

Design Elements: Tints, Tones & Shades

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Sponsored by Crescent Brands

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Neutral Color Theory

Every color has a tone—a grayed color—in the color spectrum that may become a neutral.

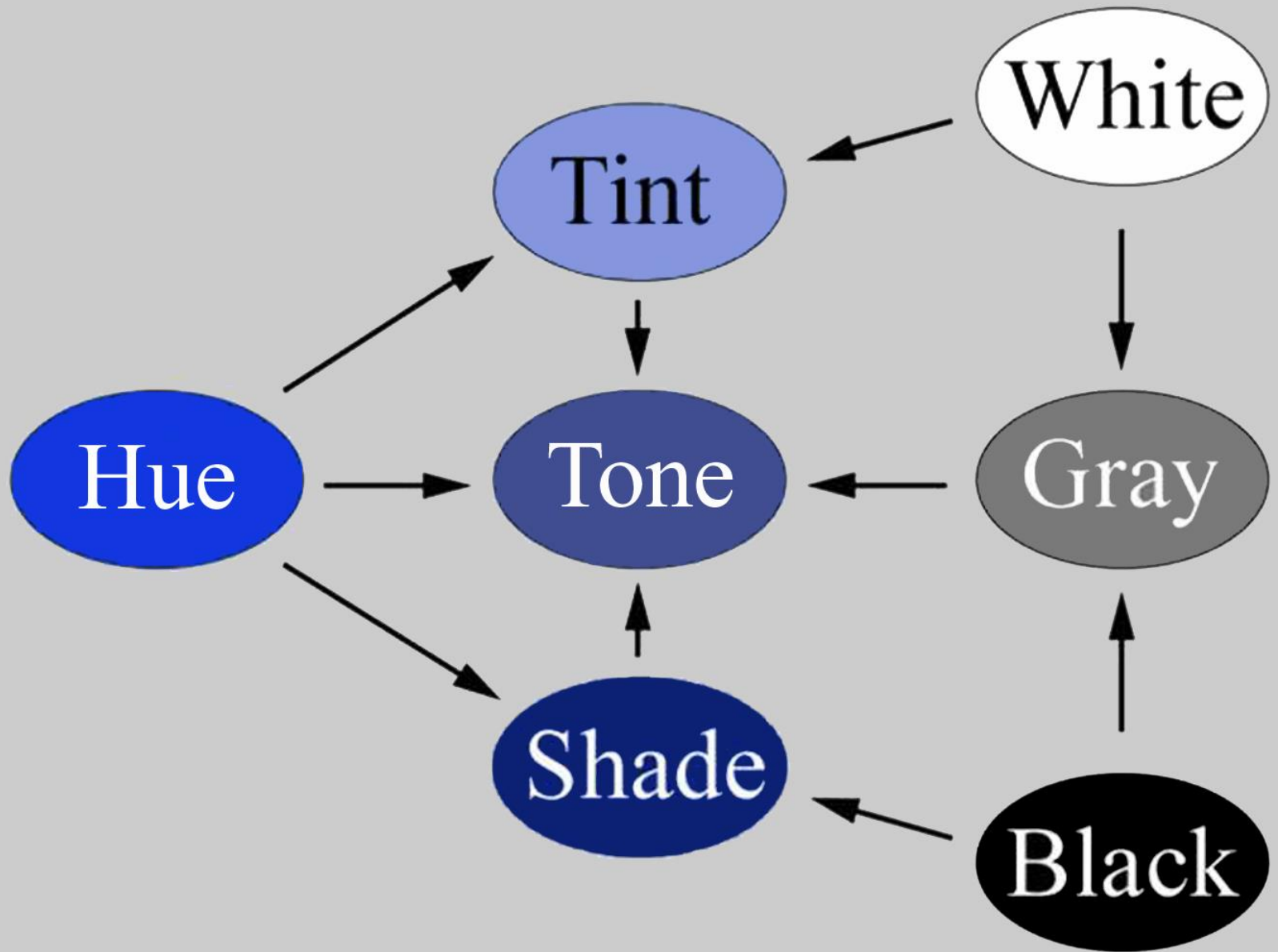


Basics Review

Black, white
and gray have
always been
considered
neutrals.

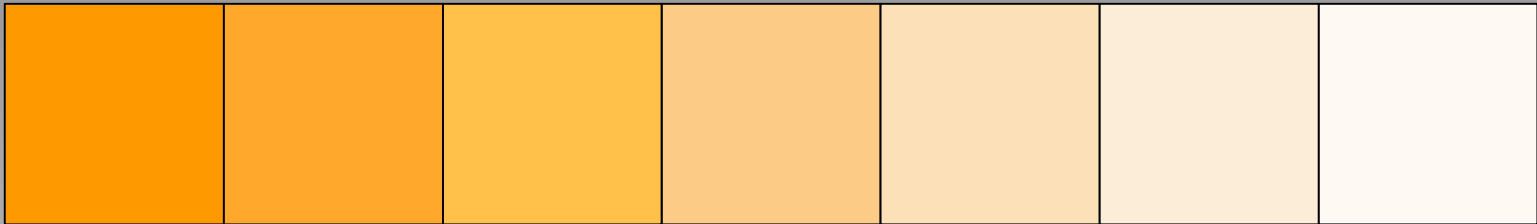
But all tinted,
toned and
shaded colors
are also
considered
neutrals.



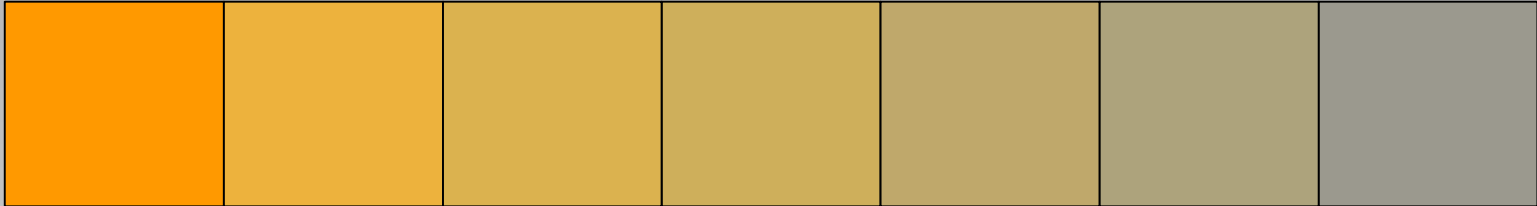


Tints, Tones and Shades of a Color

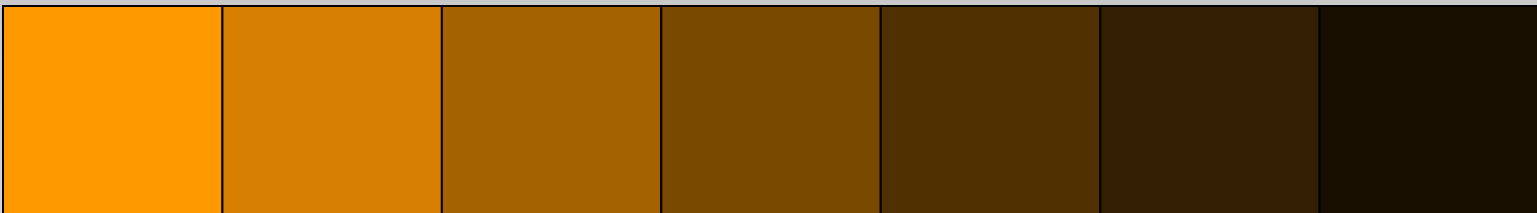
If white is added to a color it is a **tint**.



