Website Color Cheat Sheet

Pick. Prove. Place.

SEOs Hut · Guide
seoshut.com/blog/web-design-color-theory/

1 Pick: the 7 schemes

Scheme	Angles from your base hue
Monochromatic	Same hue, different lightness
Analogous	± 30°
Complementary	+ 180° (clearest button)
Split-compl.	+ 150° and + 210°
Triadic	+ 120° and + 240°
Tetradic	+ 60°, 180°, 240°
Square	+ 90°, 180°, 270°

Screen wheel: red 0°, yellow 60°, green 120°, cyan 180°, blue 240°, magenta 300°. In CSS: hsl(hue, saturation, lightness).

2 Prove: WCAG 2.2 contrast

What	AA	AAA
Normal text	4.5:1	7:1
Large text (24px / 18.5px bold)	3:1	4.5:1
Buttons, borders, icons, focus	3:1	n/a
Logos	none	none

Never round up: 4.499:1 fails. Examples on white: #777777 = 4.47 (fails), #767676 = 4.54, #0067F2 = 4.97, #1595FB = 3.12 (large text only).

3 Place: 60-30-10



60% background (white, off-white) · **30%** brand or navy: header, panels · **10%** accent: buttons only. Three colors plus neutrals. Loud brand color? Use 70-20-10.

4 The six roles of a website palette

- **Background**: page, 60%
- **Surface**: panels and cards
- **Text**: 4.5:1 or more on both
- **Muted text**: captions, still 4.5:1
- **Brand dark**: links, header bar
- **Button**: 10%, label 4.5:1

Color blindness

About 1 in 12 men and 1 in 200 women have a color vision deficiency; red-green is most common. Never use color alone (WCAG 1.4.1): add words or icons, underline links, label required fields. Test: Chrome DevTools > Rendering > Emulate vision deficiencies.

Where to set site colors

WordPress: Appearance > Editor > Styles > Colors > Palette
Wix: Site Design > Color theme
Squarespace: Site styles > Colors > Edit palette
Shopify: Online Store > Edit theme > Theme settings > Colors > Schemes

5 The 60-second check before you publish

- ☐ Squint: the main button is the first thing you see
- ☐ Count: three colors plus neutrals
- ☐ Body text, captions, footer text: 4.5:1 or more
- ☐ Button label: 4.5:1 (darken the button if needed)
- ☐ Links underlined, or 3:1 against nearby text
- ☐ No meaning by color alone (run the emulator)
- ☐ Look at it on a phone outdoors
- ☐ Dark mode? Re-check every pair; do not just invert

Sources: W3C WCAG 2.2 (w3.org/TR/WCAG22) and Understanding SC 1.4.3, 1.4.11, 1.4.1 · WebAIM Million 2026: low-contrast text on 83.9% of home pages · US National Eye Institute (1 in 12 men) · Colour Blind Awareness (1 in 200 women) · Nielsen Norman Group, "Using Color to Enhance Your Design" (60-30-10) · Platform help pages of WordPress, Wix, Squarespace, Shopify. Ratios calculated with the WCAG formula. Free palette tool: seoshut.com/blog/web-design-color-theory/#lab