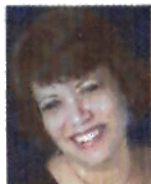


# Feeling blue? Perhaps you should try a coat of orange

I recently met with a client who wanted help selecting a paint color for her family room. She was torn between sage green and yellow. Knowing she has two very active young children, I asked her



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how she envisioned using the room. When she said "spending quality time as a family," I immediately recommended the sage green.

As an interior designer who loves using color, I've learned a lot about how color affects us psychologically and physically. Painting the room green would create a calming effect, perfect for quality family time. Yellow would produce a stimulating environment, encouraging even more activity from the children.

Typically, I don't use color psychology and physiology as the decisive factor in helping clients select room colors. But I do encourage them to think about how certain colors may affect a room's atmosphere.

Here is how six basic colors can affect us:

**RED** is an energetic and exciting color. It raises our respiration rate and blood pressure, and stimulates adrenaline. Because it stimulates appetite, red is a good color for kitchens and dining rooms. It's no surprise that all the fast food chains have red and yellow color schemes.

**ORANGE** also stimulates activity



Above: Green walls and blue bedding makes the bedroom more relaxing. Left: A yellow dining room stimulates appetite and conversation.

and appetite. It encourages socializing and buoys emotions, making it a terrific antidepressant. The last time I was at the JCC in Newton, I noticed the aerobics studio was painted a tomato orange and the weight room walls were yellow and peach. Whoever chose

this color scheme knew what they were doing.

**YELLOW** promotes communication and makes us more alert and decisive. Like red and orange, it stimulates us. While yellow is as-

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sociated with optimism, people tend to lose their tempers more often in yellow rooms, and babies cry more. This is probably because yellow reflects a large amount of light, making it the hardest color on our eyes. Yellow works well in kitchens, dining rooms and hallways. You could use it in a living room or family room as long as the shade isn't too intense.

**GREEN** is the easiest color on the eye. It relaxes us both physically and mentally, helping to alleviate depression and anxiety. That's why people waiting to appear on TV or go onstage sit in "green rooms" and why many hospital interiors are green.

**BLUE** is soothing and inspires productivity. It also tends to suppress the appetite, perhaps because blue food is rare in nature. Blue is often used in bedrooms because it's relaxing and helps with insomnia. At the same time, it works well in offices as blue helps us concentrate.

**PURPLE** is calming, uplifting and encourages creativity. Painting a master bedroom purple is perfect, because the color combines calmness and, if desired, romance.

Remember color psychology is just one factor to consider when selecting colors for your home. If you really have your heart set on a blue kitchen, then by all means, paint it blue. If your family doesn't seem to have much of an appetite when eating there, you can blame it on the walls and not on your cooking.

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