

What is Colour Psychology?

Colour Psychology is a theory of how each colour affects a person's mood, cognitive functions, creativity, and productivity. When a person is surrounded by calming hues such as blue or green, they feel relaxed. Whereas, if a person is surrounded by loud vibrant tones such as red, maroon, or orange, they feel energetic and passionate. Similarly, neutral colours such as white or gray make them feel serene.

Colour Psychology is based on the scientific effect of different hues of each colour of the spectrum, on the human brain. Although the effects of the colours may seem similar, studies show that each individual responds differently to standard colour schemes.

See also – Bohemian Colours

How Does Colour Psychology Affect Interior Design?

Colour schemes are an important factor in Interior design. The colour of the walls, furniture, natural elements, decorative pieces, lights, and fixtures all play an important role in the psyche of the inhabitant. They spent hours surrounded by the combination of colours you choose. Therefore, it is always good to choose colour schemes based on the client's personality and desires. It makes them feel comfortable and relaxed in their home and increases productivity at the workplace.

Based on the results of multiple studies on the Psychology of Colours, each person reacts differently to each colour. For instance, some people find the colour black to be depressing and demotivating. However, several others find the colour black to represent order and functionality. Some people find the colour red to be threatening while others find it inspiring.

Therefore, it is best to ask your clients what kind of colour schemes they find most appealing. Even if they can't choose the colours, you will get an adequate idea about what they like and what they don't. Let us discuss the effects of the popular colours in detail so you can make an informed decision while implementing your design ideas.

See also – 5 Ways that Interior Design Influences Your Mood

Role of Different Colours

Most ostentatious colours add tones of energy and make the environment lively. They also contribute to flair and gravity depending on the density of the colour that you use. Other colours are more subdued and have a calming effect on the senses. They create a relaxing environment that makes the inhabitant feel safe and comforted.

Here is a list of 10 colours that are commonly used in Interior design and the effects they have on the human mind:

Red

The colour red is the most vibrant colour that represents emotions in their entirety. Whether it is dark shades like maroon or light shades of ham red, they create an atmosphere of love and camaraderie. Implementing the colour red in your design plans adds excitement and vigor to the entire room

You can use red in office buildings or home offices, in the living room, and in the bedroom. In offices, red inspires leadership, willpower, high energy levels, and friendship. When used in the living room, the colour red in all its shades inspires friendship and stimulates conversation. But the best utility for the colour red is in the bedroom, where it kindles feelings of love, desire, and passion.



Image Credit: costar.com

Red also inspires feelings of anger and revenge, which is why it is best to combine it with calming colour tones such as white or beige to balance the human emotion. You can add higher nuances of red to stimulate productivity but make sure to compliment it equally.

For instance, you can use red on one or opposite walls in the bedroom, while using calm and subdued tones in the overall room. This will instigate passion while keeping the blood pressure levels in check with the help of complementary colours such as yellow, or natural tones of light green, or plain white touches.

Emotions associated with the colour Red are:

Joy, Love, Passion, Desire, Sexuality, Sensitivity.

Energy, Power, Vigor, Strength.

Determination, Leadership, Courage, Will Power.

Anger, Rage, Malice, Wrath.

Danger, War.

Hunger.

Use our inspiration to design – Red Velvet Monochromatic Living

Brown

A lighter and softer deviation from red is the colour brown. With its natural hue and soft, reassuring essence, brown can work wonders in vast spaces to synchronize different elements of modernism and classic.

The colour brown is best used sparingly. As interior designers, you must ensure that the wall colours, room colours, and the colour of the overall interiors make the inhabitants feel warm and comfortable. The colour palette you choose must also serve to inspire them. Brown tends to relax the senses, maybe a little too much, leading to inactivity and lack of goals. On the other in combination with vibrant shade and other natural hues, brown can symbolize resilience and security.



