



# Color Psychology

# Color Design

## Psychology of Color



Colors convey **strong emotional meaning** to an audience.

Marketing research studies have been done regarding the subconscious perception of color and its ability to drive consumer behavior.

**Red, yellow and green** have been shown to increase hunger and impulse purchases, which is why we see this combination frequently used by fast food chains and manufacturers of junk food items in retail packaging.

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## Psychology of Color



Image Source: <http://bit.ly/cVJYzE>

Color has a **strong psychological impact**.  
Audiences can be drawn to or repulsed by a product's color.

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## Psychology of Color in Western Culture



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**BankMutual**  
Trust. The feeling is Mutual.



**usbank**<sup>®</sup>  
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**Allstate**<sup>®</sup>  
You're in good hands.



**GEICO**<sup>®</sup>  
**geico.com**



**Liberty Mutual**<sup>®</sup>

**Blue** is seen as **reliable, conservative and dependable**.  
Financial institutions and insurance companies frequently use this hue in their logos and promotional materials.

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## Psychology of Color in Western Culture



**Yellow** is a **cheerful and playful color** associated with fun, energy and vitality. It can have the problem with not being perceived seriously.

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## Psychology of Color in Western Culture



**Orange** represents **vitality, energy and fun**. It is considered the most **visible color in the spectrum**, so it is used in safety and construction products that demand the attention of passersby.

Like yellow, it is not generally associated with sophistication and refinement, and is not always taken seriously.

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## Psychology of Color in Western Culture



**Green** is associated with **freshness, growth and renewal**. This color is used frequently to convey organic products.

**Light green** is perceived as **tranquil**, and is frequently used inside of hospitals and prisons.

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## Psychology of Color in Western Culture



diablo



**Red** is tinged with numerous meanings in our culture. It can be associated with **energy, love and vitality** or with **vice, danger and lust**.



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## Psychology of Color in Western Culture



**Purple** is associated with **mystery**. Darker shades of this color are associated with **royalty and wealth**. Purple is generally considered a **feminine color** in advertising, packaging and marketing.

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## Psychology of Color in Western Culture



**Brown** suggests *stability, reliability and comfort*. Studies have shown that in times of economic uncertainty, consumers tend to purchase more earth tones for clothing and home décor.

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## Psychology of Color in Western Culture



**Grey** conveys a sense of **refinement and sophistication**. We often see this used in the advertisement of luxury items. It is a color proven to decrease appetite, so it is not generally used in restaurant settings or on consumer food packaging.

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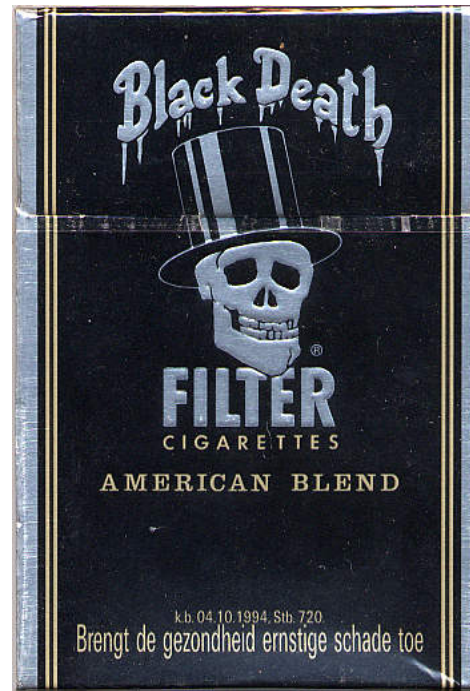
## Psychology of Color in Western Culture



**White** is perceived as **pure and innocent**.  
It is associated with **cleanliness and sterility**.

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## Psychology of Color in Western Culture



**Black** is a color of **mystery, fear and danger**. In the west, it is closely associated with death. In advertising and marketing it is often used as a color to denote sophistication and masculinity.

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## World Cultural Associations

It is important to note that **color associations** vary across world cultures.

For instance, the **color white** suggests **purity and innocence** in the west, but in some **African and Asian countries** this color is **associated with death**.

**Red** is the color of lust and adventure in **Western cultures**, but symbolizes **luck, prosperity and marriage** in Asian countries.

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## World Cultural Associations

### Why is it important to understand color symbolism across cultures?

Colors are tinged with **religious and political symbolism**, which is different throughout different regions of the world.

A color palette that is considered **acceptable in one region** might be **taboo** in another region of the world.

For this reason, it is important to understand how different cultures perceive colors in order to **communicate the right message** to an audience and to avoid unintentionally offending consumers in your global audience.

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## Asia



**Red:** Red is the color of **luck and celebration** in most Asian countries. It is worn by brides during wedding ceremonies.

Red is also a color of both **vitality and bloodshed**.

In China, red is associated with the Communist government.



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## Asia



Image Source: <http://bit.ly/aAmoBL>

**White:** This color is associated with the masculine “yang” force in nature.

In most Asian countries, white represents autumn, death and is **worn at funerals**.

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## Africa



Image Source: <http://bit.ly/ciU76X>

**Gold:** Symbolic of **immortality and royalty**.  
As in many cultures, gold prized as a symbol  
of wealth and power.

**Black:** symbolic of age, **maturity and wisdom**.

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## Africa



**Green:** Growth, fertility and life.

Image Source: <http://bit.ly/c6E2pi>

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## Middle East



**Blue:** Symbolic of divinity, blue is also representative of water (a precious resource in the desert).

Image Source: <http://bit.ly/doltIO>

# Color Design

## Middle East



Image Source:<http://bit.ly/8YiAer>

**Green:** In Islamic cultures, this is the **holiest color** and represents the concept of heaven as a garden.

It is also affiliated with **healing and protection** from sickness.

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## Middle East



**Purple:** In coastal Israel, purple is the color of shellfish (which people used to make dyes) and is **associated with the sea**.

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## Central and South America



Image Source: <http://bit.ly/bQxErn>

**Red:** For the Aztecs, this color was associated with **blood and sacrifice**. The Aztecs produced the pigment from grinding Cochineal beetles.

Considered very **valuable** because it was so difficult to make.

Red cars are illegal in Brazil because they are shown to be involved in more traffic accidents than cars of other colors.

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## Central and South America



Image Source: <http://bit.ly/bCtOo3>

**Purple:** The **color of mourning** in Brazil and representative of the balance of life and death.



# Color Design

## Central and South America



Image Source: <http://bit.ly/9KGEuE>

**Yellow:** Represents the **sun and wealth** in many Central and South American countries.

In Mexico, yellow symbolizes light to help souls find their way to the afterlife, and is frequently seen in **Dia de los Muertos** decorations.