



EXPERIMENTING WITH COLOUR - The Difference is YOU!

In the second of two articles, Anita Duke, looks at experimenting with colour further...

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Knowing your colour characteristics opens up a world of options . Rather than being a slave to fashion a personal colour analysis enables you to choose styles in a colour that suits you. Whether you choose simple, subtle colour accenting or full-on bold colour statements, you can express your individuality and personality through colour . It's your personal best, but with an added air of confidence!

Colour surrounds and fulfils our lives in abundance. It's almost impossible to capture the essence of colour in words. Look in a dictionary. There's a host of different definitions. Colour plays a part on many levels. We all, consciously or unconsciously,

connect particular states with colour. Power, romance, logic, energy, calm all have colour association in our minds. The psychology of colour is, in fact, a profession in its own right. Retailers and marketing professionals have played on these associations for years, whether through product packaging, advertising or colours and lighting in shops. When electrical giant, Comet, revamped their stores they employed a colour expert. Colour was introduced into outlets to guide customers through the various departments.

Colour makes immediate impact, so understanding what looks good together, and what flatters you, is an incredible bonus to your style. Once you know the colours in your palette experiment a little. Cool pink may be your "wow" colour, but it's not always

appropriate to cover yourself head-to-foot in it! Nonetheless there's no excuse not to bring a little colour into every outfit. So give yourself a boost. Add a splash of "wow" today.

Confidence with Colour

Statistically-speaking good looking, well-dressed people are considered to be more intelligent and self-assured and, on average, earn higher incomes. Whether you approve or not it's a fact, so how about using it to your advantage? Invest time in finding out what suits you, rather than your friend or the model in the magazine. Consider how to use colour to enhance YOUR style and personality. Discovering your colour characteristics is the first step. The next is about how to wear your best shades to suit your

personality, body shape and characteristics.

Colour enhances on a personal level. With jewel-like eyes, dark hair and contrasting pale skin, the actress Courteney Cox has a dominantly clear chroma. She can take high colour contrast in her outfits because she naturally has lots of contrast in her appearance. Now, consider her 'Friends' co-actress, Jennifer Aniston, who has a softer, blended appearance. Jennifer has a dominantly soft chroma so muted, tone-on-tone schemes balance best with her natural characteristics.

Consider how dark, monochromatic schemes give the illusion of slimming a silhouette – but dark doesn't have to mean black! Always choose your best dark, neutral shades and don't forget to accent with accessories in your brighter colours. Monochromatic never needs to be dull!

Layering and colour blocking has the effect of breaking up a long body-line, as will light colours - useful for the taller figure. In contrast, a petite figure should avoid big, bold colour patterning but monochromatic colour schemes will give the illusion of added height.

For those who previously shied away from colour, a brilliant way of introducing it is through accenting with accessories – necklaces, wraps, bags or shoes. Draping or tying a coloured scarf is a classic way to bring your best colours to your face.

The Psychology of Colour

Most of us unconsciously use colour associations to match outfits to our mood, occasion or the non-verbal message we wish to convey. What colours make you feel happy, relaxed or confident? Do you wear them? However, be mindful that the positives of colour associations only work if you wear your correct shade.

White - the colour of simplicity, youth and peace. A must for every wardrobe in your best shade (e.g. pure white, soft white, cream).

Black - the classic colour of intelligence and professionalism. Accent with your flattering colours if black is not your palette.

Grey – less formal, symbolising reliability and professionalism. A true neutral it can drain other colours, but is quietly supportive in the right shade.

Red - the colour of energy and passion. Good to accent with, and for lifting end of week energy levels. Not, perhaps, for relaxing! Ladies, tone your lipstick in!

Orange – also the colour of energy and enthusiasm. Less aggressive than red having been calmed with yellow. Considered a sexy colour, but only in the right shade!

Yellow – the colour of happiness, summer, femininity and hope. Often avoided, yellow has many hues to suit. It's the case of finding yours.

Green – the colour of calm, balance and nature. Green is seen well over distances and contrasts red and yellow. A great addition to your wardrobe. Need convincing? Experiment with scarves/shoes/bags in whatever shade suits you.

Blue - shows strength of character, knowledge, confidence and security. It's no coincidence that police uniforms are dark blue. The lighter shades, symbolising vitality, are good occasionwear.

Purple – the colour of spirituality, wealth, creativity and sensitivity. If you fear purple try as a highlight to see the amazing result.

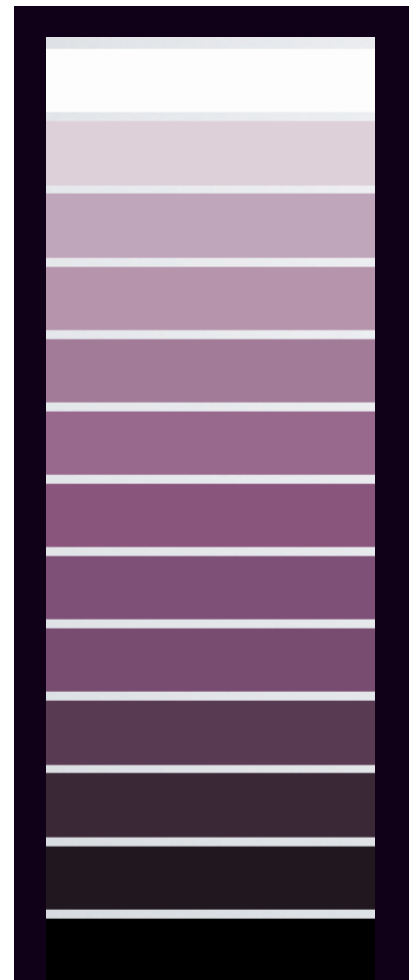
Pink – the colour of love and femininity. Great if you need a lift. If pink isn't your style, use your shade as an accent colour.

Brown – associated with friendliness and dependability. Less threatening than black and symbolising approachability and warmth. Accent, of course, with another colour.

The key to using colour in personal styling is about what creates harmony and balance. The most fundamental part of balance, in any colour system,

is YOU. Only 7% of a first impression is based on what you say. The rest is based on appearance and body language. Male or female, when you know how good you look you are ready to tackle life with greater confidence and energy. Isn't it time to colour up and let the world see the *real* you?

Experiment with colour - the difference is YOU!



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For more information visit www.confidencewithstyle.co.uk