

A simple guide to Colour



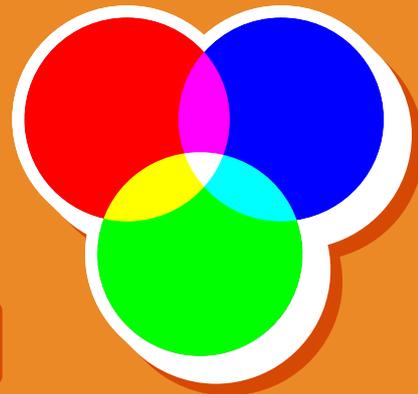
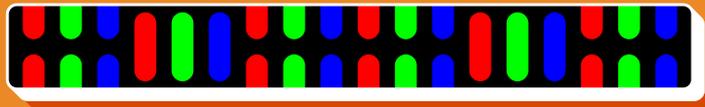
What's the difference between RGB and CMYK?

If you're designing anything in colour, you should be familiar with the two most common colour models – RGB and CMYK. You don't need to know all the technical stuff to be a good visual communicator, but you should at least be aware that CMYK and RGB are used for different media.

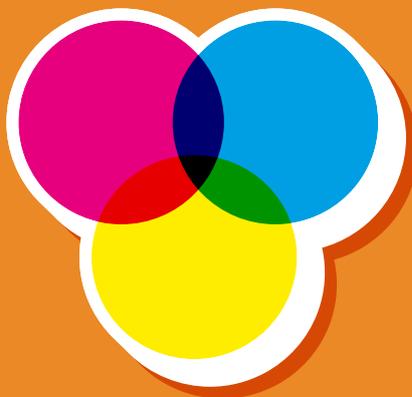
In simple terms, RGB is for digital media like websites and television, while CMYK is for print media like brochures and posters.

RGB Here's the science bit (if you're interested):

RGB stands for Red, Green and Blue (the primary colours) and is sometimes known as the Additive Model because colours are added together to make up what we see on the screen. Basically, images on a computer monitor or television set are comprised of tiny pixels, that if viewed under a magnifying glass, are one of the three primary colours. Light is projected through them, blending the colours on the eye's retina to create the desired colours.



CMYK



CMYK stands for Cyan, Magenta, Yellow and Black. It is also known as the Subtractive Model because the colours from the spectrum are subtracted from natural white light into pigments or dyes. These are then printed onto paper in tiny little cyan, magenta, yellow and black dots. If you were to take a magnifying glass to a magazine cover, for example, you would see that the main image is just a bunch of dots spread out, some closer than others, to appear like the colours we want.



It helps to know the difference

If you create a brochure, for example, using RGB colour, when you send it to the printer (who uses large bins of ink that are made in cyan, magenta, yellow and black), your colours won't be right when printed. If you are working in Photoshop, make sure you set the appropriate colour mode (it is one of the options when you first open a new document) for the finished medium. If it's a website, select RGB, if it's going to be printed, select CMYK.

