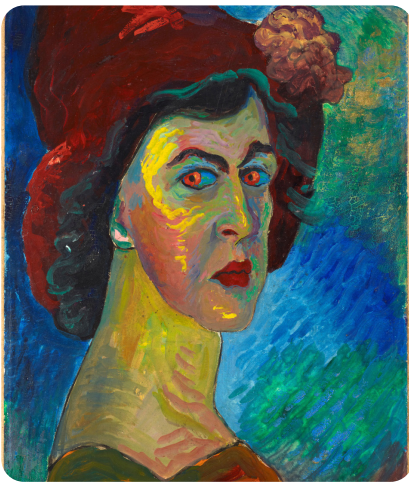
The Fauvists’ colour palette consists of complementary colours to make their colours look brighter when used side by side. These non-naturalistic colours create an abstract style.



Charing Cross Bridge, London by André Derain, 1906

Expressionism

Expressionists use non-naturalistic blocks of vivid colours instead of mixing different hues. Their artwork distorts reality to portray the artist’s inner feelings or ideas.



Self-portrait 1
by Marianne von Werefkin, 1910

Realism

Realists use subtle tones and shades of natural colours. Their colour palette is largely browns, reds, black, greys and ivories.



The Gleaners by Jean-François Millet, 1857

Glossary

abstract art	A modern art style that does not aim to represent recognisable images of the everyday world.
art movement	A style in art with a common goal that is followed by a group of artists over a period of time.
hue	A variation of a colour.
non-naturalistic	Unlike natural forms.