

Color My World

Color can lift your spirits, make you look fabulous or wash you out. Knowing which colors look great on you is an important tool for smart shopping.

by Illysia Neumann-Loreck



You can figure out your ideal palette of colors based on the four seasons. It's easy to understand, and it really works. Wearing the right colors can change the way you look and think about yourself. Color can transform you. Really!

So, how do you figure out which season you are? The first component of color analysis is how bright or soft a color is. Do you look good in powder blue or sapphire, burnt orange or pumpkin orange, blush pink or shocking pink, khaki or emerald green?

The next component is the warmth or coolness of a color. A color with lots of yellow is warm and a color with blue in it is cool. Coral pink has lots of yellow in it so it's a warm pink. Shocking pink has more blue in it so it's a cool pink. Emerald green has a lot of blue in it. Grass green has a lot of yellow. Don't worry if it seems confusing now, it will be crystal clear soon!

Universal colors are perfectly centered between cool/warm and bright/soft – dove grey, teal, cream, watermelon, navy, turquoise and raspberry. These colors, because they fall in the middle of the two components, look great on everyone.

Your skin tone, hair and eye color will help to determine which season you are ...

If your skin tone is

- ivory – very fair with yellow or pink undertones (Julianne Moore), you are warm
- porcelain – very pale, almost bluish (young Liz Taylor), you are cool
- peach or golden beige (Cameron Diaz or Julia Roberts), you are warm
- cool beige (Sara Jessica Parker), you are cool
- olive (Eva Mendes), you are cool or warm depending on undertone
- bronze (Jennifer Lopez), you are warm
- light brown or dark brown (Beyonce or model Alek Wek), you are cool or warm depending on undertone

If you can't tell whether your skin tone is cool or warm, go to a fabric store and buy two pieces of fabric in a 2-by-2-foot square – one gold and one silver (I can hear you groaning that this involves some effort, but really, it's worth it!). Once you're back home, get a mirror and move a chair to face a window. Drape one fabric over your shoulders and look in the mirror. Does it give your face color or does it make your look washed out or tired? Does it highlight any wrinkles or does it blend with your coloring? If you can't tell, enlist a friend to help. If you look better in gold, you are considered warm. If silver is the one, you look better in cool tones.

If your hair color is

- silvery, ash blonde or ash brown (Gwen Stefani or Sara Jessica Parker), you are cool
- golden blonde (Charlize Theron), you are warm
- strawberry blonde, red or copper (Amy Adams or Julianne Moore), you are warm

- golden brown or chestnut (Julia Roberts or Beyonce), you are warm
- dark brown or black, even blue-black, with no golden tones (Anne Hathaway), you are cool
- gray or white (Judy Dench), you are cool

If your eye color is

- hazel, you are warm
- green, you are cool or warm depending on your hair and skin
- soft or golden brown, you are warm
- blue, you are cool or warm depending on your hair and skin
- dark brown with no gold, you are cool

Once you determine whether you are predominantly cool or warm, it's time to figure out your season.

If you are cool, winter or summer colors look best on you. If you are cool with dark hair, winter is your season. If you are cool with light or medium hair, summer is your season.

If you are warm, spring or autumn colors look best on you. If you are warm with lighter hair, spring is your season. If you are warm with darker hair, autumn is your season.

One thing to note is that the seasons are most important for colors that are near your face. Anything goes on your bottom half (as long as it coordinates and looks great on you)! Now that you know your season, turn the page to see how to wear your colors...

LET'S LOOK AT TWO EXAMPLES ...



Cate Blanchett has porcelain, almost bluish skin. Although her hair color changes slightly, it is typically ashy or silvery blonde hair. Blue eyes can be warm or cool, but Cate's eyes are icy blue. She has cool hair, eyes and skin. Because her hair is light, she is a summer.



Beyonce has light brown skin, so she could be warm or cool. However, her eyes and her hair are golden brown, so she is warm. Because she has darker hair, she is a fall.

autumn

Earth tones make you glow if you are an autumn. Olive, golden brown, mustard and orange work well for your warm skin, eyes and hair. You should avoid pastels and clear, bright shades though. Look at your color palette on the left to find which tones are right for you. Deep olive, navy and brown work in place of black.



