

The Greco-Roman, [Renaissance](#), and Neoclassical method of representing volume and space in painting was by a system of notated tonal values, the direction of each plane in the design being indicated by a particular degree of lightness or darkness. Each tonal value was determined by the angle at which a plane was meant to appear to turn away from an imaginary source of light. The tonal modeling, or shading, of forms was often first completed in a monochrome underpainting. This was then coloured with transparent washes of local hues, a technique similar to that of colour tinting a black-and-white photograph.



An example of the early oil method of (left) colour glazing a (right) monochrome painting.

Each hue has an intrinsic tonal value in relation to others on the chromatic scale; orange is inherently lighter than red, for instance, and violet is darker than green. Any reversal of this natural tonal order creates a colour discord. An optical shock is therefore produced when orange is juxtaposed with pink (a lighter tone of red) or pale violet is placed against dark green. Such [contrasts](#) as these are deliberately created in paintings for the purpose of achieving these dramatic and disturbing effects.

The intensity of a colour is its degree of purity or hue saturation. The colour of a geranium, therefore, is said to be more intense, more

highly saturated with pure orange-red than is mahogany. The pigment vermilion is orange-red at maximum intensity; the brown earth pigment burnt sienna is grayer and has a lower degree of orange-red saturation.

Intense hues are termed chromatic colours. The achromatic range is made up of hues reduced in intensity by the addition of white, making the tints, or [pastel](#) colours, such as cream and pink; or of black, producing the shades, or earth colours, such as mustard and moss green; or of both white and black, creating the neutralized hues, or colour-tinged grays, such as oatmeal and charcoal.