

# Colour Theory

Colours are part of the design of a product

They are an example of a **media code**

Different colours communicate different messages e.g. red for danger. This is called **colour theory**

Choosing the right colour is an important choice when designing a product

# Red

Danger, anger, or romance

A high energy colour that reflects urgency,  
which is why it is often used to symbolise sales  
and reductions in price

It is bold, brash, and catches the eye

# Orange

Amusement, fire, energy, autumn

An energetic colour, symbolises happiness and enlightenment

Can be used to attract the eye and denote urgency, e.g. with traffic cones

# Yellow

Sunshine, fun, summer, joy

Youthful and optimistic, yellow make products look fresh and can grab an audience's attention

Particularly used to attract children's attention

Yellow is sometimes seen as deceitful or representing being scared of something

## Nature and the environment

Symbolises youth, health, and healing and is often used for beauty products

Can symbolise lack of experience or greed

# Blue

Knowledge, wisdom, trust, brand loyalty

It can represent peacefulness and stability

Many businesses use blue to give an impression  
of solidity and trust

# Purple

Wealth, luxury, traditional, calming

Associated with royalty and affluence, so is used to give the impression of luxury

Also used to symbolise soothing and calmness, and is often used on anti-aging products

# Pink

Youthful, fun, exciting, love, sweetness

Often used on products aimed at young women and mothers, it is seen as romantic and feminine



Dependable, natural, stable

Brown divides opinion. Some see it as a dull colour to be avoided, while others see it as one that comes across as wholesome and reliable

# Grey

Formal, traditional, conservative, cool

A neutral colour which can show authority and  
reflect high quality

Often used as a background colour because it  
lacks warmth

# Black

Dark, mysterious, cold, formal

Black is often seen as a powerful, strong colour  
and is used for luxury products

Lacks emotion and can symbolise death and  
negativity

# White

Purity, cleanliness, fresh, faith

A neutral colour which is open and inviting

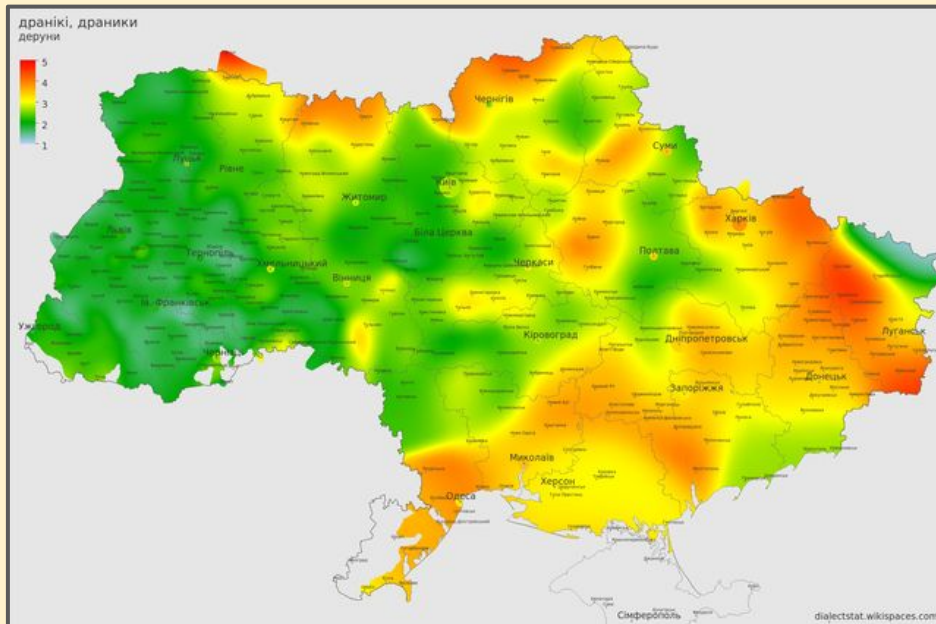
Designers use “white space” to guide the eye to important areas and give product designs space



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Colours can be used to represent health in video games



Temperature map, using reds and oranges to symbolise high temperatures and greens and blues for low temperatures

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Colours used to represent hazard levels. Similar colour transitions are used in a range of contexts