If gray is added the result is a **tone**.

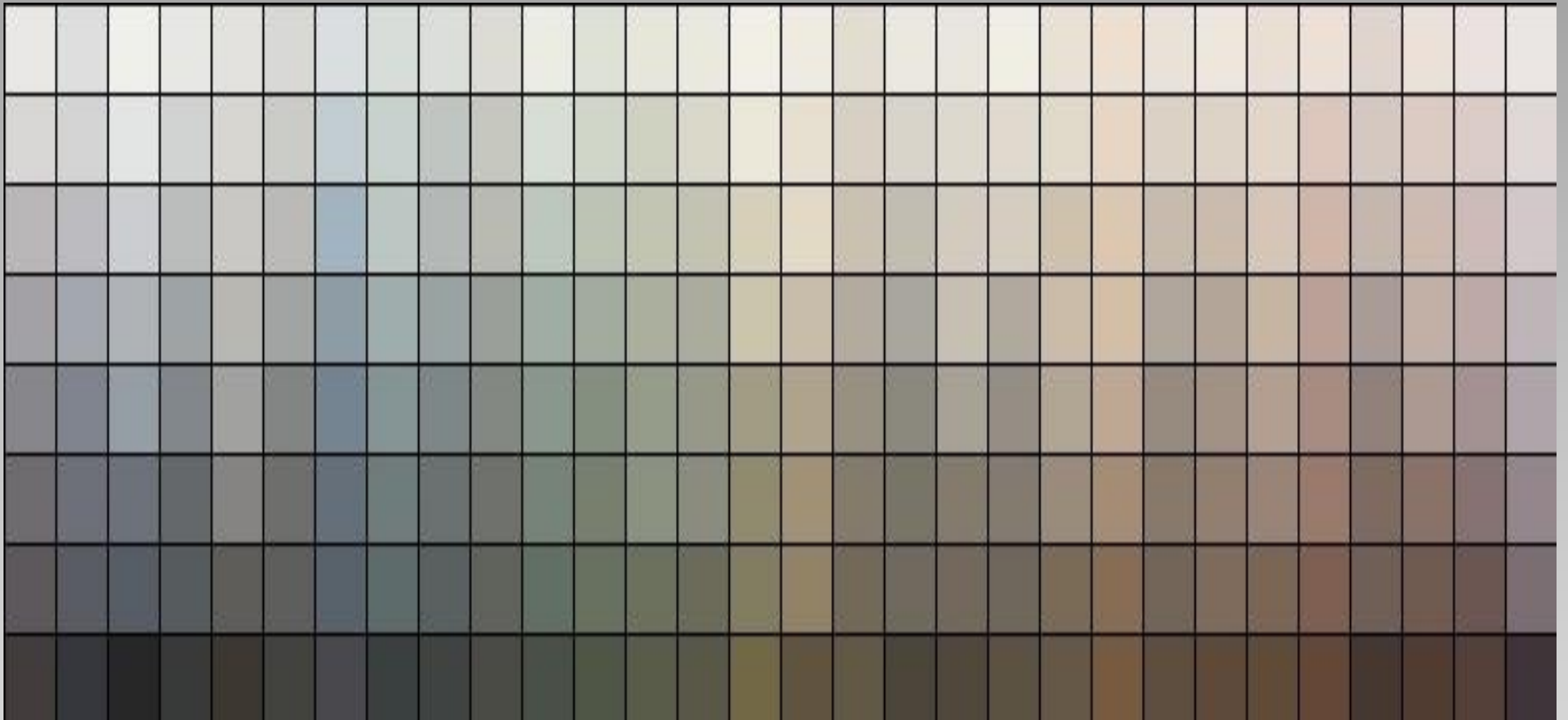


If black is added it becomes a **shade**.



What's a Neutral?

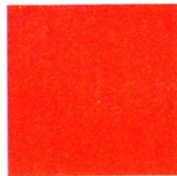
Every color on the color wheel has a tint and shade in the color spectrum that is a neutral.



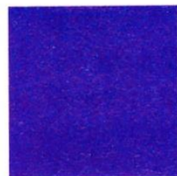
A



quinacridone magenta



cadmium red



ultramarine blue



cobalt blue

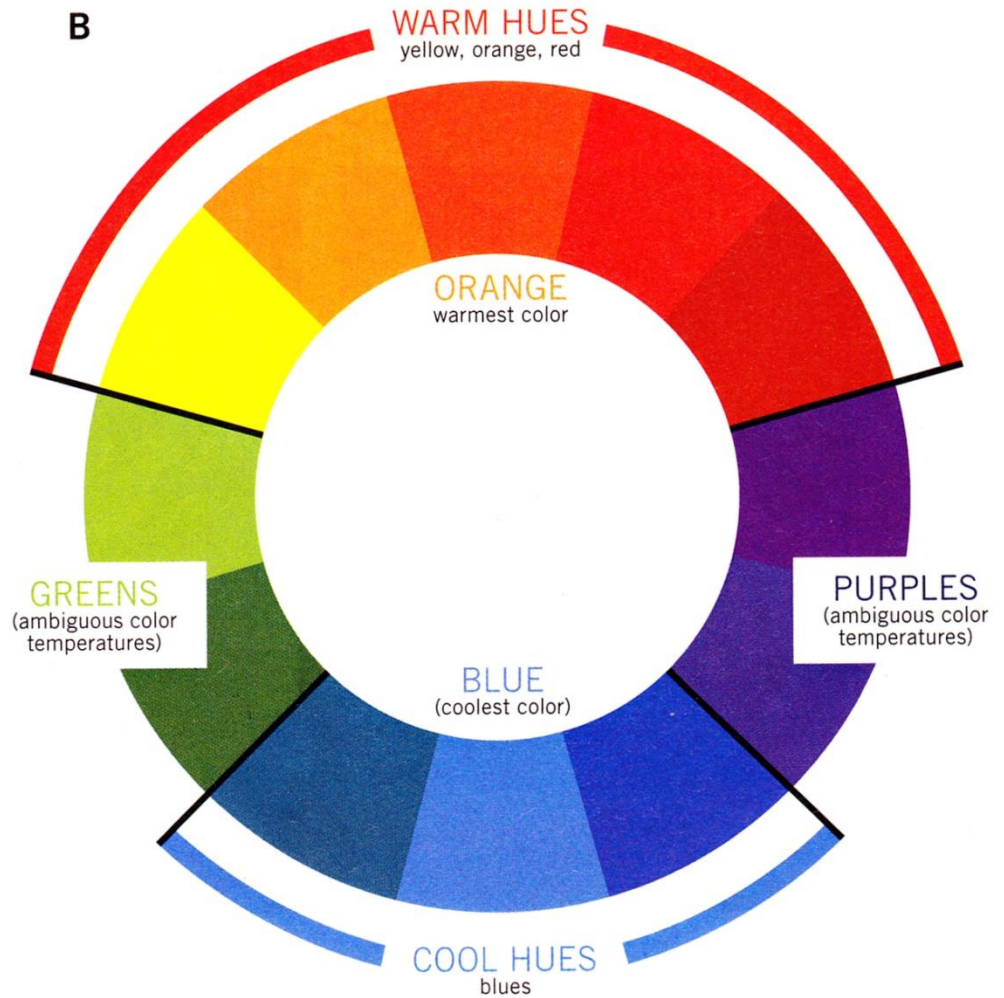
A: Relative Versus Overall

Temperatures: A red pigment that has overtones of blue, such as quinacridone magenta, may be referred to as a cool red. Cadmium red, with its overtones of yellow, is considered a warm red. Despite these distinctions, each is a red hue and conveys an overall warm color temperature. Blues also have overtones of other colors. Ultramarine blue, with its hint of red, appears warmer than cobalt blue; nonetheless, when examining patterns in color temperature, both blues stand for cool colors within a painting.

