

THE GEO-SAMPLER

Why is it that “Geotechnics” blue makes us feel so calm? And painting the geosynthetics lab a lemony shade of yellow a bad idea? And why, instead, should we consider pink? When you spend as much time immersed in shades of earthy brown as we do, well, you start to wonder a lot of things. We thought you’d like what we discovered.

COLOR US SURPRISED: 50 SHADES OF SHADES

Blue is blue. And red is hot, right? Well, sort of. Turns out, there’s more to color than meets the eye. Color can inspire, accelerate, enliven, and even anger. Here’s a primer on primary (and heck, secondary) colors to help you choose your hues.

RED Screams stop! And warning! And, in China, good luck. In fact, it’s so lucky that the Chinese language boasts thirty different characters to describe different shades of red. Be warned that red actually boosts blood pressure, which is why you won’t find it on the walls of doctors’ offices. You also won’t find red cars in Brazil and Ecuador, since the color has been outlawed on motor vehicles due to high incidence of traffic accidents.

ORANGE Here’s a juicy bit of orange: it has a need for speed. And affordability. This is why you’ll find it so abundant in fast food restaurants. Orange is actually one of the least favorite colors among Americans (our favorite is coming up soon in this edition of the GeoSampler; can you guess?), but is the national color of the Netherlands. Is it a coincidence that the Dutch are known for the House of Orange?

YELLOW Mellow? Hardly. Turns out, yellow, especially bright yellow, is the most luminous color in the spectrum and, hence, the most fatiguing color if viewed for long periods of time. Studies show couples fight more in lemony yellow kitchens. And babies cry more in lemony yellow rooms. (Hopefully, not at the same time.) FYI, it’s also considered unlucky to wear yellow at a bullfight. Especially for the bull.

GREEN Everybody knows green means go, right? Well, except if you’re in China where green means stop. Which makes sense when you consider that green is also the most

restful color, since its light rays fall most directly on the retina. Not surprisingly, green has proven to help people tolerate physical pain, so it’s a good idea to bring nice leafy greenery to a friend in the hospital. No word on its affect on bulls.

BLUE Hands down, blue is most frequently the favorite color among Americans (to the tune of 50% of all colors). It’s also the color that puts people at ease, particularly in times of trouble. Some say it’s because humans feel so comfortable in an environment surrounded by sky and water. A troublesome bridge in London was actually painted blue to reduce the high incidence of suicides.

PURPLE In ancient Rome, purple was one of the most highly coveted colors, reserved for royalty. Seems some 20,000 shells were required to make just enough dye for one yard of cloth. In more recent times, 1971 to be exact, OSHA identified Purple Orchid 80100 as the color to indicate nuclear hazard. It is also the hardest color for the human eye to discriminate, perhaps because it’s the odd-couple marriage of red and blue.

THE BUSINESS OF COLOR There’s a whole host of decisions to be made based on colors. Fast food restaurant table? Orange. Logo color for your favorite geotechnical and geosynthetic lab? Blue, of course. And there are whole companies designed around color marketing and color theory. You can even use colors to help you identify your personality type (colorcode.com, if you’re up for a free online quiz), your right career (*What color is your parachute?*), and yes, your aura.

Here at Geotechnics, we’re fine with whatever color your aura is. We accommodate all. Give us a call.



“A word to the wise ain’t necessary, it’s the stupid ones who need advice.”

—Bill Cosby



Ancient Egypt was inhabited by mummies and they all wrote in hydraulics. They lived in the Sarah Dessert and traveled by Camelot. The climate of the Sarah is such that the inhabitants have to live elsewhere.

In the Olympic games, Greeks ran races, jumped, hurled the biscuits, and threw the java.

Joan of Arc was burnt to a steak and was cannonized by Bernard Shaw. Finally Magna Carta provided that no man should be hanged twice for the same offense.

Gravity was invented by Issac Walton. It is chiefly noticeable in the autumn when the apples are falling off the trees.

Franklin discovered electricity by rubbing two cats backwards and declared, “A horse divided against itself cannot stand.”

The sun never set on the British Empire because the British Empire is in the East and the sun sets in the West.

The First World War, caused by the assignation of the Arch-Duck by an anahist, ushered in a new error in the anals of human history.