Julianne Moore



Beyonce



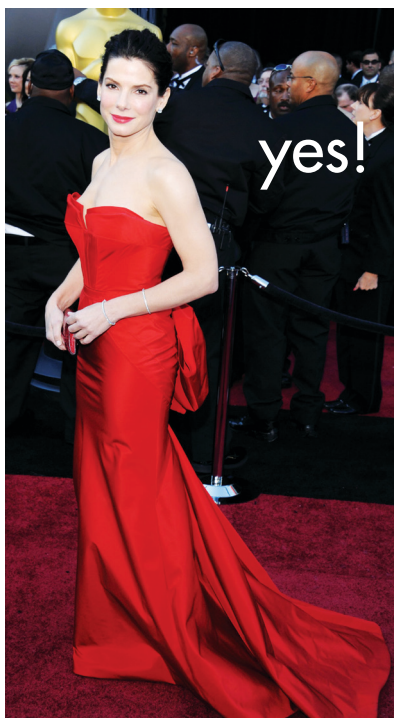
Jennifer Lopez

winter

You are the only season that can truly wear black and white. Because of the high contrast between your hair and skin, you also look great in rich, deep jewel tones such as sapphire blue, emerald green, ruby red and amethyst purple. Check out your palette of ideal colors on the right, and remember the tones you are drawn to when you go shopping.



Anne Hathaway



Sandra Bullock



Courtney Cox



spring



Kate Hudson

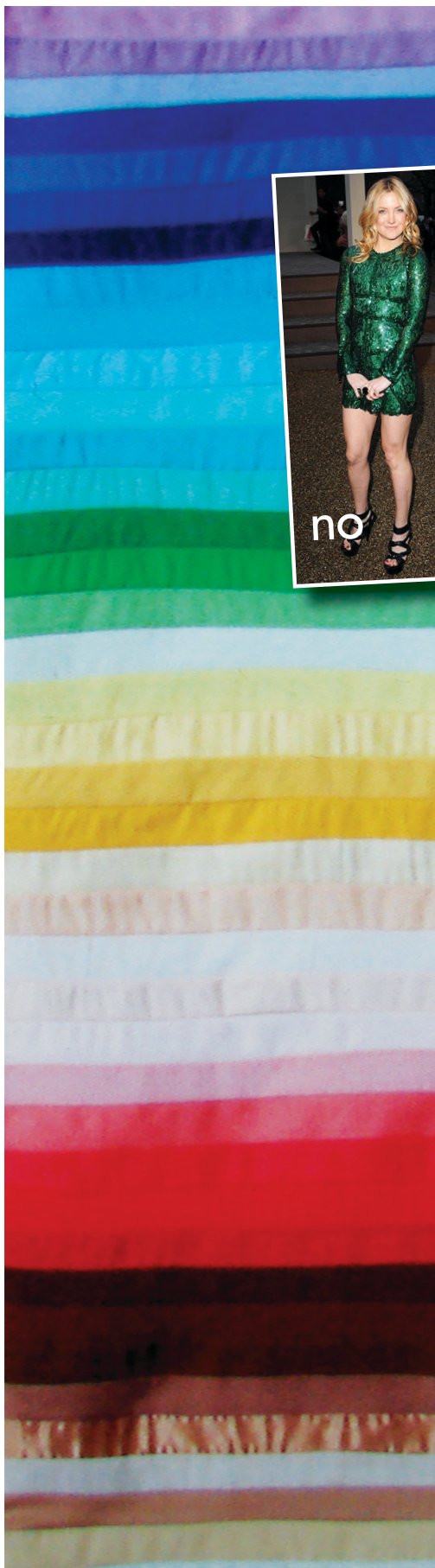
If you're spring, think bright and warm – aqua, yellow, green and salmon. Wear warm neutrals such as khaki, stone and off-white, and avoid black and white. As your palette to the left shows, you can wear blues, greens and reds as long as they are bright and sunny and not too deep and rich looking (that's for winter). Black is not great on you so try navy instead.



Cameron Diaz



Charlize Theron



summer

If you have a low level of contrast between your cool-toned skin, eyes and hair, wear light, quiet colors such as blue, gray and rose as seen on your color palette on the right.

If you have cool, brown hair and cool, light skin like Sarah Jessica Parker, you can also wear the brighter colors on the right. Your black should be navy or charcoal.



Gwyneth Paltrow



Scarlett Johansson



Sarah Jessica Parker

