

PINK

The colour of flowers from plants of the *Dianthus* genus. The word means jagged as in pinking shears. In Dutch the word *pinck* means small.

C:0 M:37.5 Y:0 K:0

BABY PINK

Very pale pink. The colour used for dressing baby girls.

C:0 M:22 Y:0 K:0

ROSE

Plants of the *Rosa* genus with fragrant flowers often pink in colour. People who view the world through rose-colour glasses are overly optimistic.

C:0 M:50 Y:0 K:0

RED

From Sanskrit *rudhira* meaning blood. One of the 7 colours of the rainbow.

C:0 M:96 Y:90 K:0

RUBY

Precious stone. Latin for red.

C:0 M:81 Y:73 K:22

CARDINAL

Colour of a cardinal's cassock.

C:25 M:100 Y:79 K:20

CRIMSON

Pigment from scale insect *Kermes vermilio*. From Sanskrit meaning produced by a worm.

C:0 M:90 Y:70 K:0

PURPLE

The Phoenicians produced red-purple dye from the shellfish *porphyra*. This word morphed into the word purple. Colour of royalty.

C:39 M:81 Y:0 K:0

LAVENDER

The colour of the lavender flower *Lavandula vera*. The word lavender is said to be derived from the Latin word for washing.

C:16 M:16 Y:0 K:2

LILAC

The colour of a lilac flower *Syringa vulgaris*. Lilacs symbolise love. Persian for bluish.

C:20 M:30 Y:0 K:15

PUCE

Puce means flea in French. The colour of a blood-engorged flea.

C:8 M:56 Y:22.5 K:0

OLD ROSE

Dark red cultivated rose.

C:15 M:67 Y:39.5 K:0.5

CORDOVAN

The colour of cordovan leather. Named after Cordoba, Spain, where the leather was first produced by Visigoths in the seventh century.

C:43 M:82 Y:42 K:0

CARNATION

The flower. Carnation means fleshy.

C:0 M:45 Y:0 K:0

HOT PINK

First mentioned in Vogue in 1958, an intense, vivid pink.

C:0 M:73 Y:0 K:0

SHOCKING PINK

From the bright pink packaging of the perfume *Shocking* designed by Leonor Fini for the Surrealist fashion designer Elsa Schiaparelli.

C:0 M:94 Y:24 K:1

MAGENTA

When the synthetic dye was discovered in 1859, it was first named fuchsia after botanist Leonhard Fuchs. It was renamed after the Battle of Magenta, a town in Italy. The battle was part of the Second Italian War of Independence. The M in CMYK.

C:0 M:100 Y:0 K:0

AMARANTH

An imaginary flower that never fades. Colour of foliage of *Amarantus* plants.

C:0 M:94 Y:59 K:0

RASPBERRY

Colour of fruit from the genus *Rubus*. Prince song *Raspberry Beret* was a hit.

C:12 M:100 Y:66 K:10

CERISE

Colour of the cherry fruit. Cerise means cherry in French.

C:6 M:79 Y:20 K:0

CHERRY BLOSSOM

Colour of the cherry flower. Cherry blossom is celebrated in Japan.

C:0 M:36 Y:10 K:0

In 1856 18-year old English chemist William Perkin accidentally discovered the colour mauve, the first synthetic dye.

Until Perkin, dyes and artists' colours were based on natural pigments – minerals, plants, squid ink, even crushed insects.

After Perkin, words for colour names got a little bit weird. Magenta was named after a famous battle.

The traditional words for colours tell their history. They are worth understanding and preserving.

Colours are grouped according to 11 base colour names.

CMYK values are provided as a guide only. Colour is subjective.

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COLOURFUL WORDS

by Anne Jones

BLUE

The Middle English word *blew* meant yellowish-grey. Said to be the most popular colour, blue is also the colour of sadness. One of the 7 colours of the rainbow.

C:88 M:76 Y:0 K:0

CYAN

From Greek *kyanos* meaning intense blue. Cyan is C in CMYK. One of the four colours used to produce full colour printing.