B: Warm, Cool and Inbetween:

When determining color-temperature patterns, pay particular attention to the blues (cool colors) and the reds, oranges and yellows (warm colors). Purples and greens, though significant for other reasons, play an ambiguous role in temperature patterns.

B



Sherwin-Williams paint samplers



WARM DETAILS
RED-TONED NEUTRAL WITH WARM HARMONIES

RED-TONED NEUTRALS IN NATURAL HARMONIES

Use neutrals as a complete scheme by themselves, as simple background for stronger colors, or to help define design features like doorways and windows. Ranging from a whisper of beige to deep, russet browns, these Red-Toned Neutrals are comfortable and traditional.

Our Color Studio has created three distinctive Red-Toned Neutral palettes, each with trim and accent colors:

WARM DETAILS provides warm harmonies that are specifically selected to accent a Red-Toned Neutral. This palette gives a subtle and sophisticated look.

SUBTLE BLENDS gives you lighter and darker tones of a Red-Toned Neutral. It's a classic palette that's simple to work with and comfortable to live with.

COOL DETAILS offers cooler harmonies that will complement a Red-Toned Neutral, to give you quiet accents and interesting highlights.



WARM DETAILS
BLUE-TONED NEUTRAL WITH WARM HARMONIES

BLUE-TONED NEUTRALS IN NATURAL HARMONIES

Neutrals are every color's friend, and offer an abundance of shades and nuances. Use neutrals to calm a colorful scheme, or use color to enliven a neutral scheme. Ranging from a hint of gray to smart charcoals to deep blue-blacks, these Blue-Toned Neutrals offer quiet, restrained elegance.

Our Color Studio has created three distinctive Blue-Toned Neutral palettes, each with trim and accent colors:

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COOL DETAILS offers cooler harmonies that will complement a Blue-Toned Neutral, to give you quiet accents and interesting highlights.



WARM DETAILS
YELLOW-TONED NEUTRAL WITH WARM HARMONIES

Think of all the neutrals as very low intensity hues that will work well with all other colors. Experiment freely with different shades and tones and you will be amply rewarded. Ranging from subtle creams to deep golden browns, these Yellow-Toned Neutrals are fresh and quietly uplifting.

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730C-2 " Sandstone Cove	730C	1812 " Swiss Coffee	W-B-300
		730D-4 " Barkin Wall	740D

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Color Based Neutral Tints, Tones, Shades

blue

yellow

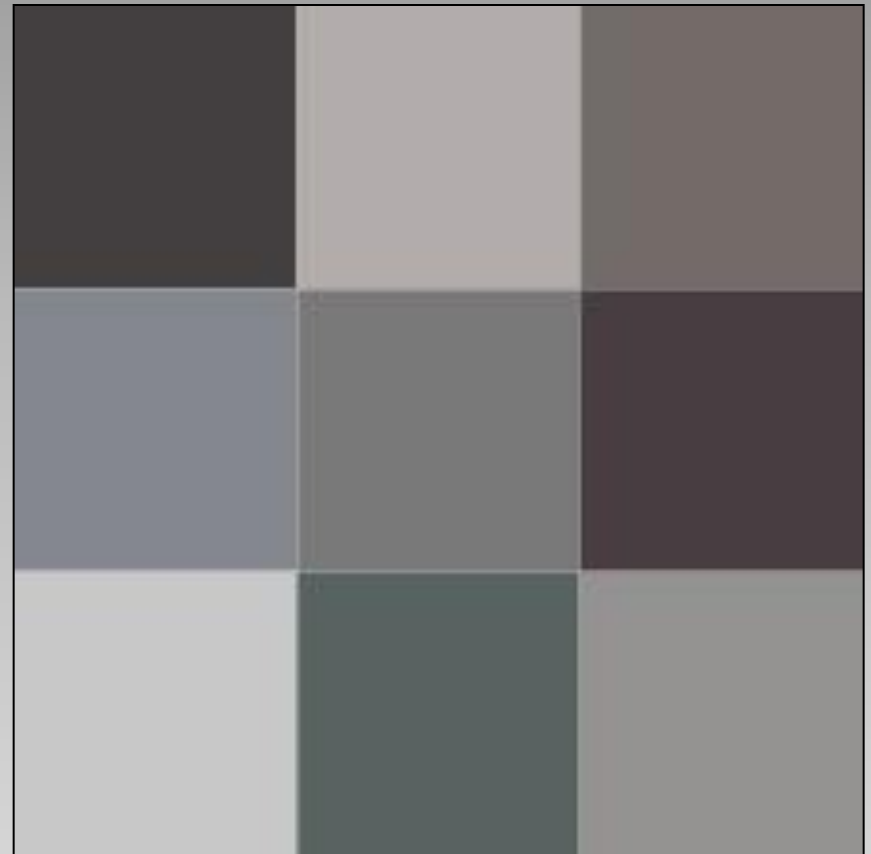
red



blue

yellow

red



Crescent Brands LLC Specifier Card

Neutrals Specifiers for
Shades of Gray 2017
Tints, Tones, Shades 2025.

2025 features neutrals
broken into red, yellow,
blue families illustrating
tints, tones and
shades of each.

A color dot could be
applied to mat corner
sample for easy reference
when designing.



Neutrals in Framing

Original Chinese
Watercolor



Subtle color
contrast, still
neutral

Florence, Italy

LE Etching

Pale blue gray,
warm white and warm
gray triple rag mat
with spacer



Original art – set of 3
Asian proportions elongate
Busy frames demand attention





Warm white expands image.
Spacer adds depth.
Top warm neutral ties
to browns in the horse.



Pearl white rag enlarges image.
Warm gray rag top brings the eye
into the gray of the horse. Dark
frame aligns with the ink.



Shitake silk top mat.
Tan rag second mat.
Gray deep bevel wrap third mat.
Pearl white rag liner mat.



