PRIMARY AND SECONDARY COLORS

Brenda Hoddinott

R-01 INTERMEDIATE: COLOR BASICS



In this lesson, you discover how to make secondary colors from primary colors, and explore a basic color wheel, complementary colors, and warm and cool colors.

Colored pencils are a wonderful medium for drawing everything and anything. They beautifully portray soft delicate drawings such as portraits and flowers, and also work very well for subjects needing a bolder, more colorful approach. "Painting" with colored pencils is relatively inexpensive, not messy, and easily travels with you wherever you go.

This lesson is divided into the following four parts:

- **PRIMARY TO SECONDARY:** Use colored pencils to make secondary colors from primary colors.
- **COMPLEMENTARY COLORS:** Explore complementary colors and make a basic color wheel.
- **WARM AND COOL COLORS:** Discover some of the associations and emotions attached to primary and secondary colors.
- **EXPLORING COLORS IN A DRAWING:** Examine a drawing that is rendered in colored pencil with mostly primary and secondary colors.

Suggested drawing supplies include good quality white drawing paper, and three colored pencils, red (magenta), blue (cyan) and yellow.

8 PAGES – 15 ILLUSTRATIONS

This article is recommended for artists of all ages and abilities, as well as home schooling, academic and recreational fine art educators.

Published by Hoddinott Fine Art Publishers, Halifax, NS, Canada – 2004 (Revised 2006)

PRIMARY TO SECONDARY

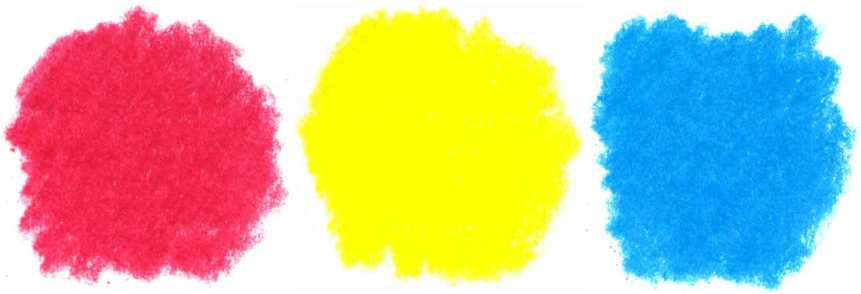
Primary colors are the basic hues, colors or pigments of red, yellow, and blue. *Hue* refers to any definite color within the vast range of possibilities. *Pigment* is the basic ingredient, usually a powder or dry substance, used in the manufacture of various colors in colored art media.

All colors originate from primary colors, and no combinations of other colors can make primary colors. Primary colors are high intensity and go together well if you want a drawing to be incredibly bright. By mixing the primary colors together in different combinations, you can create millions of different colors.

1) Use red (magenta), yellow, and blue (cyan) colored pencils, to make three color swatches.

ILLUSTRATION 01-01

Your colored pencils may be different than mine, so simply choose those that are closest in color.



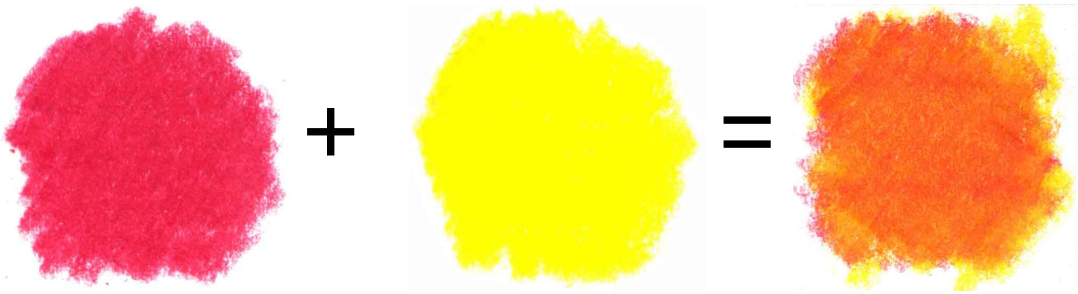
InfoTidbit Colored pencils come in a wide variety of qualities from student to professional. The permanency rating of the pigment used in the mixture, helps determine the ultimate quality of the pencils. During the manufacturing process, various synthetic and/or organic pigments are added to binding agents (such as clay or chalk) and wax.

