

COLOR COMBINATIONS

BLUEPRINT

Color is fundamental to composition in photography. Colors can enhance our images depending on the way we use them. But how do we know which colors work together? It can be very useful to look at the color wheel in case you are confused by various relationships between colors. The color wheel is a circular scheme that visually represents the relationships between colors.

The most common types of color pairings are the following:

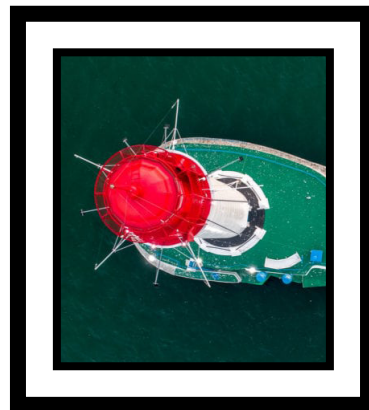
- **primary colors**
- **secondary colors**
- **complementary colors**
- **analogous colors**

Once you have decided what colors to use in your photograph, you can:

- **fill the frame with them**
- **photograph the colors in various settings**
- **photograph the colors at night**
- **choose the backgrounds and clothes for your portrait subjects carefully**



In order to find the most complementary color, you look at the opposite color on the color wheel. Complementary colors provide a striking contrast.



However, some colors that lie next to each other on the color wheel can also complement each other. Analogous colors work to produce a subtle and delicate difference.



1 PRIMARY & SECONDARY COLORS

Primary colors are those you can't create by combining two or more other colors together - these are red, yellow and blue. Secondary colors are the colors that are formed by combining any two of the primary colors - these are orange, purple and green.



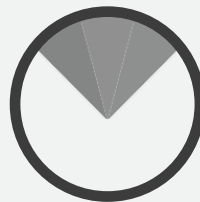
There are also tertiary colors - they are created when you mix a primary color with secondary color and there are six of them - red-purple, red-orange, blue-purple, blue-green, yellow-orange and yellow-green.

TIP:

The color wheel gives you opportunities to create brighter, lighter, softer, and darker colors by mixing white, black, and gray with the original colors!

2 ANALOGOUS COLORS

Analogous colors are groups of three colors that are next to each other on the color wheel. Red, orange, and red-orange are examples. The term analogous refers to having analogy, or corresponding to something in particular.



An analogous color scheme creates a rich, monochromatic look. This is especially true for the right side of our color wheel between red and green. The colors here might be considered pastel shades, subtle but very effective in compositions.

TIP:

Unlike complementary colors, analogous colors give a more soothing look to your photographs. Use them to suggest serenity.

THE ESSENTIALS

3 COMPLEMENTARY COLORS

For example, if you were shooting a subject that was predominantly red and want to add a striking contrast you would use green, the color opposite on the wheel.



Complementary colors are pleasing to the eye and they look rather refreshing. We can use a combination of complementaries to draw attention to the subject or make a bold statement.

TIP:

If you don't want to go overboard with complementary colors, use one color as background and the other as accents.