C:100 M:0 Y:0 K:0

ELECTRIC BLUE

Colour of a spark of electricity.

C:75 M:0 Y:5 K:0

SKY BLUE

Sky is from Old Norse meaning cloud.

C:55.5 M:0 Y:6 K:0

AZURE

The clear blue of the sky on a clear day. The word is derived from the semi-precious stone lapis lazuli.

C:84.5 M:46.5 Y:0 K:0

CERULEAN

From Latin meaning dark blue probably derived from the word for heaven.

C:100 M:38 Y:20 K:1

TURQUOISE

A precious stone found in Turkey, turquoise means Turkish in French.

C:95 M:0 Y:22 K:0

AQUAMARINE

A blue-green gemstone. The word is from Latin meaning sea water.

C:81 M:0 Y:25 K:0

ULTRAMARINE

Ultramarine means beyond the sea. The pigment was made from lapis lazuli.

C:100 M:90 Y:6 K:6.5

TEAL

A type of duck with green-blue feathers on the wing.

C:100 M:26 Y:33 K:6.5

CORNFLOWER BLUE

The colour of cornflower *Centaurea cyanus*, a perennial garden plant.

C:65 M:35 Y:0 K:0

PERIWINKLE

In Italian, the flower of death as those awaiting execution wore periwinkle.

C:20 M:20 Y:0 K:0

ROYAL BLUE

The rich blue colour of a dress made for English Queen Charlotte (1744-1818).

C:81 M:60.5 Y:0 K:0

NAVY BLUE

The colour of British Navy uniforms. Navy means ship.

C:100 M:98 Y:12.5 K:15

COBALT BLUE

Cobalt means goblin of the mines. From the Herz mines in Germany.

C:100 M:79.5 Y:0.5 K:0.5

GREEN

From Old English *growen* meaning to grow. Many languages have only one word for both blue and green. One of the 7 colours of the rainbow.

C:100 M:18.5 Y:100 K:11

TEA GREEN

The colour of brewed green tea *Camillia sinensis*. Tea was stolen from China by botanist Robert Fortune.

C:20 M:0 Y:30 K:0

EAU DE NIL

French meaning water of the Nile, the colour of the water of Egypt's River Nile.

C:33 M:3 Y:42.5 K:0

PLUM

The colour of plums, *Prunus domestica*, one of the first fruits domesticated by humans.

C:30 M: 100 Y:0 K: 35

TYRIAN PURPLE

The rich red purple produced by the Phoenicians from the shellfish *Murex brandaris*. The process was very smelly but the resulting dye was enormously valuable. Tyre was a Phoenician city.

C:47 M:88 Y:20 K:36

GRAPE

Colour of grapes, the fruit of the deciduous woody vines of the botanical genus *Vitis*.

C:70 M: 100 Y:4 K: 1

AMETHYST

Amethyst means not intoxicated. The purple quartz crystal was said to prevent drunkenness.

C:35 M:70 Y:0 K:0

FUCHSIA

Colour of the fuchsia flower named after 16th century German botanist Leonhard Fuchs. Fuchsia was one of the early synthetic dyes.

C:22 M:77 Y:0 K:0

MULBERRY

Colour of mulberries. The mulberry tree is a weed in South-East Queensland.

C:22 M: 85 Y:13 K: 30

MAUVE

Derived from the French word for mallow flower, mauve was the first synthetic dye produced in 1856 by William Perkin. The colour was popularised by Queen Victoria.

C:17 M:32 Y:0 K:0

HELIOTROPE

Meaning turns to the sun, the heliotrope is a purple flower which follows the sun.

C:50 M:65 Y:0 K:0

VIOLET

The colour of flowers from the genus *Viola*. One of the 7 colours of the rainbow.

C: 65 M: 80 Y: 0 K: 0

AVOCADO

From Spanish meaning advocate.

C:40 M:0 Y:100 K:30

OLIVE

The colour of the unripe fruit of the olive tree *Olea europaea*.

C:51 M:36 Y:100 K:12.5

BOTTLE GREEN

Dark green bottle glass. Bottle means vessel.