In the following exercise, you use combinations of the three primary colors to make secondary colors. *Secondary colors* are the hues, pigments or colors of orange, green, and purple created by mixing two of the primary colors together. Red and yellow make orange, yellow and blue make green, and red and blue make purple.

2) Layer your red and yellow colors on top of one another to make orange.

Don't press too hard with your pencils or you'll destroy the tooth of your paper; then the second color will not adhere to the paper. In this case, I added the red on top of the yellow.

ILLUSTRATION 01-02

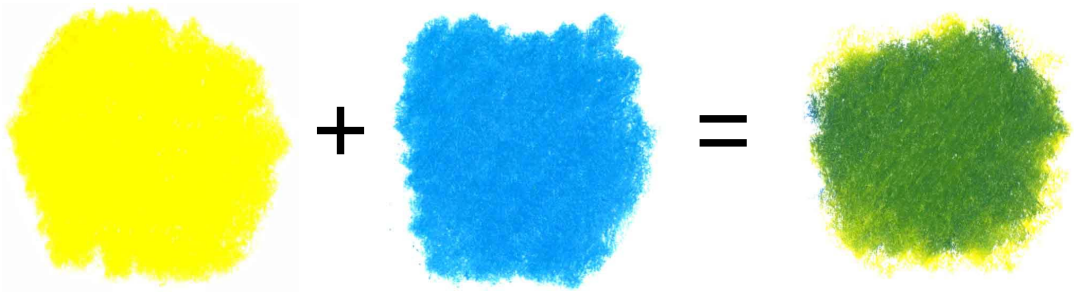


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3) Layer yellow and blue over one another to make green.

I lay down a base of yellow and then add blue on top.

ILLUSTRATION 01-03



4) Layer blue and red over one another to make purple.

The blue is added on top of the red.

ILLUSTRATION 01-04



COMPLEMENTARY COLORS

Complementary colors are very different from one another, and when placed beside each other, their strong contrasting colors seem to make one another brighter and more vibrant. When used in a drawing, sets of complementary colors create harmony because they contain all three primary colors.

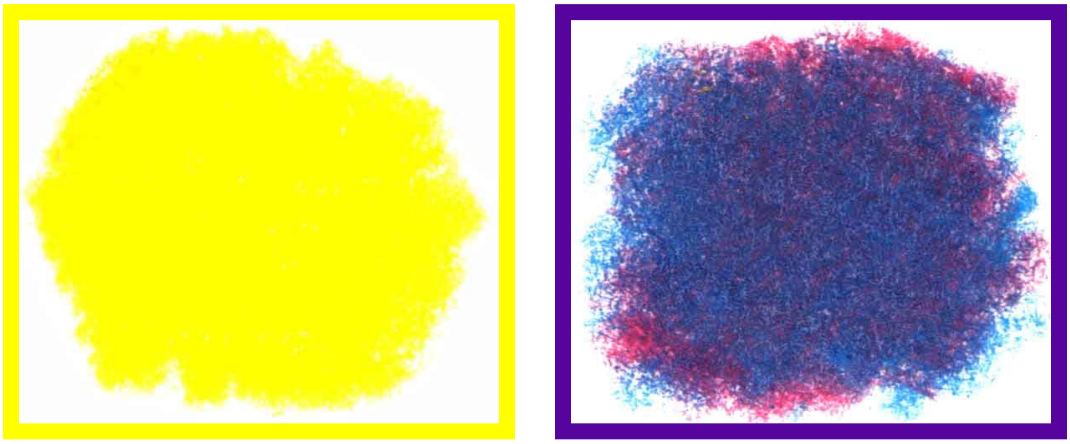
InfoTidbit Colored pencils were originally developed for commercial artists and illustrators. Over the past two decades, "painting" with colored pencils has gained a new respect as a medium for fine art.

Sets of complementary colors are easy to find on a color wheel because they are directly opposite one another (see Illustration 01-08). *Color wheel* refers to a method of arranging colors within a circular format to easily reference primary, secondary, and complementary colors. Examine three basic sets of complementary colors in Illustrations 01-05, 01-06, and 01-07.

5) Find all three primary colors in each of the three following sets of two colors.