Image Credit: decoor.net

In interior design, brown is used abundantly when it is meant to create a rustic look and somber atmosphere. Although elegant, the colour has a tendency to evoke depression, so ensure that you combine it with happy colours such as yellow, white, red, green, and orange.

Emotions associated with the colour Brown are:

Safety, Security, Dependability, Warmth, Comfort.

Resilience, Spirit, Determination, Rigidity.

Sadness, Loneliness, Depression, Isolation, Indifference.

Vastness, Openness, Starkness, Solidarity.

Strength, Power, Sophistication.

Use this inspiration to design – Dark Brown Kitchen with Cosy Vibes

Orange

Another prominently vibrant colour is orange. It symbolizes sunshine and nature. Orange and all its shades pretty much have a positive effect on the psyche. Distant tones of Orange, such as gold represent wealth and prosperity. It can either reflect on the client's personality or their desire for success and fame.

Orange, much like red, also inspires desire, love, sexuality, and appetite. This colour predominantly has a calming effect on the senses as it reminds people of laying on the beach, drinking tropical beverages.



Image Credit: wtсенates.info

Orange is typically best used in bedrooms with complimentary tints that tone down the extreme effects of the colour. You can also use it in exercise areas to stimulate people.

Orange can increase appetite, which is why it is well suited for indoor and outdoor kitchen areas.

For instance, you can use natural and neutral shade on the walls for a calming effect. Then introduce hanging lamps in orange patterns or use orange chairs and cushions to tie the room together.

Emotions associated with the colour Orange are:

Happiness, Calm, Joy, Relaxation, Warmth.

Love, Attraction, Passion, Sexuality, Pleasure, Desire, Attachment.

Encouragement, Determination, Enthusiasm, Stimulation.

Success, Wealth, Prestige, Prominence, Prosperity, Wisdom.

Deceit, Betrayal, Aggression, Dominance, Distrust.

Healing, Energy, Vibrations.

Creativity, Fascination, Adventure.

Use this inspiration to design – Teal and Orange Vibrant kitchen

Yellow

The colour yellow is synonymous with sunshine, thereby spreading the effect of light and happiness. Yellow is also associated with intellect and prosperity, due to its close associations with the colour gold.

In interior design, the colour yellow is recommended for the kitchen, dining areas, hallways, and bathrooms. The colour automatically uplifts people's spirits making the room feel bright and sunny.



Image Credit: homedit.com

Although most shades of yellow have a positive effect on the psyche, dull yellow colours instigate a feeling of doom, decay, and sickness. It is best to use yellow in its bright shades around the house. Make sure to use it sparingly though, as yellow tends to stimulate uncontrollable emotions. Due to the extreme optimistic effect, a completely yellow room can drive up blood pressure. The brain associates high blood pressure with feelings of anger thus causing people to lose their temper without any provocation.

Yellow also adds a level of sophistication to interior design, especially when it is paired with grey or white. Yellow stucco walls with grey linings and patterns gained quite the popularity in the 90s and it is making a comeback with better quality materials.

Emotions associated with the colour Yellow are:

Joy, Happiness, Care, Cordiality.

Intelligence, Excellence, Obedience, Productivity.

Energy, Freshness, Nature.

Caution, Sickness, Doom, Decay, Jealousy.

Optimism, Encouragement.

Use this inspiration to design – Mid Century Bedroom with Industrial Glam

Green

When people see the colour green, they think of nature. Although, in reality, nature can be cruel, the human psyche associates nature with freshness, peace, and trust. Thus, green is a powerful colour in interior design. Additionally, pale green is promptly associated with the colour of pea soup, which is comfort food. It helps relax the senses and lower the levels of hypertension and blood pressure.

