



COLOR

PICKING PERFECT COLOR
FOR PERFECT PACKAGING

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Welcome

Shhhh. What you are about to read is the most closely guarded secret of successful packaging design. Corporate enterprises, packaging empires, and product lives have risen, fallen, and been exterminated by the use or abuse of this secret. The power of this secret, once known and employed, can propel you to success beyond your wildest imaginations. The secret of successful packaging is... color.

Color is power

You've heard "money is power." Well how does one get the money? In the packaging world, the answer is color. Color is what gets your product noticed, and if your product gets noticed, your product might actually get purchased. See? Color leads to purchase. Purchases result in money. More purchases, more money. Money is power.

Every color is powerful

Riddle: Which color is the most noticeable color? Answer: Yellow. Think highlighters, sunshine, yellow slickers, construction equipment, etc. You can SEE them. Yellow assaults the eyes, it reaches out and slaps you in the eyeballs. The answer to getting your package noticed is ... wait for it ... make it yellow. Right?

Wrong! Color is only a part of the formula to success. Color must be perfectly aligned with design and product to be noticed. If your product's purpose is to slap people's eyeballs, then yellow is the color for you.

Color psychology

Color affects you. It's true. You will want to pick colors that communicate what your product is about. If you are selling a soothing and calming bath oil, you need to pick a soothing and calming color from the greens, blue, purples, and browns palette. Studies show that yellow, red and orange are not soothing colors.

At the end, we've included a profile for each color and what they "mean" to us. Read it, it can help you narrow down what colors you should use in your packaging.



How to choose the right colors

One way to pick color is to check out the selling environment—the grocery store, the boutique, the department store, or the flea market, and do a study on the products that you will compete with. If you’re selling a barbecue sauce, go to the barbecue sauce aisle and study what’s there.

Here’s the tough part. If you’re going to sell your sauce, you’ve got to look like a sauce, but you’ve got to stand out from the others. NOTE: Successful products look like they’re supposed to and yet stand out, just a bit. When you’re in the sauce aisle, identify the products that stand out to you, figure out why, and then do it better on your product.

Coordinating colors

There are a lot of colors to consider when coordinating your package: the color of the container, the closure, the label or print, and the product. Here’s a table of our recommendations for tried-and-true color combinations using products you’d buy from Container and Packaging.

STEP BY STEP CHOOSING PERFECT COLORS FOR PERFECT PACKAGING

CONTAINER COLOR

Once you know your product color, you can pick a container that will HIDE, SHOW, or KINDA HIDE/SHOW your product.

HIDE your product by using black or white (or other opaque-colored) containers.

SHOW your product by using a clear container.

KINDA HIDE/SHOW your product by using a natural, amber, blue or green container.

PRODUCT COLOR

Every product has a color, and you need to decide if hiding or showing your product adds to its sellability.

Hide your product if it will separate, settle, is sensitive to light, or needs to be shaken before use. Show your product if it has a vibrant color, smooth consistency, or appetizing combination of ingredients.

CLOSURE COLOR

Caps, sprayers, pumps ... there are all kinds of closures. Pick your closure based on function, THEN pick a color that coordinates with your product and container.

ARTWORK COLORS

This is the last thing to pick. Pick colors for your artwork (labels or prints) that coordinate with your product, its container, and its closure. See below for some tried and true color combinations.



	CLEAR	NATURAL	BLUE	AMBER	GREEN	BLACK	WHITE
CONTAINERS Most common colors are shown (more styles and colors are available at CPS). Show or hide product by picking the container color.							
CLOSURES Our top two color combos; closures come in many colors and styles.	Black or silver closures look best on clear, but any color can look good.	Natural closures are best (earth-friendly look), black is a nice second.	Black and silver look best, white can look smurfy and top heavy.	Gold closures are knockout gorgeous on amber. Black looks great.	Black is best, but a natural cap can look pretty good with green.	Black closures are best, silver looks pretty good too. Gold looks gaudy.	White and black both look great, but really any color will work.
ARTWORK Experiment with designs and colors. These color combos are tried-and-true.	Any combination of colors works with a clear container choice.	Any combination of colors works with a natural container choice.	Blue, silver and white are best, but vibrant colors can also look great.	Harvest and warm colors look best on amber. Think rich golds and oranges.	Green, blue, white, other nature-occurring colors. Think mother earth.	Gray, white, and silver are best. Think understated impact.	White and black both look great, but really any color will work.



CONTAINER AND PACKAGING
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