C:90 M:40 Y:80 K:20

LINCOLN GREEN

Material made in the city of Lincoln and the colour of Robin Hood's tights.

C:94.5 M:36.5 Y:100 K:37

WHITE

From the Sanskrit word *cvid* meaning to be white or bright. The Inuit people have seven different words for white. C:0 M:0 Y:0 K:0

ALABASTER

A smooth white stone from the Ancient Egyptian word *a-labaste*, which refers to vessels of the Egyptian goddess Bast. C:1 M:3 Y:6 K:1

OYSTER

A pale beige colour like the colour of oyster flesh. C:2 M:5 Y:13 K:5

GREY

An Old English word, the colour between black and white. Also spelt gray. Some think the two spellings have different meanings: gray is warm gray and grey is cool grey. C:51 M:43 Y:43 K:7

SILVER

Colour of the precious metal, chemical element with symbol Ag. C:0 M:0 Y:0 K:12

PLATINUM

Less lustrous than silver, platinum is a chemical element with symbol Pt. From the Spanish *platina*, meaning little silver. C:10 M:10 Y:10 K:0

BLACK

From the Middle English word *blak*. May have originally have meant burnt or scorched. The last letter of black is the K in CMYK. Also called ebony, jet, raven. C:0 M:0 Y:0 K:100

MIDNIGHT BLUE

Very dark blue, an imaginary colour of midnight. C:100 M:99 Y:21 K:48

WALNUT

Colour of walnut wood. Walnut is derived from "Welsh nut", Welsh originally meaning "foreign". C:51 M:70 Y:71 K:50

IVORY

The colour of animal tusks, particularly elephant tusks. It means elephant. C:1 M:0 Y:15 K:3

ECRU

Meaning unbleached, ecru is the colour of unbleached linen. C:5 M:4 Y:10 K:0

CREAM

Colour of cream, the oily part of milk which settles on the top. C:1 M:0 Y:22 K:0

CHAMPAGNE

The colour of sparkling wine made in the Champagne region of France. C:1 M:10 Y:20 K:3

WARM GRAY

Grey with red and yellow hints. C:0 M:5 Y:11 K:23

DOVE

Colour of a bird of the pigeon family. C:24.5 M:19.5 Y:20 K:0

DUN

From the Celtic languages meaning brown. The colour of a mouse. C:46 M:43.5 Y:46 K:4

CINEREOUS

A brown ash grey. From Latin meaning like ash. C:0 M:15 Y:19 K:40

MOCHA

Colour of coffee from Mocha, a port city in Yemen. C:51 M:79.5 Y:71 K:50

HENNA

Body and hair dye made from leaves of Egyptian Privet *Lawsonia inermis*. C:51 M:98 Y:83 K:70

OXBLOOD

Blood of an ox, used for gems, leather and porcelain. C:41.5 M:90.5 Y:82 K:65

TAUPE

From French meaning mole, colour of moleskin. C:54 M:63 Y:71.5 K:53.5

ALMOND

The colour of the almond flower, *Amygdalus communis*. C:2.5 M:12 Y:17 K:0

BISQUE

A type of unglazed white porcelain. C:0 M:10 Y:20 K:0

EGGSHELL

Colour of hens' eggs. C:5 M:20 Y:25 K:10

BEIGE

Beige is a fine woollen fabric used for clothing. Unbleached it is the colour beige. C:3.5 M:8 Y:15.5 K:0

COOL GREY

San Francisco was called the "cool grey city of love" by poet George Sterling, because of the fog. C3 M:0 Y:0 K:32

GLAUCOUS

A grey bloom used to describe the colour of plants. From Greek for bluish grey or green. C:20 M:10 Y:15 K:0

SLATE GREY

The blue-grey colour of slate, rock used for roofing. C:50 M:35 Y:20 K:10

BATTLESHIP GREY

A bluish-grey, the colour of battleships. C:50 M:31 Y:18 K:40

AUBURN

Brown, originally meant brownish white or blonde. Frequently used to describe a hair colour. C:0 M:75 Y:100 K:60