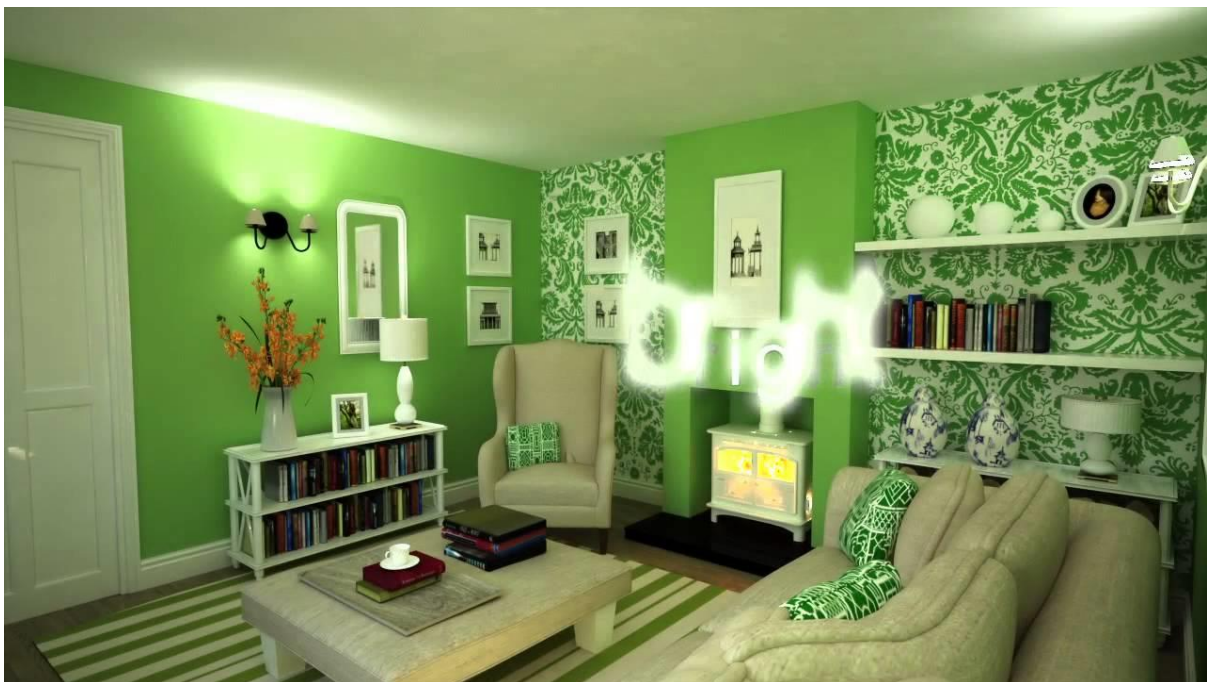


Image Credit: ytimg.com

Green is an extremely versatile colour. Different shades of green promote different emotions. While light and aqua green have a calming effect, dark green is mostly associated with greed and jealousy. Olive green on the other hand is recognized worldwide for peace and harmony.

Green can be used in different shades throughout the house. You can use lighter shades on the walls and create contrast with dark shades of green with plants. The effect of the dark shade is neutralized as plants automatically remind people of nature. The colour green mostly has a calming effect with a sense of security, which makes it an ideal colour for interior design.

Emotions associated with the colour Green are:

Nature, Harmony, Growth, Fertility.

Peace, Security, Safety, Protection.

Freshness, Joy, Healing.

Greed, Jealousy, Ambition.

Cowardice, Sickness, Conflict.

Calmness, Sincerity, Comfort.

See also – Monochromatic Green Living Room Interior

Blue

Blue is among the most calming colours in the palette for interior design. In regards to the psychological effects of colour, blue relaxes the mind and slows down heart rate, metabolism, blood pressure, and hypertension.

Aquatic shades of blue, in particular, such as sky blue and light blue have a healing effect on the mind. It reminds the inhabitants of the sea or swimming pools. Blue is the only colour that has an array of positive effects, and little to no negative effects on the psyche.



Image Credit: ltkcdn.net

You can use different shades of blue in all areas of the house. You can use darker shades such as royal blue as primary colours and pair it with yellow and use it for the kitchen, playroom, etc. You can also use a combination of light and dark blue colours in the bedroom and dining room.

