



## VINYL BANNER GUIDES No.1

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### Colour Guide - What Colours Are Best for My Vinyl Banner

Knowing which colours to use on your banner to achieve the desired effect can be difficult. The balance between being **easy to see** and easy to read, combined with a design that's engaging enough to draw the attention of your prospects..

The best colours to use for your vinyl signs I'll discuss here, are based purely on legibility and clarity.

I understand there can be corporate colours and branding you may have to consider for your banners. This information will help you choose your banner colours within these constraints, and make sure they work.

#### The Colour Basics

The ease with which we can read anything is a result of the difference in the *refractive index* of the colour of the background, and the colour of your text.

The difference in colour refractive index best suited for us to read is 100. You can likely guess which two colours give us this index - you guessed it. Black on white, I know these aren't really colours but you take my point :)

White is the most reflective, it returns almost all of the light reaching it back to the environment. While black on the other hand drinks light in like a sponge absorbing almost all the light that reaches it. (R.I. White = 100, Black = 0)

Based on this, all our banners should be black on white. The problem with this is Black and white are Boring.

B&W is great for the morning paper, beaut for typing an email but dead boring when it comes to catching someones attention to your sign.

The colour combination I most often

resort to for my own banners is Black on Yellow. These two colours have a refractive index difference of about 70, so still easy on the eyes from a reading perspective.

Black on Yellow though is far more interesting, and more

importantly, more eye catching. Think of all those road works signs. Most are Black on Yellow - why? Because Black on Yellow gets seen, look for yourself.

To place this in perspective colours like Blue and Red have a very a similar refractive indexes and as such are very hard to read together, you should avoid using colours like these if possible..

Apart from the colours themselves, another factor to consider when working on a design for any signage, is the level of colour saturation or brightness used.

Bright colours are seen more easily. Bright colours are pure colours and reflect a single wavelength (or narrow band) of light. Bright colours though cause visual fatigue. The reason for this is because your eyes must keep refocusing on different light wavelengths used. Look at the examples.

That said, our prospects don't have to

|                     |                      |
|---------------------|----------------------|
| Easy On<br>The Eyes | Easy On<br>The Eyes+ |
| Too Hard<br>to Read | Too Hard<br>to Read  |

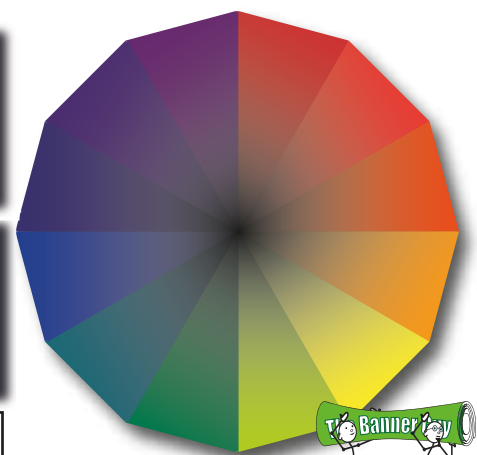
read your banner all day. So judicious use of bright colours to attract more attention is fine. A bold headline on your banner is a great place for this. Balance this with some softer tones.

Pastels can work in the right combinations. The correct colours for your secondary text and the background ensure your message is easy to look at, and read. Look for a balance between eye catching colour and easy legibility. I also recommend keeping the number of colours to a minimum in your design, three to four as a rule of thumb.

The best way to show these concepts are with examples. I hope this info and the graphics provided help you to choose effective colours for your next outdoor sign or vinyl banner.

Cheers  
*Steve*

Steve Scott - The Vinyl Banner Guy



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