Traditionally framed with team colors, but think outside the box and try neutrals



White as a Neutral

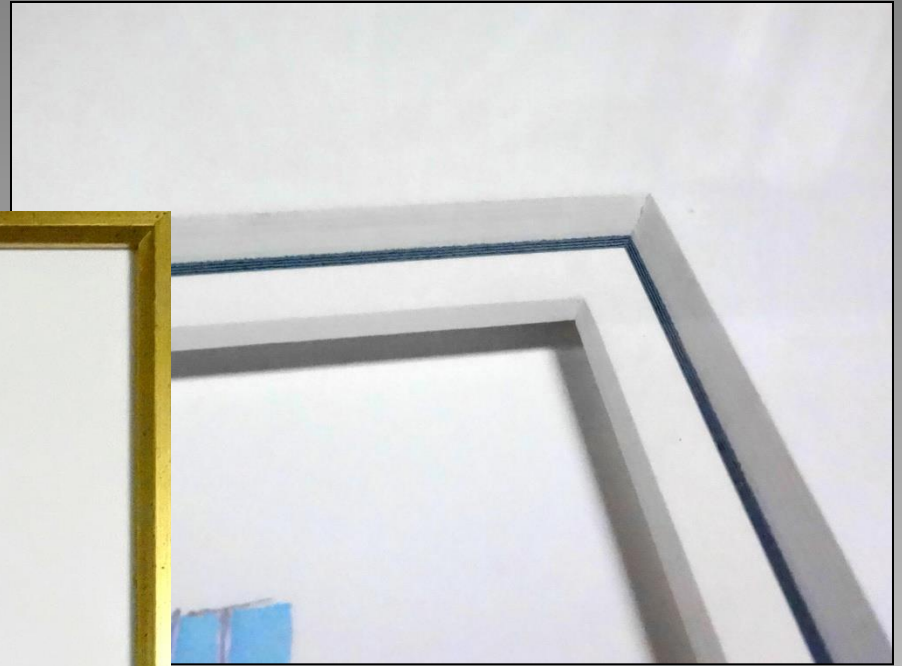
Color enriches and enlivens art, but there is nothing wrong with white on white.

Asian theory states the blank white page is already a completed work of art...so bright white or warm white rag mats can easily enhance fine art.



Creating dimension





LE calligraphy

Under tiered 8-ply
with whit liner,
spacer beneath



Italian Etching

Three white tints
(crème, white, warm white)
for four mats with spacer.
Top mat is used to break up
the negative space.

Contemporary

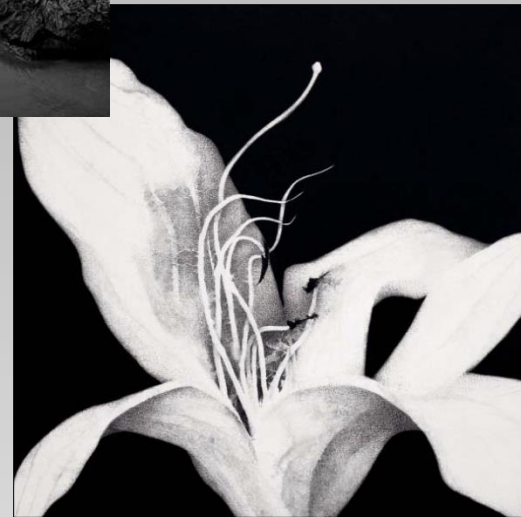
Narrower yet...double rag
white on white mat with spacer
in Nielsen #34-21 metal



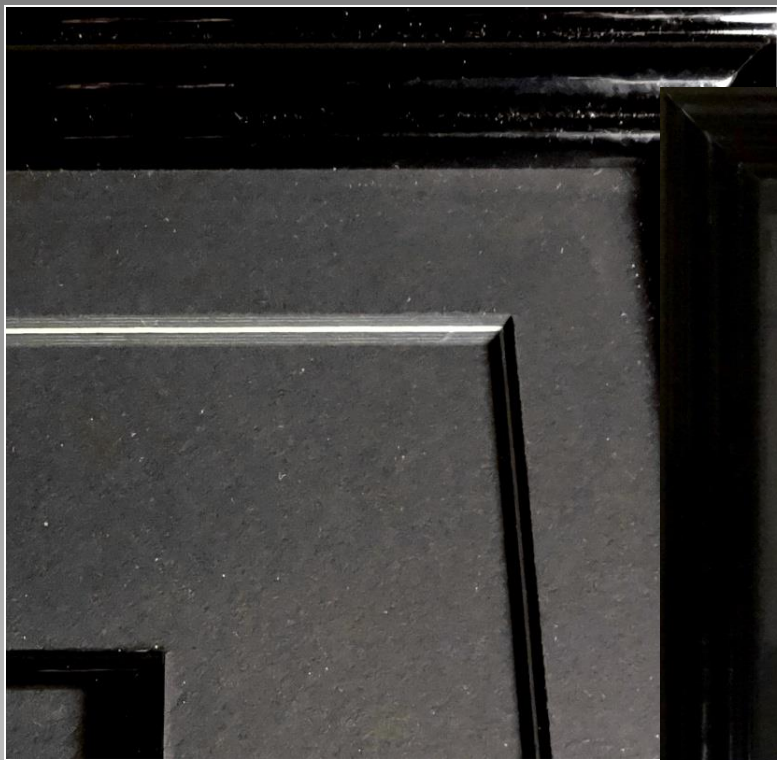
Mats don't always need to
be 4" wide, they need to
meld with the art