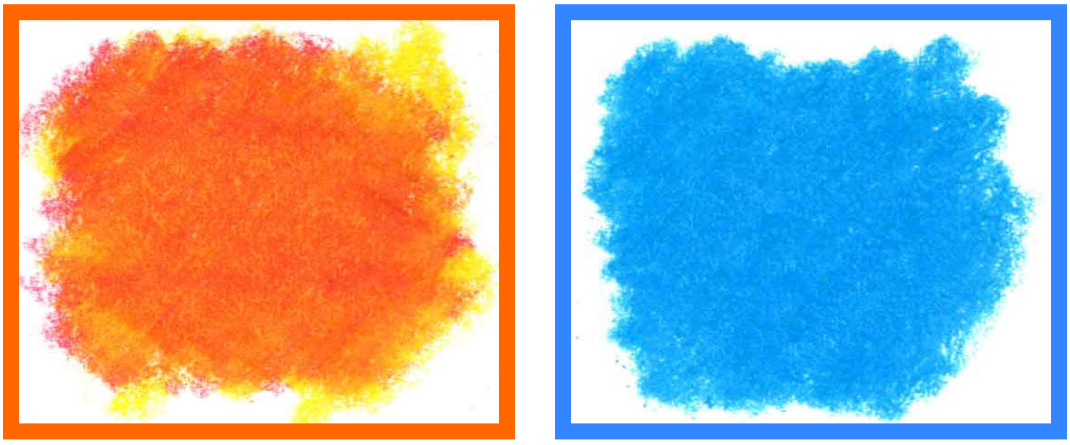
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ILLUSTRATION 01-05



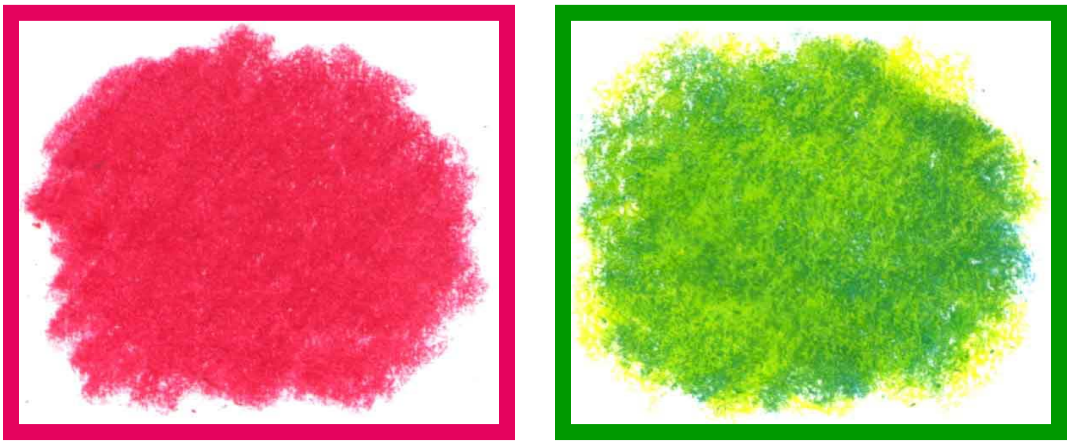
YELLOW AND PURPLE (purple is made with red and blue)

ILLUSTRATION 01-06



ORANGE AND BLUE (orange is made with yellow and red)

ILLUSTRATION 01-07



RED AND GREEN (green is made with yellow and blue)

