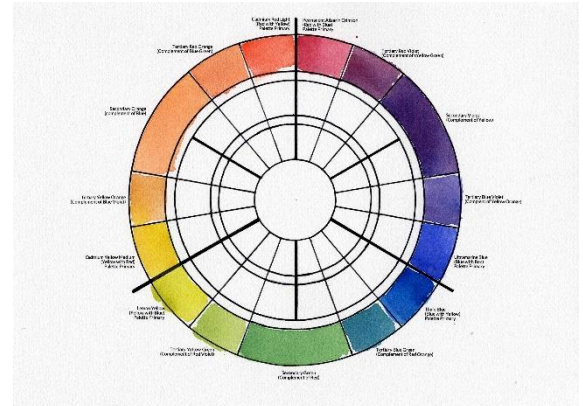


## Understanding Color Characteristics - Temperature

Depending on the books you've read or instructors you've had, they may or may not have included temperature as one of the characteristics of color. Color Temperature is indeed related to Hue, in that a change in the Temperature of a color is also a shift in Hue.

Temperature is easy to understand at a basic level. We are all familiar with those colors that are considered warm – yellows, oranges and reds – and those that are cool – greens, blues, and violets.

This simple distinction makes it easy to organize our thinking and planning Hues for our paintings.



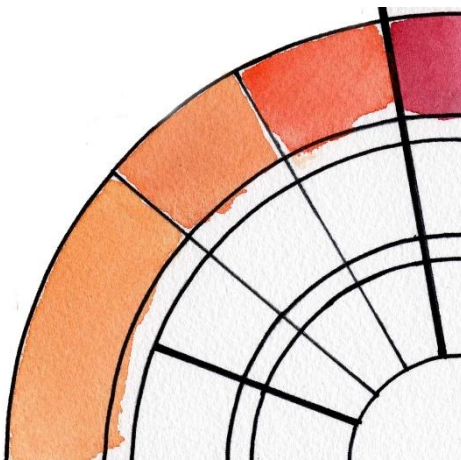
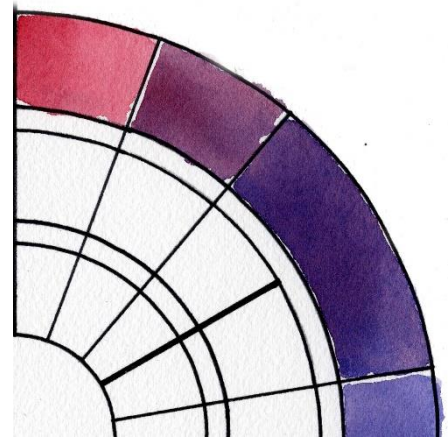
Colors on the left are mostly considered warm. Those on the right are mostly considered cool.

### But, It's Relative

Being familiar with those warm and cool colors is helpful when your painting includes a wide range of color. In those instances when you have chosen to use a more limited palette, especially an analogous palette, it is necessary to recognize that perception of color temperature changes with based relative to the other Hues in the painting.

#### Cool or Warm

At right is part of a color wheel. The color at the top is Permanent Alizarin Crimson which is a cool red – red with some blue in it. This particular slice of the color wheel includes some other colors considered to be in the cool range. In this group of color, Permanent Alizarin Crimson is actually the warmest color.



At left is another portion of the color wheel. This one includes a group of warm colors – oranges and reds. Permanent Alizarin Crimson is again located at the top of this section of the wheel. In this group of colors it is coolest of the colors.

#### Uses In Painting

Placing a contrasting temperature note in your painting is an effective way to draw the eye, subtly separate edges, and help the viewer move through the painting. It is also an effective way of introducing subtle color variety.