Black as a Neutral





Black, gray and white
continues to trend



Eyvind Earle
High Gloss Serigraph

triple mat with fillet and
8-ply pin stripe at top

Traditional B&W photo framing is evolving

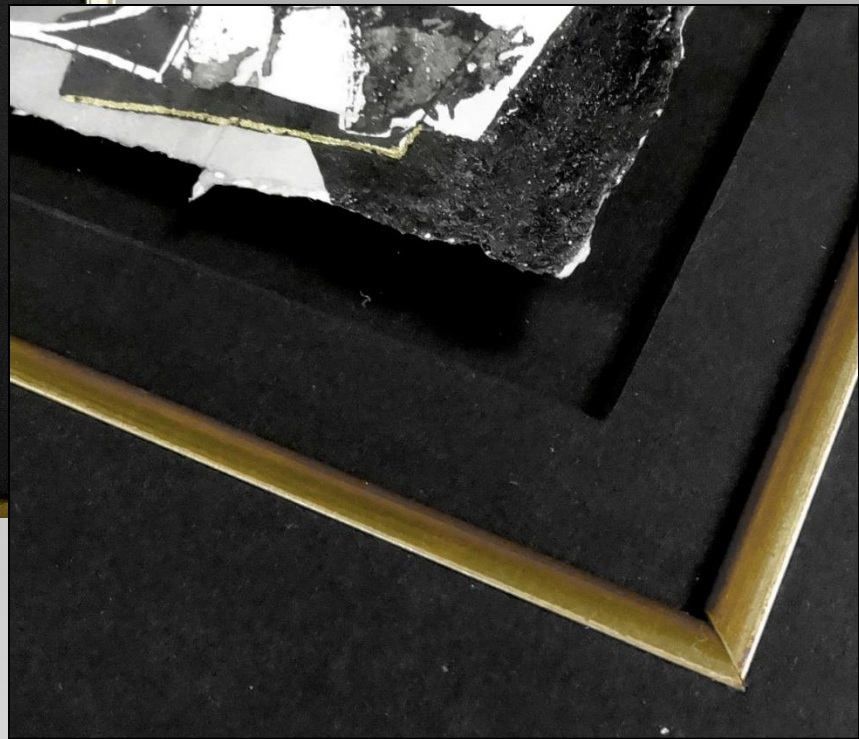


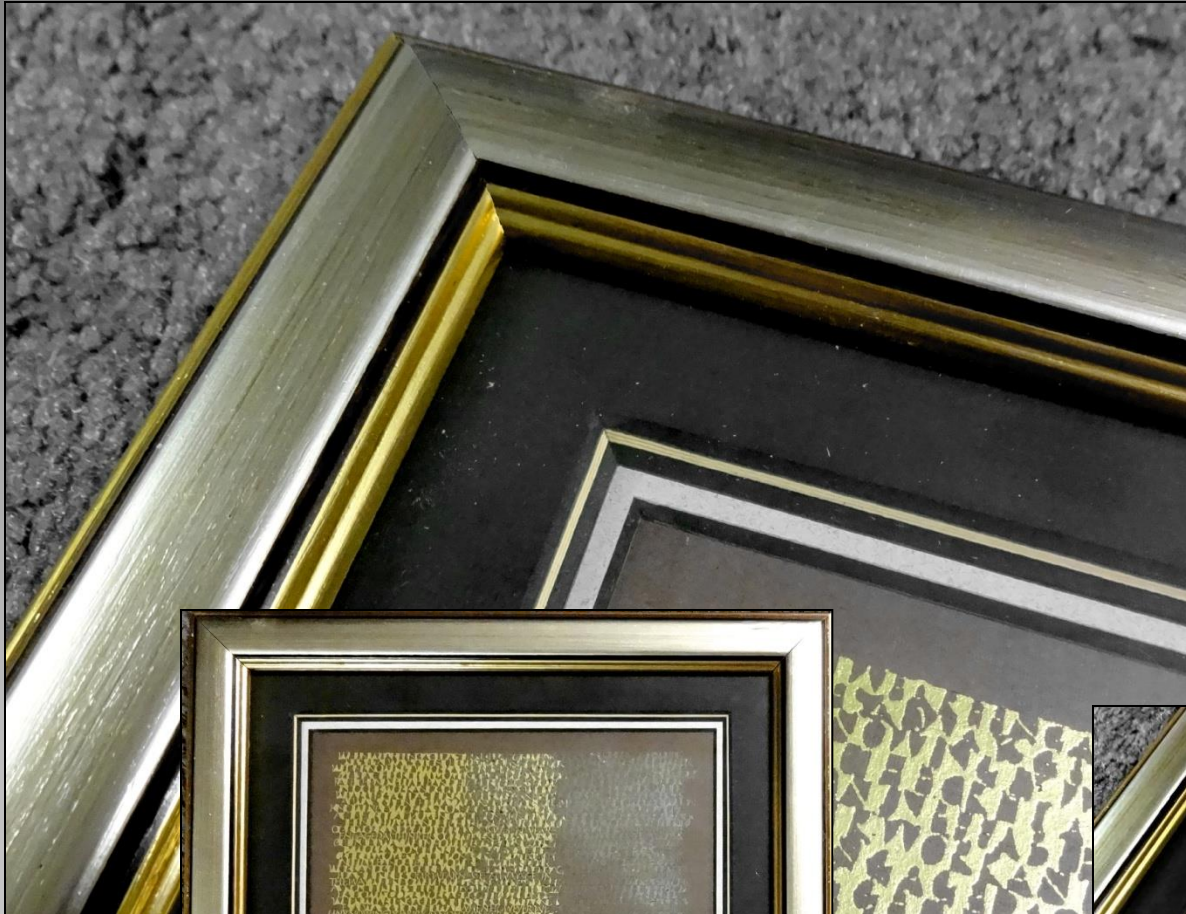
Textural rather than smooth black cap frame, double rag mat with spacer over signed mounted photo



Original Gilded Calligraphy

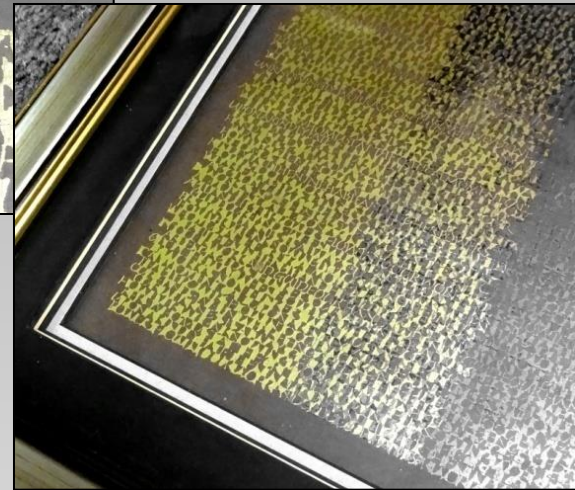
floated art
black on black on black
with gold fillet





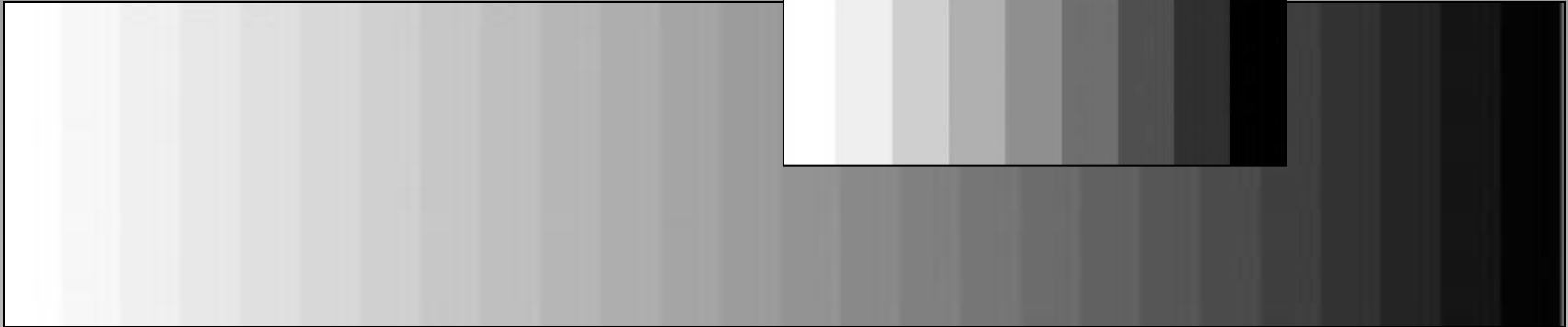
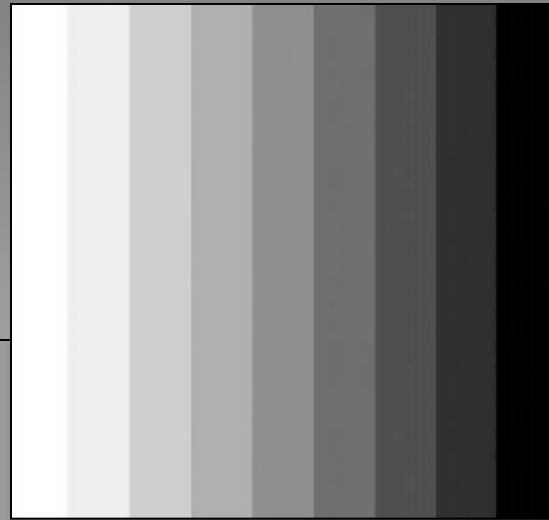
Metallics

