HISTORY OF COLOUR FORECASTING AND COLOUR TRENDS

HISTORY OF COLOUR FORECASTING[1]

Fashion colour trends date back to the 1800s when French textile mills created fold out books with swatch colour cards. These cards became an essential tool for the textile industry, and later became a popular method in North America.

The colour trends came from the Parisian couture houses which set the standards for trends every season. Everyone flocked to Paris for the latest in fashion, but that came to a screeching halt during the First World War. The world was at a stand still and the Americans could no longer obtain the swatch cards since the British prevented them from entering Europe. They had to rely on their own resources and established *The Textile Color Card Association*.

As America's first professional colour forecaster, Margaret Hayden Rorke served as the head of the association for almost forty years. *The Textile Color Card Association* released their Standard American Color Cards which were valid for two to three years.

https://bit.ly/3hn5alb

From 1929 to the 40s, Rorke enlisted the help of fellow American, Bettina Bedwell, to send her colour trend reports to compare to her own forecasts. Rorke used these reports to heighten the association's position as a predominant leader in colour forecasting.

Interestingly, societal factors had a big role in colour forecasters determining colour trends, and there are notable colour palettes which emerged throughout the decades, and each colour palette is symbolic of the eras' history.

1 Blaszczyk, Regina Lee. The Color of Fashion. Humanities, March/April 2008, Volume 29, Number 2. National Endowment for the Humanities.
https://www.neh.gov/humanities/2008/marchapril/feature/the-color-fashion

FASHION COLOUR TRENDS THROUGH THE DECADES[2]

The Roaring 20s fashion was embellished with decorative jewellery, ribbon, and embroidery, on muted, pastel, and bold colours with gold trim, and later bright patterns. The time was influenced by luxury and adventure.

The 30s was tainted by the despair and misfortune of the Great Depression, therefore, the colour palette was accentuated by brighter colours and patterns, while plum, dark green, navy, and brown became popular as well.

In the 40s, the world was consumed by the second World War, and the colour trends were based on military khaki and muted blues, giving a sense of unison for the workers back home and the soldiers at war.

[2] Juicebox Interactive, From Harvest Gold to Millennial Pink: colors that defined the decades. Blog. https://juiceboxinteractive.com/blog/color/

The 50s marked a time of economic prosperity and new beginnings. The cheerful morale was reflected with a bright colour palette with pastels and bright yellows and reds.
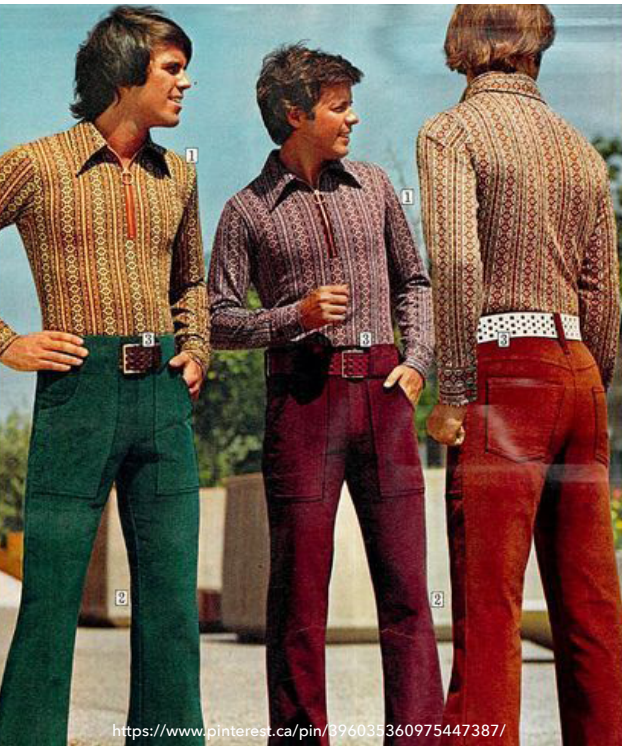
In the 60s, the mod period introduced geometric shapes and logos, with natural earthy hues and bright colours reflected in clothing, décor, and automobiles. The fashion was inspired by British rock and roll, Pop art and the hippie movement.

The 70s slowly deviated from the deep earthy tones and launched into bright colours reflective of disco and punk culture. Standing out was in fashion and everything was accentuated.

https://www.pinterest.ca/pin/362258363756757996/

The 80s economic boom resulted in bold colours, which often complimented black and white clothing pieces. The 80s did not shy away from colour!

