

Description and Operation

Basic color theory

In order to achieve optically perfect painting results it is vital to understand the physical principles of the origin of color impression.

Color

Color itself is a sensory perception.

This perception arises through the combined effect of the following components:

- Light (sunlight or artificial light irradiates the object).
- Surface of the object (reflection from the object of certain constituent parts of the light).
- Eye (perception of the reflections from the object).



Because the sensory impression of color is produced by all three of these components, it is dependent on the type, quality and function of the individual components. Practical examples make this clear:

- If a particular article is subjected to artificial light, then it gives a different impression of color to that which it gives in sunlight.
- An object with uniform color but different surface textures appears to have different colors (grained or ungrained dashboard).
- A person with perception disorder (colorblindness) cannot recognize certain colors or distinguish between them e.g. red-green weakness).

In turn the type of color is determined by the light absorption ability of an object. Light shines with all color components (spectral colors) onto an object, certain components of the light are absorbed (taken in) and other components are reflected (sent on). The components which are reflected produce the specific color impression.



The colors as we see them are the result of a combination of reflected colors from the spectrum. Physically speaking, these are electromagnetic waves with different wavelengths (and frequencies). The healthy human eye can recognize wavelengths between 0.36 μm (violet) and 0.78 μm (red).

If all the perceptible wavelengths of the spectrum impinge on the human eye at the same time, the impression of white light is produced.

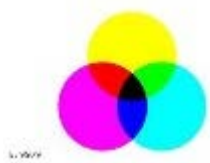
Additive and subtractive color mixing



Additive color mixing is the combination of light from different sources to give white. Different intensities of the additive primary colors red, green and blue allow millions of different colors to be represented (RGB colors).

Additive color mixing is always therefore used when light should enter the eye directly (without reflection off an object). Such as in the case of computer monitors or overhead beamers.





Subtractive color mixing means mixing the primary colors cyan, magenta and yellow to form a desired color (CMY colors).

Subtractive color mixing is used when light should enter the eye of an observer after reflection from an object. Such as happens with painting or in printing.

Oswald color circle



The Oswald color circle is based on subtractive color mixing, and enables the behavior of paints when they are mixed together to be represented.

Colors lying opposite each other are complementary colors and should not be mixed together as this will produce a dull (i.e. grey) shade. If green is added to red, the red becomes greyer, not greener.

Color shades which are side by side are partner colors and produce a mixed color shade. For instance, mixing red and blue produces a pure violet.

In addition, black and/or white may be necessary to produce a particular color shade.

- White makes the color shade lighter.
- Black makes the color shade darker.
- With black and white the color shade becomes more dreary or greyer.

Metamerism

Metamerism is the name of the effect which occurs when two colors appear identical in a particular light (e.g. artificial light), but the colors appear different under another light source (e.g. daylight).

The cause is the fact that the human brain, aided by the eyes, does not evaluate the wavelength, instead it evaluates the spectral intensity of the reflected light.

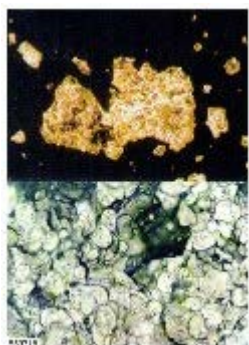
It is for this reason that color matching in practice must only ever be performed in daylight, or under special artificial light which is based on daylight.

Metallic and pearl pigments

Colored paints achieve their color effect by the addition of pigments. Pigments are colored, solid, very fine organic and inorganic particles which are insoluble in the binding material.

Metallic pigments

Aluminum platelets are added as pigment to form metallic paint.



Depending on the size and shape of the aluminum platelets, different metallic effects can be achieved:

- Cornflake aluminum (1) causes very strong dispersion because of rough edges, low brilliance, very low flop and produces grey-silver shades.
- Dollar aluminum (2) causes hardly any dispersion because of the smooth surface, high brilliance, produces very light, almost white silver shades.

With metallic paints however, only a light-dark light reflection effect occurs.

Colored metallic paints are produced by the extra addition of color pigments to the metallic paint.

Pearl pigments



The basis of pearl pigments is formed by mica, which is metallized with a silver or gold layer.

Depending on the angles of light and observation, the mica platelets reflect different proportions of light. Because of this, the color of the paint appears to the observer to change.

Pearl pigments produce a colored and light-dark reflected light effect.

Color codes and their determination on Ford vehicles

It is necessary to determine the correct color shade of the original paintwork in order to perform a professional and perfect paint repair.

The original paint color shade can be found by:

- Inspection of the vehicle type plate with the color code stamped on it.
 - Later design
 - Earlier design
- Color shade catalog or color shade system of the manufacturer.
- The bare bodyshell plate with color designation.

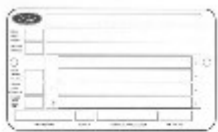
Type plate

Type plate - location on Ford vehicles:

- Right-hand B-pillar - door rebate
- Left-hand B-pillar - door rebate
- Hood lock panel
- Left-hand vertical edge of inner front wing
- Right-hand vertical edge of inner front wing
- Right-hand engine compartment side member
- Left-hand bulkhead
- Right-hand bulkhead
- Luggage compartment interior
- Inner rear panel - luggage compartment



The type plate gives the color code in the last row.



On the newer type plates, the color code is given in the left-hand column, at the penultimate position.



Color shade catalog or color shade system of the repair paint manufacturer.

The repair paint manufacturers offer a variety of possible systems for the determining the production color shade of motor vehicles. There are electronic systems, color card systems and manuals for the determination of color shades.

Most repair paint manufacturers use the following systems:

- A tabular system based on the following parameters:
 - Color code
 - Make
 - Model
 - Build year
 - Color or color name
 - Ancillary codes
- A system with color cards based on the following parameters:
 - Make
 - Color shade
 - Build year



Because of the many parameters used, in a tabular system the color shade can also be determined by the lack of a parameter.

When using the color cards, emphasis is placed on matching of the original color shade with the color shade samples. For this reason this method is very helpful when the other parameters are not available.

Comparison of the results of both methods increases the certainty of using the correct original color shade and its formulation.

Additional certainty can be achieved during color shade determination by making a color sample plate. Here it is however important to apply the complete paint structure with base paint and clear lacquer onto a sample plate (1) in order to carry out a color shade and color coverage test.





The color shade comparison is done by comparing the vehicle paintwork with the sample plate (1). The color coverage test is possible by using the black test stripe (2): If the test stripe (2) is still visible after test painting of the sample plate (1), the coverage is not good enough.

By using this determination of the original color shade, the formulation and information on any very slight fine adjustments which may be necessary can be established.

Bare bodyshell plate

The bare bodyshell plate is located:

- On the hood lock panel.
- Near the type plate.

The color name is stamped on in the last row.



Matching tinted filler to the color code

NOTE: Color samples must always be made from the same materials as the subsequent repair painting. Perform color shade matching in the fully hardened state, in natural light or under suitable artificial light.

Various tinted fillers are used during factory painting. In order to achieve the exact color shade of the factory applied paint, attention should be paid that the correctly matched fillers are used.



The repair paint manufacturers offer suitable precolored primers. The use of filler color cards allows the matching color shade to be determined.