Gold & silver
are also considered
neutrals



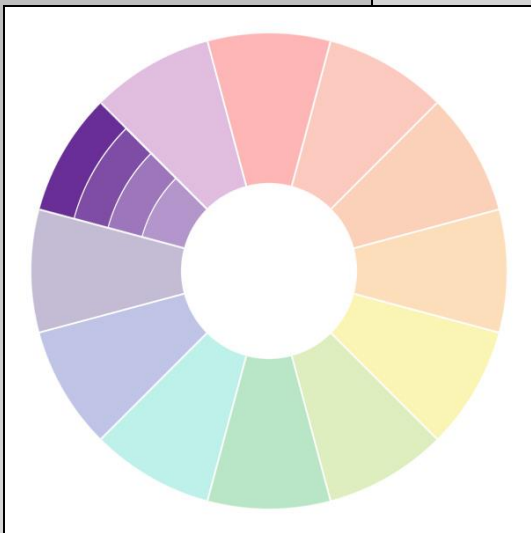
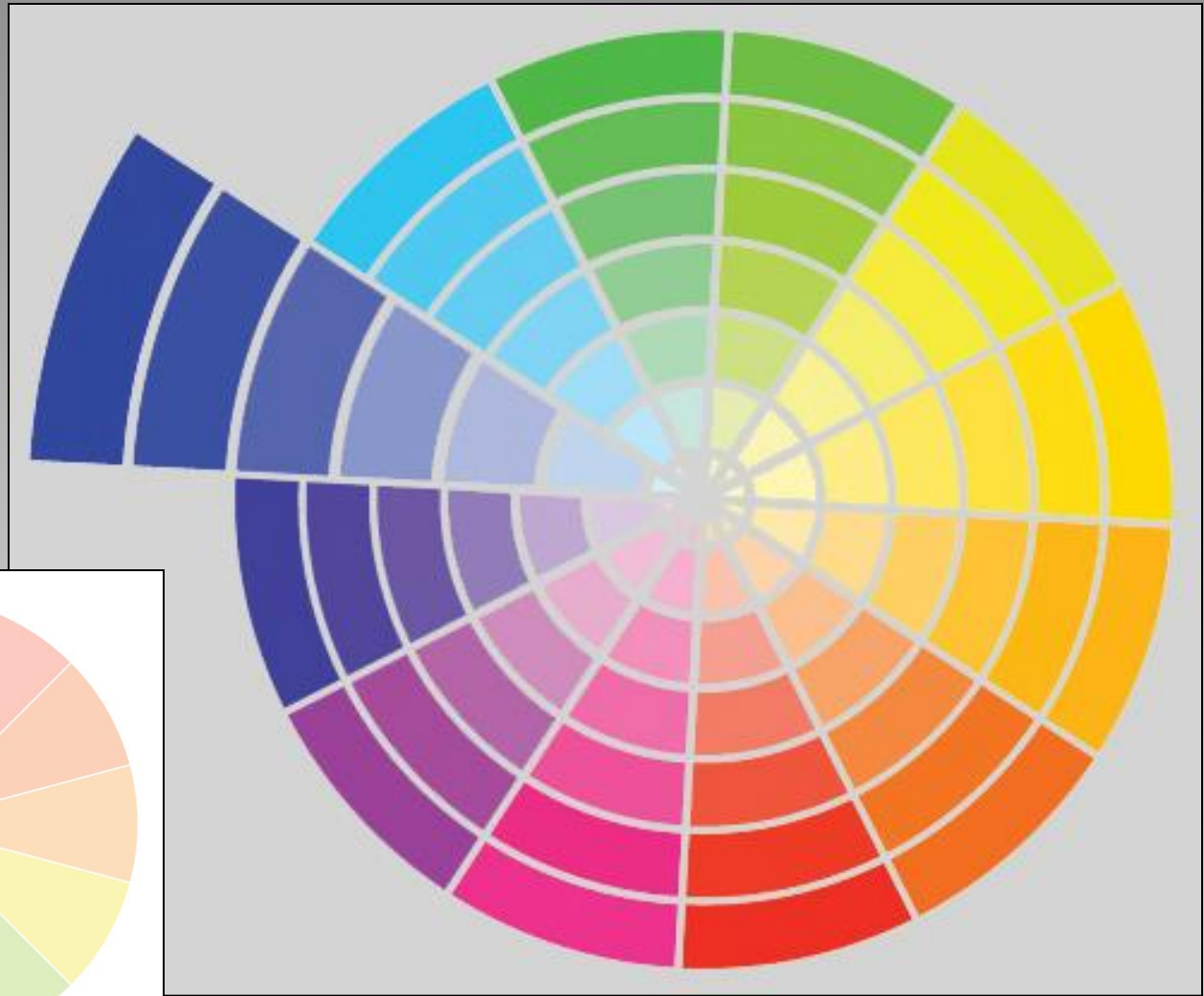
Neutral
Monochromatic Palettes

Gray Scale



A monochromatic palette is fine, but introducing a color or accent will control the eye and complete the picture.

Monochromatic Palette



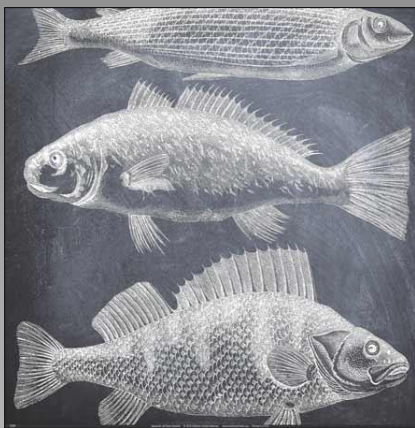
Pastel Tints &
Soothing Neutrals



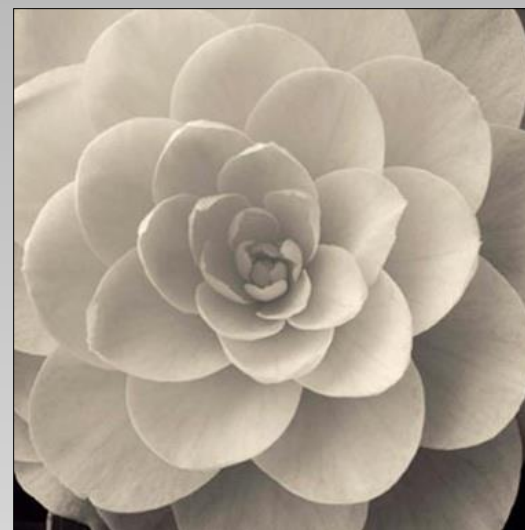
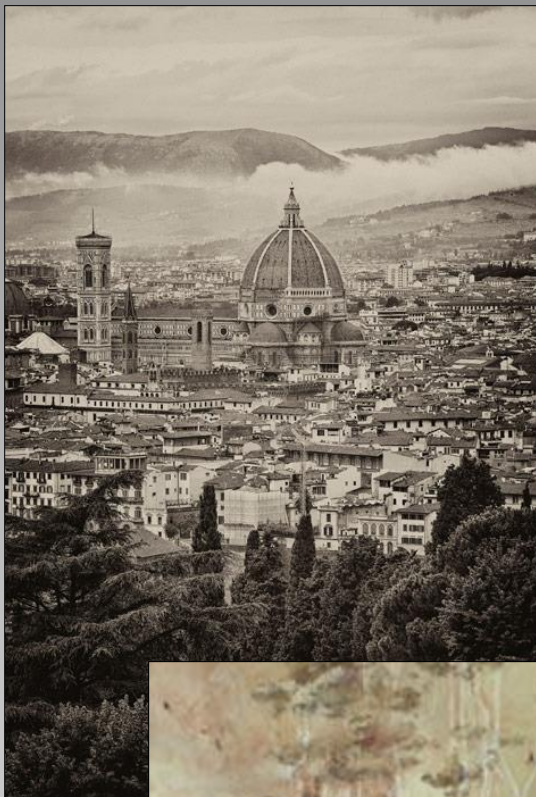
Grayed Tones and Tints



Gray Monochrome



Brown Monochrome



Décor Trends for 2025

Décor Colors



Ashley Montgomery Design



The biggest color trend is rich and warm.
Brown everything, from mushroom brown to taupe, mocha, and espresso.