In 1986, Pantone established its Color Institute™ and became a leader in colour and trend forecasting, and the go to for designers and brands. Later in 1988, they set new standards for textile, design, and home industries[3].

In the 90s, grunge promoted authenticity and self-expression, and rejected fashion status quo, stating that each person is unique. While some fashion was muted and simplistic, in contrast, some part of the 90s included bright jewel tones like bright purples, hot reds, greens, and blues.

In 1999, Pantone launched the first Colour of the Year and have released a new colour every year since. Cerulean Blue was the colour of the new millennium[4] and was accompanied by other colours in fashion throughout the seasons.

https://bit.ly/2GoVdan

The 2000s colour palette was rich with bright colours inspired by pop culture and innovation. Hot pink was all the rage, along with bright orange, green, yellow, and blue.

▲
Cerulean Blue

[3] https://www.pantone.com/about/about-pantone
[4] Pantone. 1999 Press Release. Color the Millenium Cerulean Blue. April 26, 1999 https://www.pantone.com/pages/pantone/pantone.aspx?pg=20194&ca=10

The 2010s brought us to a whimsical and happy colour palette. Millennial pink made its debut, and pastels and bright colours resurfaced to make a statement. This period marks an era of nostalgia and colours from previous eras made a comeback.

Millennial pink

Color of the Year 2016
PANTONE®
&
Rose Quartz 13-1520   Serenity 15-3919
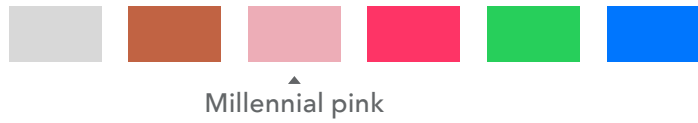
In 2016, Rose Quartz and Serenity Blue became Pantone's colours of the year to reflect the societal movement for gender equality and fluidity.

FALL/WINTER 2019/2020

The Fall and Winter colour palette is similar to the 60s and 70s colour palettes with earthy green, orange and brown hues, and bright reds and pinks. These colours are meant to exude confidence and boldness for the wearer[5].

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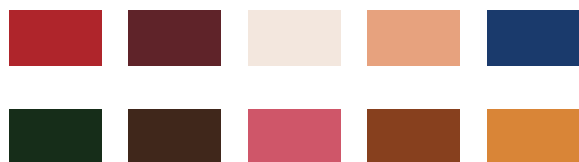
[5] Pressman, Laurie, NY Fashion Week Autumn/Winter 2019/2020. EMBRACE OF IDENTITY PROMOTES COLOR CONFIDENCE WITH A CLEVER TOUCH. Pantone Color Institute. Fashion Color Trend Report. February 7, 2019.

https://bit.ly/2DDIPCb

Classique Blue

SPRING/SUMMER 2020

The Spring colour trends recycled colours from the 80s with bright and contrasting hues, while summer colour trends recycled the colour palette of the 90s with some softer hues, and stronger colours.

The spring and summer trends were based on stability and creativity. The palette includes pops of colour with traditional colours to create a sense of ease and includes **Pantone's colour of the year; Classic Blue**[7].

It is interesting to note how the colour trends blend into each other throughout the decades, and how some colour trends are recycled based on societal factors. Pantone's Fall/Winter 2020/2021 colour palette was selected based on consumers' desire for longevity and versatility. Consumers want colours that will make a statement and that will allow them to wear their pieces for a few seasons.

STAY TUNED FOR OUR
2020 FALL COLOUR TRENDS
REVEAL NEXT WEEK!

7 Pressman, Laurie, NY Fashion Week Summer/Spring 2020. Pantone Color Institute. Fashion Color Trend Report. September 6, 2019. https://www.pantone.com/color-intelligence/fashion-color-trend-report/fashion-color-trend-report-new-york-spring-summer-2020#:~:text=About%20the%20Spring%2FSummer%202020%20NYFW%20Color%20Palette%3A&text=Burning%20bright%2C%20Flame%20Scarlet%20exudes%20confidence%20and%20determination.&text=Pungent%20Saffron%20adds%20a%20flavorful%20brilliance%20to%20the%20palette.&text=A%20boundless%20blue%20hue%2C%20Classic,to%20a%20world%20of%20possibilities.