BEAVER

Shade of brown resembling the fur of a beaver, an amphibious rodent of the *Aryan* family. Beaver fur was used to make hats, nearly driving beavers to extinction in Europe. C:50 M:70.5 Y:79.5 K:66.5

DONKEY

The colour of a donkey *Equus asinus*. Donkey is a recent word derived from the name Duncan. Donkeys have been used by humans for more than 5000 years. C:40 M:40 Y:40 K:40

PUTTY

A pale grey, the colour of putty. From French meaning potful. C:10 M:10 Y:10 K:0

STONE

The colour of stone. C:5 M:5 Y:5 K:10

ALICE BLUE

The pale blue colour of a gown worn by Alice Roosevelt Longworth, daughter of US president Theodore Roosevelt. It inspired a 1919 hit song *Alice Blue Gown*. C:5 M:0 Y:0 K:0

ICE BLUE

Very pale blue, the colour of ice. C:20 M:0 Y:0 K:0

ASH GREY

The powdery residue of a fire. Used as a colour name in English since 1374. C6 M:0 Y:5 K:25

GUNMETAL

The colour of guns. The word gun is a shorting of the old Scandinavian women's name Gunnild. C:19 M:5 Y:0 K:60

STEEL GREY

The colour of steel, hardened iron. Steel is Teutonic meaning firm or rigid. C:64 M:56 Y:55.5 K:31.5

CHARCOAL GREY

Colour of coal. The origin of the word is obscure. It probably means burnt coal. C:67 M:60 Y:59 K:43

BRITISH RACING GREEN

In international motor racing the colour of Great Britain. Very dark green. C:98 M:50 Y:80 K:34

AUBERGINE

The dark purple colour of the skin of European eggplant, a large edible berry. Eggplants come in many colours including white and green. C:57 M:70 Y:0 K:54

INDIGO

From Latin meaning Indian, indigo is one of the 7 colours of the rainbow. Indigo dye is extracted from the plant *Indigofera tinctoria*. Used as a colour name in English since 1289. C:88 M: 88 Y:10 K:22

YELLOW

From Old English word *gelo*, its first known use is in the poem *Beowulf*. Y in CMYK. Yellow pigments include chrome and cadmium. C:0 M:0 Y:100 K:0

LEMON

The colour of the lemon. The word may come from the Persian word *limun*. C:1 M:3 Y:80 K:0

MUSTARD

The colour of culinary mustard. The word means burning wine. In Roman times mustard was made by mixing mustard seeds with new wine. C:0 M:13 Y:79 K:0

ORANGE

The colour of the orange citrus fruit. Originally from the Sanskrit word *naranja*. One of the 7 colours of the rainbow. C:0 M:62.5 Y:97.5 K:0

GINGER

Light sandy-red, the colour of ginger root, *Zingiber officinale*. Frequently used to describe a particular colour of red hair. C:0 M:40 Y:60 K:5

AMBER

Translucent yellow colour of ambergris, a resin excreted by whales, used to manufacture perfume. C:0 M:33 Y:100 K:6

BROWN

From Old English *brun* meaning dusky or dark. Hitler wore brown silk pyjamas with a swastika embroidered on the pocket. C:23 M:79 Y:100 K:15.5

TAWNY

Tawny is a variation of tan. It means crushed oak bark, used to make leather. C:13 M:36 Y:48 K:18

FALLOW

Colour of withered grass or leaves, pale brownish yellow. It means pale. C:18.5 M:40.5 Y:65.5 K:0.5

BUFF

The dull light yellow colour of buff leather made from buffalo hide. C:3.5 M:10 Y:62 K:0

TOPAZ

Dark yellow precious stone. Named after an island in the Red Sea. C:0 M:18 Y:100 K:0

EGG YOLK

Yolk is an early word for yellow. C:0 M:31 Y:100 K:0

BARIUM YELLOW

Yellow metallic element discovered in 1808 by Sir Humphry Davy. From the Greek word *bary* meaning heavy. C:0 M:50 Y:100 K:0