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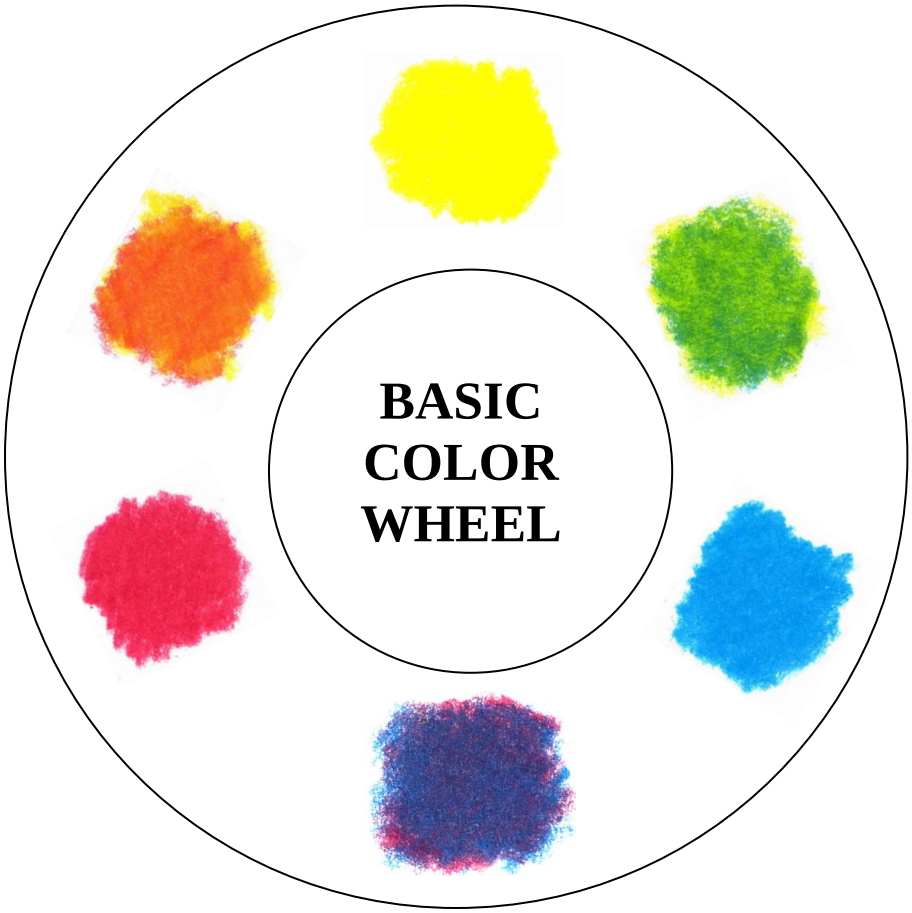
Having a color wheel, close by when you draw, serves as an easy reference for choosing colors for your drawings. In this exercise, you make your own color wheel in two simple steps.

6) Use a compass to draw a large circle with a smaller circle on its inside.

7) Make color swatches of all the primary and secondary colors.

Begin with the yellow at the top of the color wheel and work your way in a clockwise direction, until you end with orange. Use only your red, yellow and blue pencils. Should you ever forget which sets of colors are complementary, you need only look for the sets that are opposite one another on the color wheel.

ILLUSTRATION 01-08



WARM AND COOL COLORS

In this section, I tell you about some of the associations and emotions attached to the primary and secondary colors.

WARM COLORS

Yellow, orange, and red, are considered warm colors as in the colors you see in fire. They are dramatic, bright, bold and energetic.

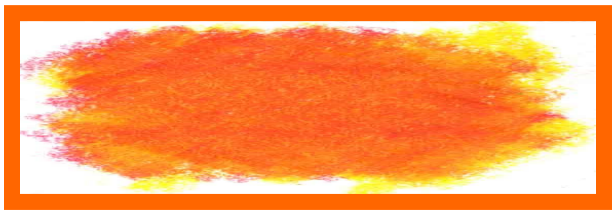
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YELLOW: is bright, cheery, and powerful and is the color of happiness, sunshine and flowers such as daffodils.

ILLUSTRATION 01-09

ORANGE: is a combination of yellow and red. Think of orange as energetic, vibrant, and flamboyant.

ILLUSTRATION 01-10



RED: is the warmest and most energetic color and is associated with love, energy, and danger (as in a red traffic light).

ILLUSTRATION 01-11

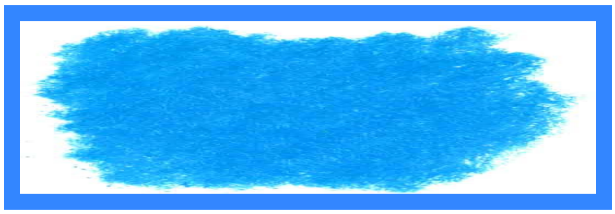


COOL COLORS

Cool colors, blue, green, and purple, are usually soothing and calming. Think about the colors in snow and ice.

