



INSTAR<sup>TM</sup>



Cheat Book for Painting

# A simple guide.....

Colour is a wonderful thing, it can change the way you feel, make something seemingly dull more bright, full of life and is everywhere we look.

But sometimes we take this for granted and don't really pay too much attention to how nature itself makes our world come to life!

But this isn't a guide on how to do things, but more a set of pointers and ideas to give you not only a better understanding of colour, but how best to apply it to your miniatures

And above all, remember the golden rule...

## HAVE FUN!

# The three elements

Things are much easier to understand when you break them down into bitesize components, in the case of painting, there are three elements to it and listed here in order of importance

## Value



How light or dark your paint is, paints closer to the white side of the scale will be lighter, paints closer to the black side of the scale will be darker

## Saturation



How rich or intense the colour is, the more saturated a colour is, the more transparency it will have but will have a more brilliant colour, the more desaturated a colour is, the less transparent it will be with a subsequent loss in colour

## Hue



Refers to the colour location on the colour wheel



# Paint Jargon

It's all well and good using fancy language to describe painting, but with more people streaming, recording tutorials and painting in general, what do all the different terms mean?

**Tint** - A colour plus white, usually used with highlighting terms

**Shade** - A colour plus black, refers to shadows usually

**Tone** - A broad description to describe different mixtures of colours, you sometimes here painters use the phrase "Toned down" when describing the desaturation of a colour by adding an opposite colour or adding grey

**Vividness, Chroma, Richness, Purity** - All the same terms when referring to the saturation of a colour

**High Key** - Refers to a range of colours in the high value range (7-10)

**Mid Key** - Refers to a range of colours in the middle value range (4-6)

**Low Key** - Refers to a range of colours in the low value range (0-3)

**Temperature** - Used to describe how warm or cool a colour is, it's not a "Physical" temperature but more of an "Implied" temperature. Warm colours on a colour wheel go from Red to Green, Cool colours go from Blue to Magenta

**Contrast** - A complex term used to describe the difference between two colours when painted next to each other, ties in with keys going from a low key to a high key



# Colour Schemes (Part 1)

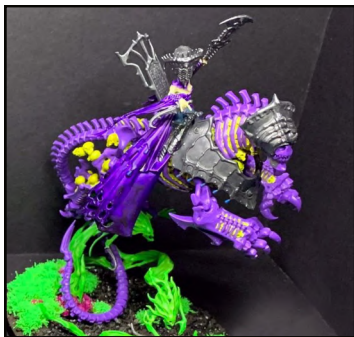
How do you make colours work well together?

There are six styles that can be used alone or combined

## Complementary

Colours that are opposite each other on a colour wheel, creates a high contrast, vibrant look.

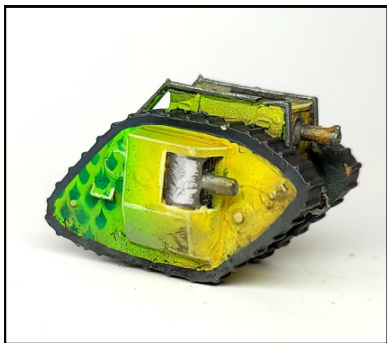
Difficult to use alone but works well for making something stand out.



## Analogous/Harmonious

Colours that are next to each other on the wheel. Ensure you have enough contrast when choosing this style.

Choose one dominate colour with a second to support while the third is used to highlight



# Colour Schemes (Part 2)

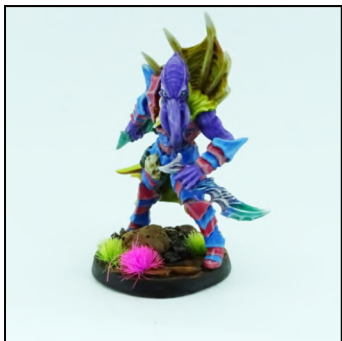
How do you make colours work well together?

