DESIGNING FLOWER BEDS with COLORS
Good flower bed designs incorporate many different features.
• Relative surface “feel” or “look”
• On plants, texture comes from
  - Leaves
  - Twigs
  - Bark
• Texture also comes from
  - Rocks
  - Pavement
  - Structures
• Plant outline form in three dimensions
• Determined by line direction and arrangement of plant parts
  - Ascending forms emphasize the vertical plane
  - Spreading forms emphasize the horizontal plane
• Emphasizes specific areas of the garden by leading your eye through the garden
• Ties together plant materials, natural features, buildings and hardscapes by repetition of colors
• Creates areas that seem warm and inviting or subdued and featureless
• Evokes great appeal and response
• Complements other design criteria
Color Wheel
Basic Understanding of Colors

• Allows you to select plant materials that blend well together
• Many plants show different colors at various times of the year
• Seasonal color is a very important landscape feature
• Flowers show the most color but leaves, bark, fruits, buds and seeds also show color
Color Results from Refracted Light

Prism

Sunlight
Fact: There are 3 Primary colors

• Fiction
  • These are the three
True primary colors

• A true primary color is as close to the color of the light spectrum as possible without any overlap.
Red is red is red???

• What is red?
• True red is a *cooler* color than the crayola red we think of.
• Paint and dye colors are composed of chemicals either man made or natural that are trying to replicate the color of light.
True Primaries must form true secondaries

• True Primaries can be determined by mixing them to get secondary colors.
• Secondary Colors are 50-50 splits of primary colors. True secondary colors are vibrant not dulled.
• Who has mixed poster paint to get the color purple? What happened? Why?
• Secondary colors that are not vibrant have one color that is not a true primary in their mix.
Color Schemes are determined by their position on the color wheel.
How many colors are there?

• The Pantone company has cataloged over 968,000 colors that our eyes can detect.

• These are made from various combinations of colors, including those with pure chroma and those that are neutralized by the addition of other colors.
Primary Colors

- Red (magenta)
- Yellow
- Blue (cyan)
Secondary Colors
Created by equal amounts of the two connecting primary colors

• Orange
• Green
• Purple

Blend well
White

• Reflects all color
• Difficult to design and maintain
• Best combined with other flowers as accents
White Flowers Are Difficult
White Flowers Are Difficult
Black

- Absorbs all color
- Very few totally black flowers or plants
- They can look like holes in the landscape
- Areas usually come from introduced, man-made features
Black Flowers
Black Foliage Color
Hue
The color with white or black added to it often called a tint or tone
Shades of a color
Value

An assigned number for a color

0  127  255
Intensity

The apparent luminosity of a color or saturation. The color is not mixed with anything but is pure chroma
Warm Colors

- Red
- Yellow (The color the eye sees first)
- Orange

Represent earth tones and are usually easy to utilize together. (Because the eye does not see them as quickly.)
Cool Colors

• Green
• Blue
• Violet

How you combine colors creates an emotional response to the combination. Clashing colors are vibrant and exciting while other transitions are more soothing.
Monochromatic

• A composition of the hues and values of one color
• Puts you to sleep
• Don’t use to emphasize a planting area.
Monochromatic Schemes

• Are color schemes using one color with white or black added.

• The best way to successfully use a monochromatic scheme is to vary the color temperature and or value of the single color in order to prevent boredom.
Contrasting

• Opposites on the color wheel
  – Red and Green
  – Orange and Blue
  – Purple and Yellow
  – Contrasting colors are vibrant and exciting
Complimentary

• Two steps over from another color on the wheel
• Complimentary compositions signify
  – High energy
  – Action
  – Vigor
• These are more difficult to use in the design process
Complementary colors make each other vibrate and standout.
Analogous

• Next to each other on the color wheel
• Peaceful
• Restful
• Sophisticated
• If in doubt on your design process, choose these colors
Complementary colors make each other vibrate and standout.
Character

• Colors send a message
• Create a mood
• Color has visual weight
• A 50-50 split of red and green is obnoxious while a 70-30 split is more comfortable. This varies with the colors. Blue and orange is 60-40, and purple and yellow is 70-30. This is because of the intensity of the colors.)
Ratio

• Darker colors appear heavier than lighter colors
• In landscapes, darker colors disappear from a distance so dark leafed plants need good contrast to show
• Warmer colors appear to come forward while cooler colors appear to recede
• Yellow is the most visible color. If you want to emphasize something, use yellow plants around it
Color is most often “neutralized” by:

• The addition of the complimentary color to dull the original chroma.
A Good check for a good design is to take a black and white picture!
THE END