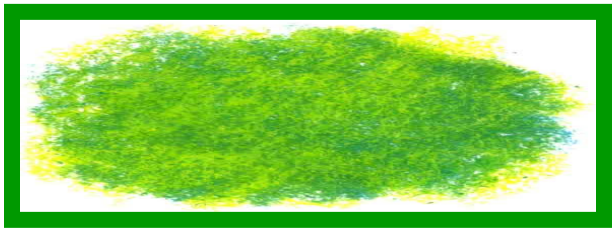
BLUE: represents tranquility, harmony, and peace. Think of a blue sky, a calm ocean, or an iceberg.

ILLUSTRATION 01-12



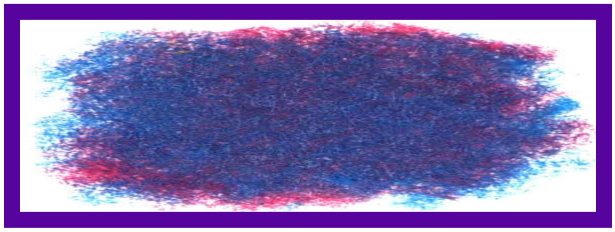
GREEN: is soothing, nurturing, and calming, and symbolizes nature, good luck, youth, and generosity. Some greens that are made with more yellow than blue can be considered as warm colors.

ILLUSTRATION 01-13



PURPLE: is spiritual, mysterious, and exotic, and represents royalty, nobility, and enlightenment. Some purples (made with more red than blue) can easily fall into the category of warm colors.

ILLUSTRATION 01-14



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EXPLORING COLORS IN A DRAWING

My cartoon drawing of a dog named “Wobby” is rendered in colored pencil with mostly primary and secondary colors.

Because his face looked so sad, I choose to use mostly blue for this drawing. To keep the drawing bright, I used other primary colors for this puppy, yellow for the insides of his ears and the under pads of his paws, and red (almost pink) for his nose. I chose stripes of both primary and secondary colors for coloring his rainbow collar (bow).

ILLUSTRATION 01-15



8) Find at least one example of each of the three primary colors and the three secondary colors in his collar (bow).

Take some time to examine colored drawings, and take note of how the colors are used to enhance the subject and/or the moods of artworks.

InfoTidbit

To render a drawing of Wobby, check out lesson *Y-02 Advanced: Creating in Color.*

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BRENDA HODDINOTT - BIOGRAPHY

As a self-educated teacher, visual artist, portraitist, forensic artist, and illustrator, Brenda Hoddinott utilizes diverse art media including graphite, technical pen, colored pencil, chalk pastel, charcoal, conté crayon, and oil paints.

> My philosophy on teaching art is to focus primarily on the enjoyment aspects while gently introducing the technical and academic. Hence, in creating a passion for the subject matter, the quest for knowledge also becomes enjoyable.
>
> >Brenda Hoddinott<

Born in St. John's, Newfoundland, Brenda grew up in the small town of Corner Brook. She developed strong technical competencies with a personal commitment to self directed learning, and the aid of assorted "Learn to Draw" books. During Brenda's twenty-five year career as a self-educated civilian forensic artist, numerous criminal investigation departments have employed Brenda's skills, including Royal Canadian Mounted Police and municipal police departments. In 1992, Brenda was honored with a commendation from the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, and in 1994, she was awarded a Certificate of Membership from "Forensic Artists International".

Her home-based art career included graphic design, and teaching recreational drawing and painting classes. As supervisor of her community's recreational art department, Brenda hired and trained teachers, and designed curriculum for several children's art programs. In 1998, Brenda chose to end her eighteen-year career as an art educator in order to devote more time to writing, drawing, painting, and developing her websites.

Drawspace http://www.drawspace.com incorporates her unique style and innovative approach to curriculum development. This site offers downloadable and printable drawing classes for students of all abilities from the age of eight through adult. Students of all ages, levels and abilities have praised the simple step-by-step instructional approach. This site is respected as a resource for fine art educators, home schooling programs, and educational facilities throughout the world.

LEARN-TO-DRAW BOOKS BY BRENDA HODDINOTT

- **Drawing for Dummies:** Wiley Publishing, Inc., New, York, NY, this 336 page book is available on various websites and in major bookstores internationally.
- **The Complete Idiot's Guide to Drawing People:** Winner of the Alpha-Penguin Book of the Year Award 2004, Alpha - Pearson Education – Macmillan, Indianapolis, IN, this 360 page book is available on various websites and in major bookstores internationally.

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