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## Triad

Uses colours that are evenly spaced around the wheel, Triadic styles tend to be quite vibrant even if you use pale versions of your colours

To use this style effectively, choose one colour to dominate



## Split Complementary

A good starting choice for beginners as it's very difficult to go wrong with this style

A variation on the complementary style but with less contrast, like the triad style, choose one colour to dominate



# Colour Schemes (Part 3)

How do you make colours work well together?

There are six styles that can be used alone or combined

## Rectangle/Tetrad

Uses four colours arranged into two complementary pairs

A rich style and works best with one colour being dominant, pay close attention to the balance between the cool and warm colours



## Square/Tetrad

Similar to the previous style but with the colours evenly spaced out

Again, it's best to let one colour be dominant and pay attention to the balance between the cool and warm colours



# Colour Schemes (Part 3)

There is one final style that tends to be used alone, this style is known as Monochromatic

It uses one dominant colour with various shades and tints, if any other colours are used, they tend to have the same value as the dominant colour being used so they blend in seamlessly unless it's a part that needs to stand out.

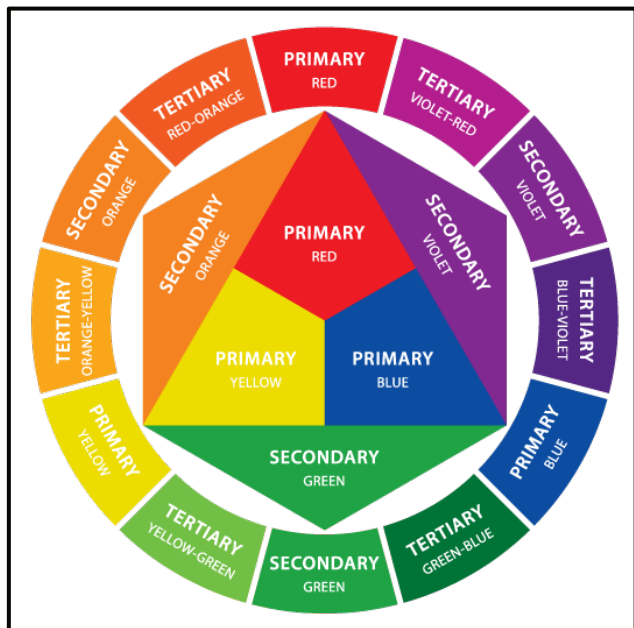




# The Colour Wheel (Part 1)

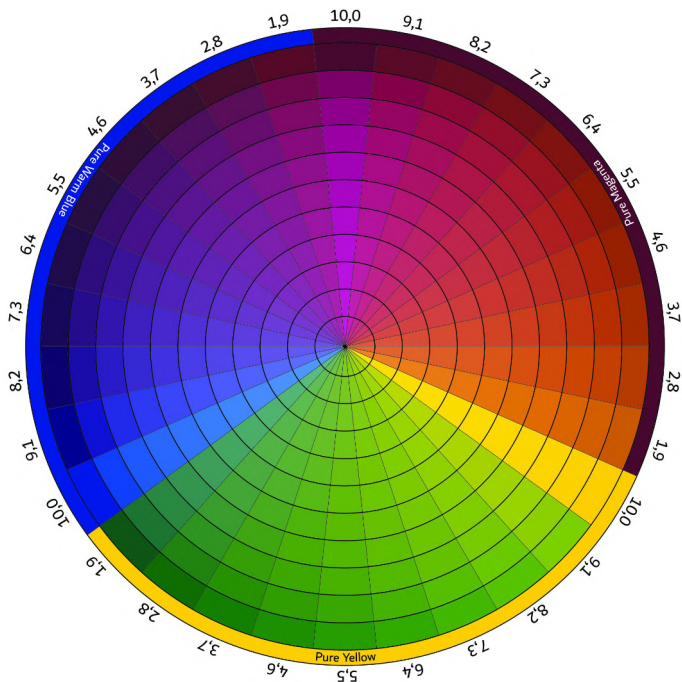
The humble colour wheel has gone through many evolutions over the years and we've given it the next one by creating colour wheels that are pigment specific which you can find at the website under "Mixing Recipes"

For simplicity though, we'll use this one to show the relationships between colours, Secondary colours are made by mixing the two primary colours either side of it, a tertiary colour is made by mixing a secondary colour with a primary colour



# The Colour Wheel (Part 2)

As we mentioned we've evolved the colour wheel to be pigment specific ones, this shows you what colours can be made just by using the Primary colours, though we use Magenta as our Primary Red as it's much softer and gives more control.