Biophilic Trend

Budwing.com



Incorporating plants, water features, and natural light into interior spaces. Use of wood, stone, natural fibers, and nature-inspired patterns and textures.

Minimalism Trend



EssentialHome.eu

Scandinavian and Japanese design elements emphasize minimalism, natural materials, and a neutral palette, complemented by cozy elements like soft textiles and warm lighting.

Retro Trend



EssentialHome.eu

Vintage old and new elements combine to create unique and eclectic interiors.

Maximalism Trend

EssentialHome.eu



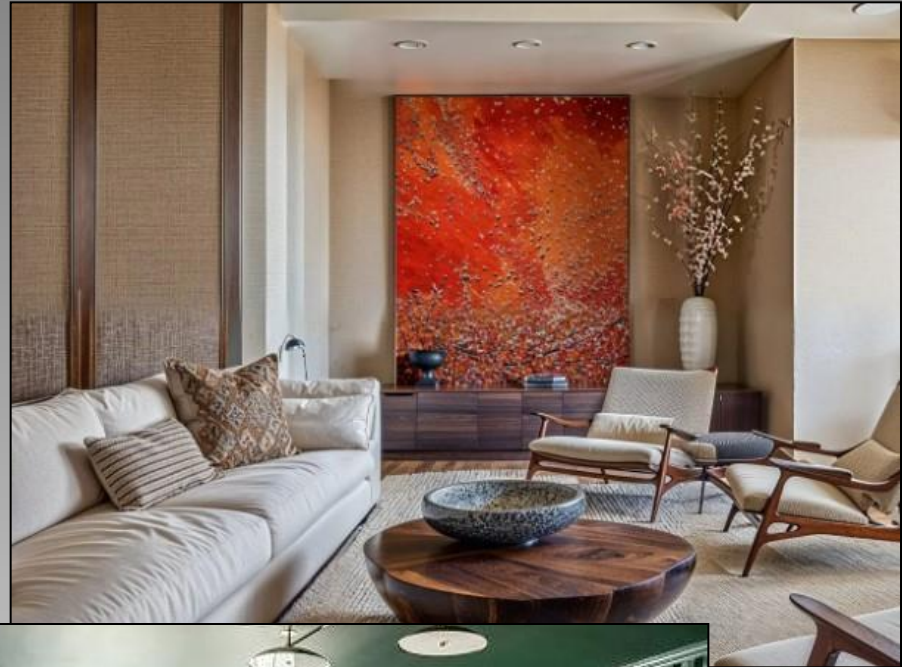
Decorilla



Bold colors, intricate patterns, and assorted textures create elements of depth and interest, sometimes bordering on over saturation.

Textures

Tactile and visual textures include weathered wood, woodgrain, nubby linen, boucle, objects and art.



Wild Apple



Houzz

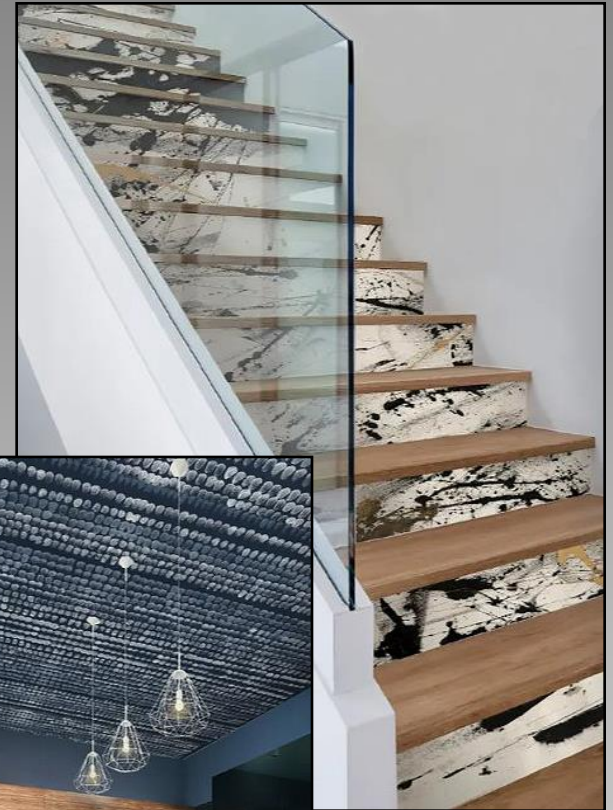
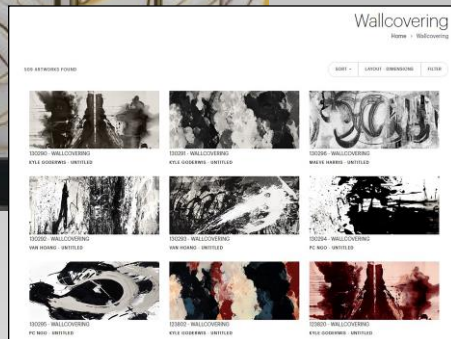
Decorilla

Wallcoverings

Even art publishers are promoting wallpaper.



Grand Image



Leftbank Art
Changes VII

Leftbank Art
Continuous Dots

Colors of the Year 2025

WGSN Future Dusk



World's Global Style Network COTY 2025

WGSN Global Color Palette

International colors from Coloro + WGSN

- Coloro is a color system based on hue, lightness and chroma
- WGSN is the World's Global Style Network



