

Mixing Greys

Art & Design

Making a neutral from complements instead of reaching for a tube of black.

Adding a complement lowers a colour's chroma without changing its hue or its family.

colour + its complement → neutral

Orange too loud

Chroma drops, hue holds.

Add a little blue

Green too acid

Grey, not brown.

Add red, then white

Need a dark

Warmer than black.

Blue plus burnt sienna

THE COMMON MISTAKE

✗ **Killing a colour with black**

✓ **Killing it with its complement**

Black lowers value as well as chroma, and most blacks are cool. The result is darker and duller than intended, not simply less saturated.

A neutral mixed from the picture's own colours belongs to the picture. A tube grey belongs to nothing in it.