# Colour Mixing

You can mix almost any colour you can think of using just the primary colours, black and white.

It's a great system to use as a beginner as it forces you to mix your own colours rather than rely on pre mixed colours, the advantages to this are:

You have more control over the **Value** of your colour

You have more control over the **Saturation** of your colour

You have more control over the **Hue** of your colour

## **Here are some simple tips for mixing colours:**

Mixing any two primary colours will create the colour between them, If you mix Red and Blue, you will get purple, to adjust it around the colour wheel you need to choose if you want to make it warmer by adding colours clockwise from the mixed colour or cooler by going anti clockwise

You can reduce the saturation of a colour easily by mixing it with a colour on the opposite side of the colour wheel, these are known as complementary colours. For example you can reduce the saturation of a Red by mixing it with Green

To Darken a colour, you can add Blue, Black, Brown or a combination of them

To Lighten a colour, you can add Yellow or White, but be careful using White as it can desaturate a colour, using Yellow in some cases can retain the saturation of a colour while lightening it

To mix a Natural Black, use Oxide Black or combine Blue with Brown



# Things to watch out for

Some people may call colours bland or boring, but colour is just colour, how it's perceived is entirely up to the observer and is completely subjective.

Some people will class grey colours as being completely lifeless, but this isn't really true, without dull colours in colour scheme, it's not possible to make more vibrant colours pop. But it's not all just dull colours, it could be the use of more low key colour values to allow other parts of the miniature to pop by using high key colours.

Colour itself doesn't have any meaning, it's what surrounds it that does that. Try to look at the big picture of what you're painting and try to make all the colours have an important role in what you're trying to communicate

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Use paint scheme recipes as an exception rather than the rule, they are great starting points and the painters who did them will have their own style and way of showing colour harmony, but life isn't that predictable that you can use the same colours and get the same looking model, while the colours themselves can be simplified into a standard mixing recipe, the way they are applied cannot.

Instead of searching for how to guides on how to paint something, try asking yourself these questions instead, what colour segment does the colour I want belong to, is the area blending into another hue (i.e Blue into Green), what's the value of the colour(s) I want (Light or Dark) and what is the saturation of the colour(s) (Dull or Vivid)

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People naturally do not have a talent for painting, some artists you see will have honed their skills over many years and may even do it as a full time job, but even then they are always learning themselves.

## **Some simple lessons:**

Learning colour and painting is a slow and steady improvement on proven fundamentals

Practice and make mistakes, without making mistakes, you'll never improve

Analyze and learn from those mistakes, Good mistakes are the ones you learn from



# Psychology of Colour

While it can vary from painter to painter and observer to observer, colour can have an influence over the way we perceive the final piece

Here are some colours and the values associated with them



Passion, Love,  
Anger, Danger



Nature, Health,  
Wealth



Vitality, Creativity,  
Activity



Trust, Security,  
Spiritual



Energy, Light,  
Hope



Royalty, Creativity,  
Wealth

But it's not always about the colour, the value of the colours you paint with can also change the way the piece is viewed, as Bob Ross once said,

"If you paint with dark colours, you'll paint an unhappy scene, if you paint with bright colours, you'll paint a happy scene"



# Links

## Alpha Paints



<https://shop.instarpaint.com/product-category/alpha>

## Provectus Products



<https://shop.instarpaint.com/product-category/provectus>

## Spectrum Paints



<https://shop.instarpaint.com/product-category/spectrum>

## Colour Recipes



<https://shop.instarpaint.com/paint-mixing-recipes>



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