TEA ROSE

Cultivated rose, a pale orange-pink. C:0 M:20 Y:20 K:0

APRICOT

Colour of the apricot fruit. Portuguese word meaning ripened in a sunny place. C:0 M:35 Y:52 K:0

PEACH

Colour of the peach fruit. Peach means Persian although the peach itself actually originated in China. C:0 M:12 Y:28 K:0

SANDALWOOD

Scented wood and dye from the genus of plants *Santalum*. C:10 M:28 Y:71 K:0

KHAKI

From Persian meaning dust. C:25 M:28 Y:44.5 K:0

FAWN

The colour of a young deer. From Latin meaning offspring. C:36 M:42 Y:53.5 K:5

BRONZE

The colour of an alloy of copper and tin. Possibly from the German word for burnt. C:20 M:50 Y:100 K:10

CHESTNUT

Nut from the tree *Castanea vesca*. C:0 M:53 Y:64 K:41

OCHRE

A native earth coloured a pale brownish yellow. The word is from Greek for pale. C:7 M:29 Y:100 K:0.5

OLD GOLD

Colour of gold, the precious metal. Gold means yellow. C:16.5 M:25 Y:99 K:0

SAFFRON

Yellow colour of the stigma of the flower *Crocus sativus*. It is also a spice. C:10 M:30 Y:100 K:0

NANKEEN

Colour of a yellow cloth made in the Chinese city of Nanken. C:3.5 M:10 Y:60 K:0

BISCUIT

Light brown colour of dry crisp bread, originally meaning baked twice. C:2.5 M:26 Y:49 K:10

CORAL

Greek word for the colour of red coral, the marine substance. C:0 M:50 Y:69 K:0

SALMON

Orange-pink colour of the flesh of the fish. Probably derived from the Latin word *salire* meaning to leap. C:0 M:50 Y:50 K:0

TANGERINE

Colour of tangerine citrus fruit. It refers to Tangier, a seaport in Morocco. C:0 M:78 Y:100 K:0

CHOCOLATE

The colour of chocolate. The word chocolate is from the Nahuatl language of South Mexico meaning bitter water. C:19 M:59 Y:100 K:43

SEPIA

Pigment made from the ink of cuttlefish in the genus *Sepia*. Black-and-white photographs were often tinted with sepia. C:30 M:70 Y:100 K:25

UMBER

Brown earth originally found near Cologne, Germany. From Latin meaning shadow. The pigment is heated to become burnt umber. C:30 M:80 Y:100 K:50

BANANA

The colour of a ripe banana. The word (and the fruit) is from Guinea in Africa. C:0 M:10 Y:40 K:0

JONQUIL

A pale yellow flower *Narcissus jonquilla*. From Latin *juncus* meaning rush. C:0 M:0 Y:60 K:0

CITRINE

Colour of the rind of the citron lemon. C:0 M:7 Y:100 K:0

MIMOSA

Plants in the genus *Mimoseae* include wattles with their distinctive yellow blossoms. It means mimic. C:0 M:15 Y:100 K:0

COPPER

Colour of the metal. In Latin, *cuprian*, metal from the island of Cyprus. C:16 M:63 Y:100 K:3

RUST

Red-brown coating that forms on iron when it oxidises. It means red. C:0 M:53 Y:100 K:11

SIENNA

Terra Sienna, red earth found at Sienna in Italy. Heated, the colour changes to burnt sienna. C:21 M:78.5 Y:99 K:10

CINNAMON

Bark of *Cinnamomum zeylanicum* which is a yellow brown colour. C:2 M:57 Y:100 K:17

RUSSET

Coarse homemade cloth, red-brown colour, used for peasant clothing. From Old French *rousset* meaning red. C:29 M:77.5 Y:100 K:26

MAHOGANY

Fine-grained hardwood of *Swietenia mahagoni*, a tree from tropical Americas. C:0 M:85 Y:87 K:60

NUTMEG

Hard round fruit of tree *Myristica fragrans* or *M. officinalis* used as spice. From Latin meaning nut musk. C:31.5 M:77 Y:91 K:31