WGSN = Spring/Summer

WGSN Global Color Palette

2025 COLOR TRENDS

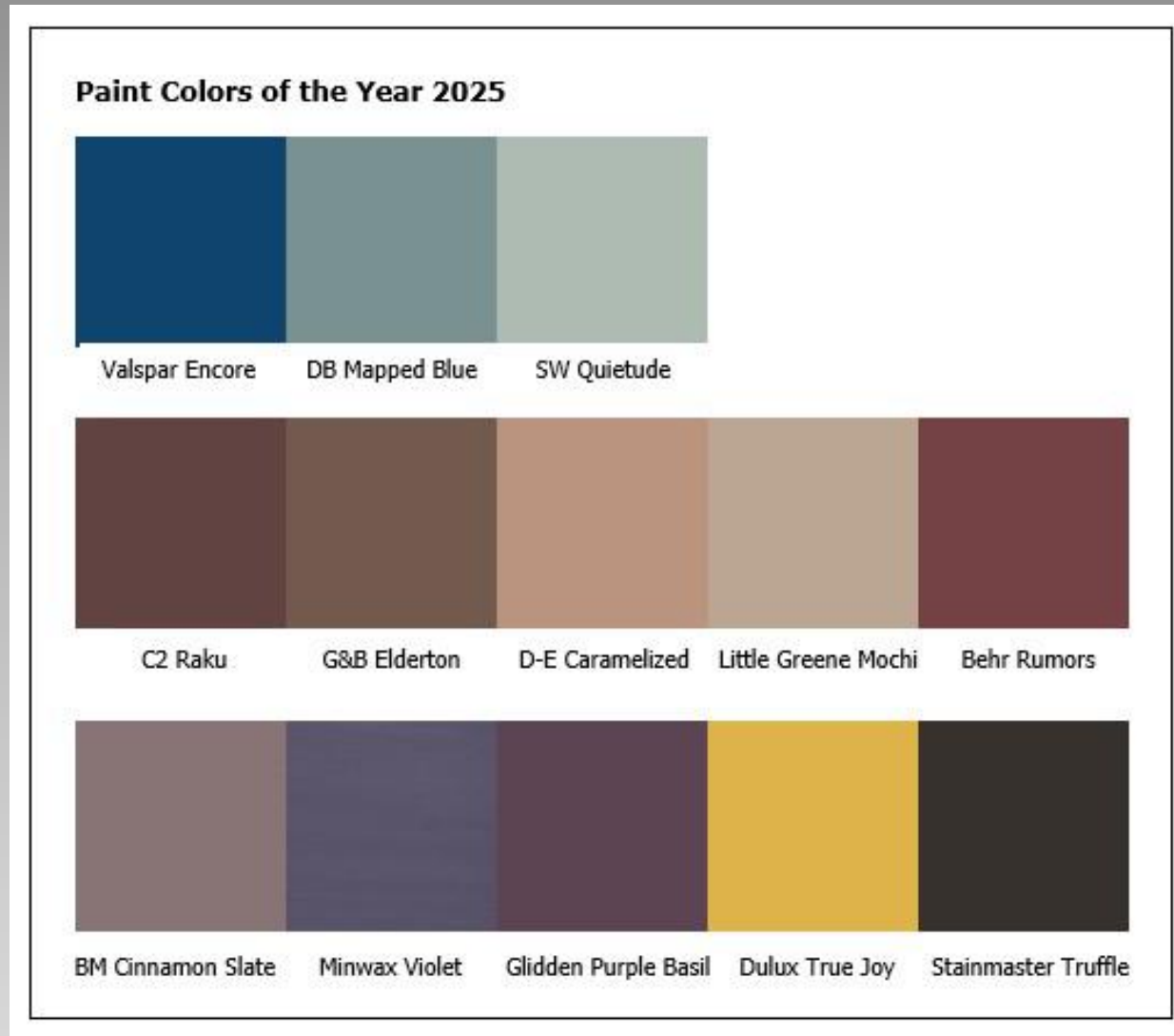


WGSN + coloro
Future Dusk
Color of the Year 2025
Coloro 129 - 35 - 18

According to Industry Experts: Pantone, WGSN, and Coloro.

WGSN = Spring/Summer/Fall/Winter

US/UK Paint Colors of the Year



Valspar Encore



Deeper blue shades are in for 2025.
This is a rich, saturated, sapphire jewel tone.

Dutch Boy Mapped Blue



A versatile medium blue with yellow undertones, allowing it to complement with a wide range of colors.

Sherwin Williams HGTV *Quietude*



It sets the stage for biophilic serenity.

C2 Raku



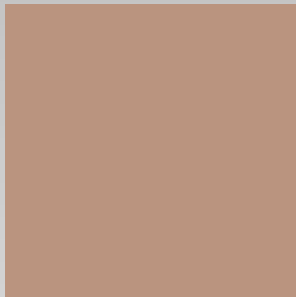
A rich mahogany shade, of burnt, brownish red color directly inspired by ancient Japanese tea ceremonies and the centuries-old pottery often used during them.

Graham & Brown (UK) Elderton

A well-balanced neutral brown reminiscent of the deep brown leaves of a native shrub.

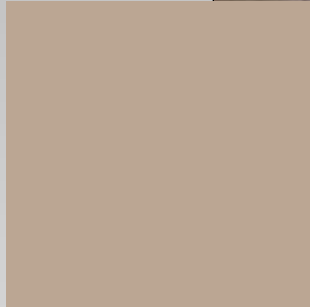


Dunn Edwards *Caramelized*



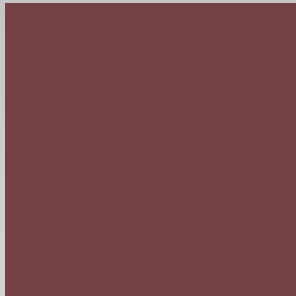
A warm, neutral with earthy tones of a sunbaked landscape appearing lighter and golden in bright spaces or more muted in dim lighting.

Little Greene (UK) Mochi



A rich tinted brown with peachy pink undertones, more saturated than a traditional beige.

Behr Rumors



A fresh take on
a modern warm
red based earthy tone.



Benjamin Moore *Cinnamon Slate*



A mauve plum with brown undertones.

Minwax Violet

A purple hue that lives in the blue color family having red undertones, providing a balanced shade that feels both classic and contemporary.



Glidden Purple Basil



A high-impact hue for maximalists

Dulux (UK) True Joy



A yellow reflecting WGSN's Ray Flower, stimulating a sense of vibrance, positivity, and joy either for the wall or accent piece.

Stainmaster Truffle



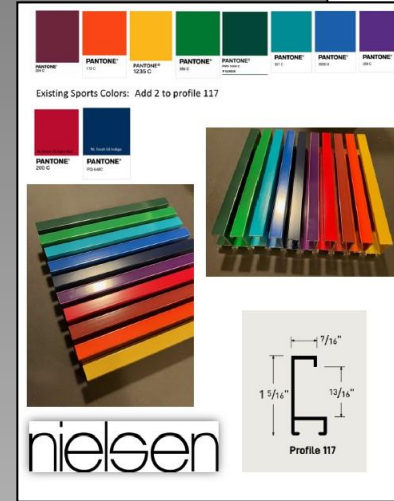
A saturated shade, a chocolate-meets-taupe color, creating luxury in interiors and darker designs.

Pantone 2025

"The color is."

Laurie Pressman, VP Pantone Color Institute

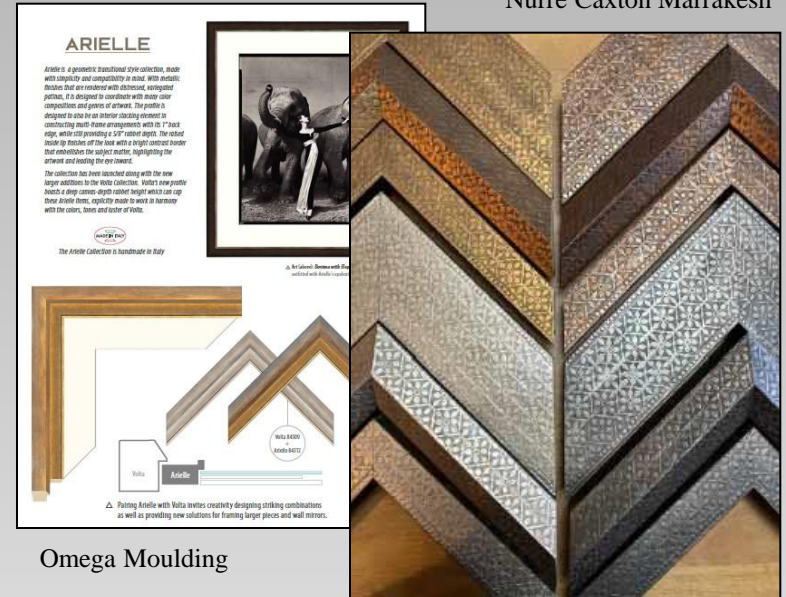
New Releases



Wood Grains, Colors, and Textures



Nurre Caxton Marrakesh



Other Paschke classes WCAF 2025

Mastering Mounting: Creative Mounting & Laminating

Sunday, 8:30-11:00am

Mastering Mounting: Handling Digitals

Sunday, 12:30-2:30pm

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Chris A Paschke, CPF GCF

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