

Colors can affect the mood of a room and its inhabitants

By SHIREE HANSON
SEGERSTROM

For The Union Democrat

Color preference is such a personal thing. People react strongly to color and with diverse opinions.

Without getting all technical on you, colors can be divided into categories of cool, warm, clear, and muted. Warm colors typically consist of yellows, oranges, and reds. Cool colors are usually green, blue, and violet. The terms "clear" and "muted" refer to how much or how little color saturation exists.

There are several tricks of the trade you can use when choosing paint colors for your home or business. Warm colors advance. Cool colors recede. What that means for your walls, generally speaking, is to visually enlarge small rooms, paint them in cool, muted, or light colors. To cozy up large rooms, choose warm, bright, or dark colors.

On furniture, this theory is counter intuitive. Placing red fabric or paint on a table, chair, pillow, or sofa will visually enlarge the piece. Just like clothes. Black is slimming while red visually increases size.

One of the tricks I use when choosing paint colors for clients is to view color chips against a piece of pure white paper. I like to view them side by side, and in different lights of day. This helps me to visualize how a color will look. The next step is to buy a few quarts of paint and ask your paint clerk if they will provide you with brush-outs, 8x10-inch painted samples of the colors you've chosen. I have discovered the hard way that the free paint chips manufacturers provide are not always true to form.

In my own home, I recently purchased what looked on the chip to be a beautiful, soft and buttery yellow called "Brie." Since it was for my laundry room (not a major decorating concern for me) I didn't

test the color before my son began painting. It turned out to have a very cool and chalky effect.

For this reason it's important to purchase a small amount, such as a quart, before you commit to several gallons. Tape your brush outs to the walls and view them side by side, at them at different times of the day.

Last tip on choosing paint, the better quality paints are more expensive because they start off with a whiter paint base, which requires more pigment (pigment is the stuff that makes all those Danish artworks pop) than a darker base. The overall effect is so much more yummy and beautiful, even with whites and neutrals. Expect to pay over \$30 a gallon for higher quality paints. Use a mildew resistant primer.

Some color facts:

- Greenery outside your windows will have an effect on the paint color you use indoors.

- Peaches and light pinks are the most flattering colors for powder rooms. Your guests will love you for it.

- Cool colors are restful, while warm colors are exciting, something to think about when painting children's spaces.

- The colors orange, tangerine, and peach are known appetite stimulants.

- Violet and blue are lovely colors to use in flowers at the end of a garden path ... they make the path look longer and more inviting. Try this with salvia and lavender and see for yourself.

- Little touches of bright red in your rooms, such as in flowers, in paintings, or on lamp shade trimmings will add life to your room even if your color scheme isn't red. In my own home, I've added red grosgrain ribbon to all the stems of my topiary. Red is a happy color and, in small doses, creates a cheery atmosphere.