

Color Theory for Illumination

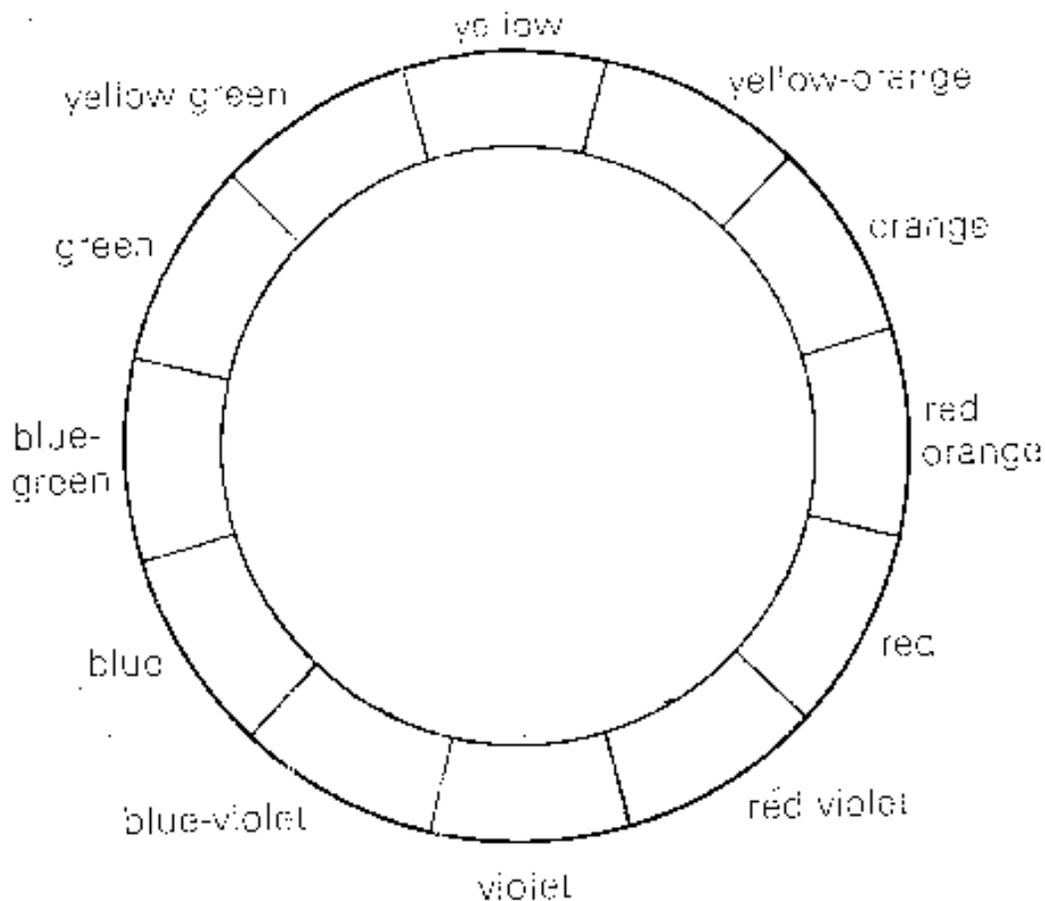
Basic Color Theory

Learning the basics of color theory allows you to create a spectrum of colors from just a few tubes of paint. All you really need are the primary colors- red, yellow, and blue. These colors cant be created by combining any other colors, but you can mix them together to create virtually any other color.

Beginners Guide Calligraphy and Illumination

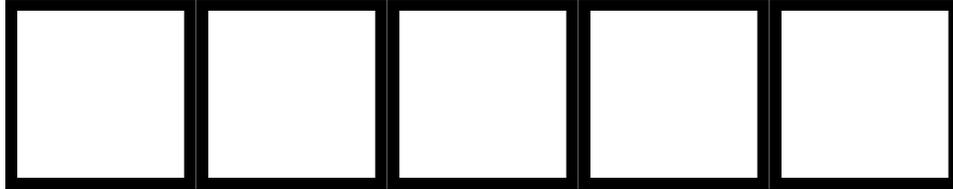
Please note that not all shades of paints used by artists came from using this color theory method. Most pigments used by historical artisans came from ground up stone or other materials. Thus, there may be several natural brown shades, for example, that an artist could use without having to mix it themselves. Since we usually use tube paints that are already ground and/or mixed to achieve the desired color, we do not commonly need to mix colors to get the standard pallet. However, it is ideal that all artists take the time to learn and understand color theory. There are many times when blending your own specific shade for a color will help an illumination look more natural.

Using the large pallet, start mixing your own colors. Here is a color wheel for you to paint so that you can take the colors with you.



1. Harmonious Analogous Colors

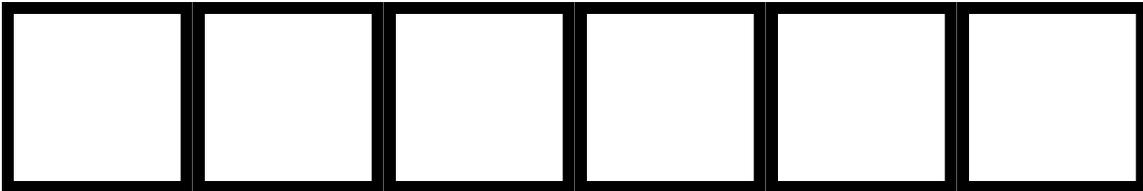
Analogous colors appear next to one another on the color wheel. Because their hues (or family of colors) blend smoothly together, they impart a harmonious feeling when used together in a work of art. Below is a range of squares. Please paint the squares as you mix the various shades between yellow and blue.



2. Dynamic Complementary Colors

Complementary colors appear opposite each other on the color wheel, and they appear brighter when placed next to each other. Complementary colors often are used to create dramatic contrasts in artwork. Please paint the complementary pairs below.

Purple Yellow / Green Red / Orange Blue



3. Grayed Darker Colors

Many artists prefer not to use black to darken colors, but to add a touch of a color's complementary color to the original paint color to create a rich-looking neutral shade. Using the smaller pallet, start mixing red and green together. Place some red on one end, some green on the other and equal amounts of both in the middle. Paint in the squares below to see the development of the shades.



4. Rich Neutral Colors

Make neutral grays and browns by mixing the three primary colors together, varying the proportions to alter the final result. One of the more historically used mixture to get a very dark brown/ almost black is to mix burnt sienna and ultramarine blue. However, burnt sienna is a mix of green, a bit of yellow and a bit more than half of red. So, this can show how all three primary colors are used to get a black type of color. Using the smaller pallet, add a small amount of blue to the middle of the plate and mix in the brown that you made with equal parts of red and green. Paint a little of that color below.