Although using blue in dark rooms with small spaces can create an eerie feeling like that of being trapped in ice, you can add a touch of warm colours to neutralize the effect.

Most dark shades of blue are associated with elegance, luxury, and royalty, while Sapphire colours add prominence to the design plan. Blue lights are also easy on the eyes, thereby decreasing any discomfort. All in all, blue is an excellent colour scheme that works well with all modern and contemporary interior design trends.

Emotions associated with the colour Blue are:

Calm, Tranquility, Control, Bliss, Softness.

Knowledge, Wisdom, Intelligence, Power, Seriousness.

Faith, Trust, Loyalty, Truthfulness, Courage, Integrity.

Healing, Health.

Elegance, Luxury, Prosperity.

Use this inspiration to design – Bold Monochromatic Blue Bedroom with Gold Accent

Purple

The colour purple is usually associated with elegance and royalty. Purple colour schemes work well in areas that inspire creativity and design. Bright hues of purple such as violet or plum add flair to your design scheme. Whereas, lighter shades of purple such as lavender and mauve create a calm but regal effect in your design.



Image Credit: designcafe.com

Since purple inspires creativity, you can add it to dressing rooms, walk-in closets, in-house art studios, or even the kitchen. This colour is particularly popular with adolescent teens as it inspires them towards creative and performing arts and helps them find their path.

The regality of purple also works well in the foyer or living room where your guests spend time. It gives an essence of calm, elegance, and luxury.

Emotions associated with the colour Purple are:

Elegance, Luxury, Richness, Sophistication.

Drama, Depth, Excitement.

Creativity, Mystery.

Calmness, Tranquility, Relaxation.

Use this inspiration to design – Lively Purple Living Room

Pink

The colour Pink influences emotions that are closer to the heart. When used appropriately, pink and all its shades create an atmosphere of love and compassion.

Although pink is largely associated with femininity, you can still use this colour for a masculine effect. Simple patterns and sophisticated designs can take pink to a whole new level in modern interior design trends. It instigates feelings of comfort and love. Vibrant shades of pink such as Magenta, Fuchsia, etc. help make a statement when paired with secondary colours such as light blue. You can use them to bring out the playfulness of wall patterns.



Image Credit: pinimg.com

Complement the colour pink with natural hues or vibrant tones of red and white for form and function. It helps in preventing any sentiments of loss and excessive sweetness. Pink is best used in the room colour for teenage girls or in the living room and bathroom to create an atmosphere of joy and bliss.

Emotions associated with the colour Pink are:

Sweetness, Warmth, Comfort.

Love, Compassion, Nurturing.

Compliance, Loss (especially of romantic attachments).

Romance.

Cleanliness, Functionality, Sophistication.

Glamour, Feminism.

Use this inspiration to design – Coral Pink Kitchen Design with Hints of Ethnicity

Black

The colour black has always fared well with versatility and elegance. Black signifies simplicity and functionality. This colour works best in modern interior design and architecture.

On a psychological front, an all-black room can be overwhelming and gloomy. However, if you pair the colour with red, white, blue, or almost anything else, it provides excellent contrast.



Image Credit: pinimg.com

Contrary to popular belief, the colour black is an excellent addition to interior design, especially in the kitchen, living room, dining area, and bathroom. With

this colour scheme, form follows function and accommodates simplistic design trends.

Emotions associated with the colour Black are:

Functionality, Simplicity.

Desire, Protectiveness.

Grimness, Depression, Untidiness, Terror.

Elegance, Modernism, Sophistication.

Efficiency, Control, Beauty.

Use this inspiration to design – Sleek Black Industrial Kitchen Design

Gray

The colour Gray is another neutral colour that is highly associated with elegance and style. Although there is some controversy as to the effects of gray on the human mind, if used correctly, it can have quite a positive effect.

