

# Cool colors

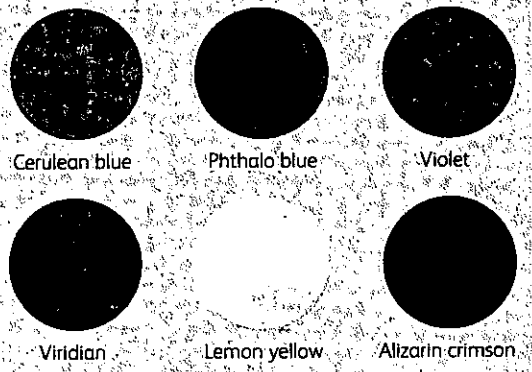
The chromatic properties of green, blue, and violet make them natural candidates for the cool color palette.

You will find these kinds of colors in objects that are naturally cool: green trees and foliage, blue water and sky, violet cloud formations, and the ocean. In art compositions, cool colors tend to recede into the background to create a calm, quiet, moody effect. Pablo Picasso appreciated the power of blue. During his well-known Blue Period (1901–04), he produced heartfelt, mournfully expressive paintings in a variety of blues. His *Femme aux Bras Croisés* (1901–02) is a fine example of this phase in Picasso's career.

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## Cool color palettes

Artists often determine their palettes before beginning a work of art. Picasso predominantly used one-color schemes for his Blue Period works. Beginners should start with a limited palette of only two to four colors before adding more. Notice how the blue tendency in the green, yellow, and crimson below make them "cool" versions of these colors.



## 61 Virtual gallery

**Degraeve Color Palette Generator**  
 A fun online tool but no substitute for creating your own palette.  
<http://www.degraeve.com/color-palette/index.php>



## 62 The impact of the unexpected

Create a blue painting in the style of Picasso's Blue Period. Select a human subject and use variations of blue and purple to convey the sitter.



1 Using a limited color palette, blend in two cool complementary colors to get a deep gray tone.

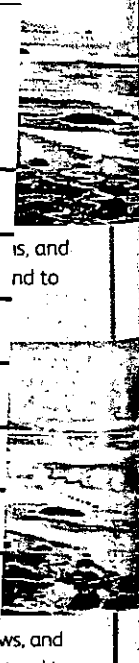


3 Picasso used models for his paintings. Although you expect this African-American subject to be portrayed in warm, earthy colors, the use of a cool palette provides an element of surprise. Cool tones can be used for intense emotions, such as isolation, but also help define expressive faces.



2 Use variations of blues, greens, and violets for the shadow areas and headpiece details.

Research Picasso Blue Period paintings, create a portrait either w/ paint or watercolor paint that is mostly one color just different lights and darks of that one color.



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