# What Is The Color Harmony of The Scene?

by Becky Joy

Look at the scene you are about to paint.

Is there a color that dominates? What color do you see more than others? Or, is there a color that stands out from all the rest? Is there a mood you want to capture using color?

Color harmony is a harmonious arrangement of colors in a painting that is pleasant to view. The color wheel (primary and secondary colors) can serve as a guide to you. There are colors that work together both in the color families and the intensity. At the other end will be colors that are opposites.
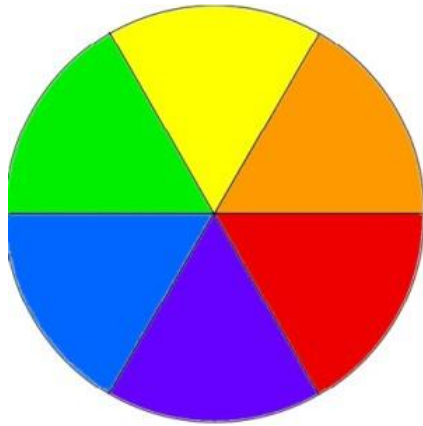
A monochromatic color grouping can be achieved by using one color family, adding interest by increasing or decreasing color intensity.

Analogous colors are colors right next to each other on the color wheel. The variety can vary by how far on each end you go with colors next to each other. An analogous palette will give you more variety, but will still be calming and soothing.

If you choose opposite colors on the color wheel, you choice will give you more energy and excitement.

The most frequently used group of colors is the triad, a little of each of three colors all spaced evenly apart around the color wheel. A triangle will form when connecting all three colors on the color wheel. Example: blue-violet, yellow-green and red-orange or any other combination of three colors evenly spaced around the color wheel.

A split complementary is similar to the complementary color harmony. Choose one color to start with, such as orange. In the complementary scheme you would choose blue as the opposite color. In the split, choose the two colors on each side of the blue, such as the blue violet and blue-green. This gives the split in split complementary.

Beyond the color wheel, harmony is also created by using similar purities of color or tonal qualities. This isn't always a very practical use of harmony in paintings.

To create a successful painting you will use color harmony in some way. You will need to:

1. use a limited palette to start with
2. use the colors in the scene in front of you
3. pick out a color in the scene and emphasize it
4. impose a color scheme which you don't see to create a different feeling
5. use color families in unequal amounts in the painting

As a final thought the color harmony that you paint is up to you. You have choices that you can make.