Some people do find the colour depressing. However, gray can be used as a neutralizer for vibrant colour schemes. It is best to avoid using light gray colours on the walls, but you can use dark gray on one wall and surround it with happy colours such as white, yellow, or pink. You can also implement gray colours in furniture in a bright room. It adds elegance and sophistication to the design plan.



Image Credit: wallpaperertip.com

In reality, gray invokes different feelings in different people. The various shades of gray can have a calming effect for some people, while it drives others into depression. It is safer to instill gray in textiles rather than wall colours. If you do use it as a dominant room colour, make sure to introduce plenty of natural light to make the room feel more welcoming and warm.

Emotions associated with the colour Gray are:

Form, Functionality, Productivity, Simplicity.

Gloominess, Depression, Steely.

Strength, Power, Rigidity, Determination, Will Power.

Style, Elegance, Sophistication.

Use this inspiration to design – Transitional Kitchen with a Gorgeous View

White

The colour white is a universal neutralizer. Although all colours of the spectrum essentially emerge into white, in interior design, White serves as a powerful colour scheme.

There are different shades of white such as Ivory; which is widely used as a standard colour for walls, Eggshell, and many more. Beige takes on a combination colour scheme but still serves well on a white palette.



Image Credit: home-designing.com

The colour white is associated with peace and tranquility. It is why spa facilities, Japanese architecture, and Scandinavian cultures implement white in abundance. It represents cleanliness and makes it easy to spot any marks or dirt on the surface.

The colour White also serves as a blank canvas to implement all your design ideas. On a psychological level, the white colour scheme is great for people suffering from Claustrophobia, which is a fear of closed spaces. The implementation of white makes the room seem larger and cleaner. The colour scheme also works well for people with anxiety and hypertension. The calming effect of the neutral colour helps in controlling the heart rate and blood pressure.

White symbolizes simplistic living. Therefore, the inhabitants are rarely disturbed by extremities and excitement. You can use white in any part of the house, including the bedroom, bathroom, kitchen, living room, dining area, or you can simply use white throughout the property. It seemingly increases the visual space and reduces tension.

You can pair white with any other colour for a vibrant effect. For a luxurious design, you can pair white with gold, grey, or yellow. For more vigor, you can pair it with red, orange, or green. You can also pair white with blue for calmness and relaxation.

Emotions associated with the colour White are:

Tranquility, Peace, Harmony

Cleanliness, Hygiene

Openness, Trust, Fraternity

Creativity, Challenge, Productivity, Efficiency

Control, Effectiveness, Functionality

Elegance, Luxury, Prosperity

Use this inspiration to design – Open Compact All-White Kitchen

Colour Psychology is a massive field of study that is closely associated with Interior Design. Whether it is a home or professional property, the correct colour scheme can make a huge difference in the lives of the inhabitants. Since interior design is effectively a reflection upon your client's personality, it is best to use colour schemes that make them feel comfortable. As interior designers, the paint colours you choose, whether they are pastel or vibrant, create an impact.

For workaholics, shades of red, white, and black work best as they inspire the individual to perform well. It also creates a sense of calmness and functionality on their property where they can relax at the end of the day.

Similarly, for clients who suffer from hypertension, anxiety, loss, or depression, cool colours such as blue or green are ideal. You can also use white to uplift their spirits. Avoid colours like black, gray, or red as these colours may instigate strong negative emotions.

For joyful people, yellow, pink, red, orange, and white work best. Their positive attitude demands equally positive shades in their living spaces.

For people who prefer luxury and style, colour schemes of sapphire blue, aqua green, grey, gold, and red represent their inner selves. These colours add accents to their interior design and complement their acquisitions of art and history.

As an interior designer, you must always familiarize yourself with the psychology of colours. Sometimes the psychological effects of colour may differ from places around the world. You can consult a colour expert before choosing the colour palette for your clients, for an accurate definition of their personalities and the colours that work best for them.