



COLOR POWER

Your shade shows your personality

Color psychologists believe that every color of the rainbow has a distinct "personality." Listed below are each one's positive traits (we'll skip the negative ones); what it means if it's your favorite color; and how to use it in your home.

- **Red:** leadership, perseverance, strength. You're intense, impulsive, competitive, daring, aggressive, passionate. Because it stimulates appetite, it's a natural for dining rooms and kitchens.
- **Orange:** social activity, enthusiasm, freedom. You are good-natured, extroverted, gregarious, charming. Orange tones (peach or terra cotta, for example) work well in living rooms, family rooms and entryways.
- **Yellow:** communication, diplomacy, clarity, humor, open-mindedness. You're original, imaginative, idealistic, creative, artistic. Good in poorly lit areas, like hallways or basements.
- **Green:** generosity, harmony, emotional balance. You're involved, concerned, fastidious, kind, generous. Deep shades give a prosperous feel to dens and living rooms; light shades make a bathroom seem like a spa.
- **Blue:** honesty, intelligence, tranquility, spirituality. You're conservative, even-tempered, reliable, cool, confident. Shades from sky to navy induce calm, so they're good for bedrooms.
- **Indigo** (often described as navy): perceptive, steadfast, purifying. You're intuitive, receptive, spiritual. Good choice for accenting a meditation space, media room or family room.
- **Violet:** power, creativity, mystery. You are imaginative, unconventional, witty, enigmatic. Use it in kids' bedrooms, playrooms, kitchens and bathrooms.

Sources: "Healing With Color Zone Therapy" by Joseph Corvo and Lilian Verner-Bonds; "Colors for Your Every Mood" by Leatrice Eiseman; Deborah Zimmer, Paint Quality Institute

The hues we choose can make all the difference

By **ABIGAIL LEICHMAN**
STAFF WRITER

Remember the thrill of opening a fresh pack of Crayolas on the first day of school?

Whichever color you reached for first — cerulean blue, sea green, burnt sienna — just made you feel good all over.

"As adults, we need to be like kids with a box of crayons, feeling a sense of joy in using color," says Leatrice Eiseman, executive director of the Carlstadt-based Pantone Color Institute.

Colors have a powerful effect on our emotional and physical well-being, say experts ranging from designers to nutritionists.

Purple boosts creativity. Gold inspires confidence. Gray encourages compromise. The vibrant pigments that color fruits and vegetables keep us

in the pink of health.

Learning how to use color can lead to greater success at school and work, sounder sleep and even a better game.

Angela Wright, a color consultant for OKI Printing Solutions, notes that Tiger Woods' red shirts convey an image of strength and energy, while France's red-trimmed blue World Cup jerseys gave the message that this team "has both brains and brawn."

However, adds Eiseman, conscious or subconscious memories also color our reactions to color.

Happy childhood weekends at the beach may forever make one partial to sandy beiges and blue-greens. A tummy ache brought on by a carnival cotton candy may cause a lifelong aversion to pink.

Some preferences stem from more primitive emotions, she says.

"Why is it that blue is America's favorite color? In the human mind, blue

is irrevocably attached to the fact that the sky is blue. No matter what changes in our lives, the sky is always there ... dependable, constant and trustworthy. That speaks to us whether we think about it consciously or not."

Eco-designer Danny Seo says innate preferences should guide us in decorating personal spaces.

"Go through your wardrobe and pick out what you'd pack for a trip," advises Seo, host of the satellite radio show "Simply Green" and the upcoming LIME-TV series of the same name. "Those colors will look good on your walls because they're a backdrop to your life."

If black is part of that palette, use it in "punches," he says. "Black ties everything together, just like in your wardrobe."

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Colors: Setting the tones of our lives

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Seo suggests natural tones. "Pick up river rocks, fronds, leaves, topsoil, bark and seashells. Bring them with you to the store so you can match those beautiful shades."

Earthy, "grounded" hues make a room feel like a safe refuge, says Eiseman. Touches of gold, periwinkle or rose keep the scheme from looking boring or depressing.

"A room should be approximately 75 percent cool colors and 25 percent warm colors or vice versa," she advises, "so that a dominant message and comfort level is conveyed."

Raising productivity

Natural pigments – the phytonutrients that make grapes and red cabbage purple, pumpkins and carrots orange, tomatoes and watermelon red, broccoli and kiwi green – all have proven health benefits, from preventing cancer to maintaining vision.

The field of color therapy is

One of Eiseman's annual tasks is predicting which of the nearly 2,000 colors in Pantone's widely used standardized guide will strike a chord with Americans.

based on the theory that the colors we look at matter just as much as the colors we eat.

Research has shown that office workers are more productive when blue and yellow – the colors of sky and sunshine – are prominent in the décor. Green is often used in hospitals and schools because it is calming.

Clifton resident Ann Orzel bought a \$25 "Healing Colors" DVD a few months ago at Alternative Two in Lyndhurst, to help her "mellow out."

"I work in multimedia, so it's extremely stressful, and I need to wind down at the end of the day," says Orzel, 34.

The DVD's producer, Dwight Vega, explains that according to ancient Eastern belief, the vibra-

tions of light emitted by specific colors strengthen and harmonize the body's energy fields – also called chakras – to speed healing, lift depression and soothe anxieties that interfere with sleep.

Orzel uses a booklet included with the product to figure out which color is most relevant at the moment.

"If I'm PMSing, I go to brighter reds and oranges," she says. "At night, I go to blues and indigos ... and I don't have crazy dreams or wake up in the middle of the night. Even if it's a placebo, it's a placebo that works for me."

Renaissance hues

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used standardized guide will strike a chord with Americans.

"We always consider what's happening in the world around us, including entertainment," she says.

Even "The Da Vinci Code" has had an influence, making the umber and sienna hues of the Renaissance popular in design and advertising.

"We also use the Rule of 3," Eiseman says. "Years ago, many people associated brown with dirt. But with the rise of coffee and chocolate into the public consciousness, brown has become a color presence in the three areas of food, flowers and fashion. Now people say 'rich' and 'robust' when they're shown brown color chips."

Accordingly, brown shades show up in several 2006 Pantone decorating palettes along with sister hues of yellow and orange.

Also look for pastels with silver accents, vibrant combos of red and blue, and the return of that ubiquitous '60s shade, avocado, renamed "golden olive."

Yet Eiseman encourages people to rely less on style forecasts and more on their early crayon memories. "Rather than use a color we're told to use, we need to feel it in our gut," she says.

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