Crayola crayon colors available beginning 1903 Number of Colors: 8

Black, Brown, Orange, Violet, Blue, Green, Red, Yellow

Colors available 1949 - 1957

Number of Colors: 48

Apricot, Gold, Orange, Silver, Bittersweet, Gray, Orange Red, Spring Green, Black, Green, Orange Yellow, Tan, Blue, Green Blue, Orchid, Thistle, Blue Green, Green Yellow, Periwinkle, Turquoise Blue, Blue Violet, Lemon Yellow, Pine Green, Violet (Purple), Brick Red, Magenta, Prussian Blue*, Violet Blue, Brown, Mahogany, Red, Violet Red, Burnt Sienna, Maize, Red Orange, White, Carnation Pink, Maroon, Red Violet, Yellow, Cornflower, Melon, Salmon, Yellow Green, Flesh, Olive Green, Sea Green, Yellow Orange

Colors Available 1958-1971

Number of Colors: 64

All colors previously listed plus the following colors added in 1958. Aquamarine, Copper, Lavender, Raw Sienna, Blue Gray, Forest Green, Mulberry, Raw Umber, Burnt Orange, Goldenrod, Navy blue, Sepia, Cadet Blue, Indian Red***, Plum, Sky Blue

Colors Available 1972-1989

Number of Colors: 72

All colors previously listed plus the following fluorescent colors added in 1972. Chartreuse, Ultra Blue, Ultra Orange, Ultra Red, Hot Magenta, Ultra Green, Ultra Pink, Ultra Yellow

Fluorescent colors name change in

1990. Atomic Tangerine, Hot Magenta, Outrageous Orange, Shocking Pink, Blizzard Blue, Laser Lemon, Screamin' Green, Wild Watermelon

Colors Available 1990-1992

Number of Colors: 80

All Colors previously listed plus the following fluorescent colors added in 1990. Electric Lime, Purple Pizzazz, Razzle Dazzle Rose, Unmellow Yellow, Magic Mint, Radical Red, Sunglow, Neon Carrot

In 1990, eight colors were retired and replaced by eight new shades.

Retired Colors Green Blue, Orange Red, Orange Yellow, Violet Blue, Maize, Lemon Yellow, Blue Gray, Raw Umber
Retired colors were enshrined in the Crayola Hall of Fame on August 7, 1990.

Replacement Colors Cerulean, Vivid Tangerine, Jungle Green, Fuchsia, Dandelion, Teal Blue, Royal Purple, Wild Strawberry

Colors Available 1993

16 new colors added in 1993, named by consumers

Number of Colors: 96

Asparagus, Macaroni and Cheese, Razzmatazz, Timber Wolf, Cerise, Mauvelous, Robin's Egg Blue, Tropical Rain Forest, Denim, Pacific Blue, Shamrock, Tumbleweed, Granny Smith Apple, Purple Mountain's Majesty, Tickle Me Pink, Wisteria

Colors Available 1998

24 new colors added

Number of Colors: 120

Almond, Canary, Pink Flamingo, Antique Brass, Caribbean Green, Fuzzy Wuzzy Brown, Purple Heart, Banana Mania, Cotton Candy, Manatee, Shadow, Beaver, Blush, Mountain Meadow, Sunset Orange, Blue Bell, Desert Sand, Outer Space, Torch Red, Pink Sherbet, Eggplant, Piggy Pink, Vivid Violet

Colors Available 2000

All colors previously listed with the following exceptions. Thistle was removed from the 120-count assortment to make room for indigo; torch red was renamed scarlet.

Colors Available 2003

4 new colors added, 4 retired

Number of Colors: 120

New Colors: inch worm, jazzberry jam, mango tango, wild blue yonder
Retired Colors: blizzard blue, magic mint, mulberry, teal blue

* Name changed to "midnight blue" in 1958 in response to teachers' requests.

** Name voluntarily changed to "peach" in 1962, partially as a result of the U. S. Civil Rights Movement)

***Indian Red is renamed Chestnut in 1999 in response to educators who felt some children wrongly perceived the crayon color was intended to represent the skin color of Native Americans. The name originated from a reddish-brown pigment found near India commonly used in fine artist oil paint.

ASHES, ASHES

What do you get when you burn coal? Ashes, of course. And here at Geotechnics, we test a lot of Coal Combustion Products during the course of a week. Fly ash. Gypsum. Bottom Ash. And we're happy to help our clients determine the unique qualities of each variety. To learn more about testing CCP's or ask a question to stump the expert, give Randy O'Rourke a shout at (412) 823-7600.



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