Summer Edition Newsletter

Centre for **Universal Design Australia**

This 2023 Summer Edition features colour and luminance contrast

CUDA's summer newsletters are topic specific containing past posts from the website. For more on this topic, or any other, use the search button on left hand menu of the website.

Which colour to use - a new standard?

There is a growing body of science on the topic of colour use and choice. On the second page of the International Ergonomics Association newsletter there is an item advising that in developing an international standard (ISO 24505) for colour use, accessibility needs to be considered. In four parts, the first part of the standard has been published for older …

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Luminance Contrast: How to measure it?

Visual contrast, or luminance contrast, is a key feature of universal design, but how well can we measure it? It's a mainstream issue and something designers need to consider from the outset. It's one thing to know the importance of visual contrast, but knowing how to measure it is another. For most people, vision is their most dominant sense. About …

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Creating independence with colour

Colour is important for giving visual cues about the position of objects and helps us navigate around obstacles. But as we grow older this ability tends to decrease along with vision loss. Colour coding is one strategy to gain or direct attention and increase independent movement. A study on using colour for safe movement in the home found that bright, …

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Colours for colour blindness

Colour is often used in charts, maps and infographics, but what if you can't see some colours? One in twelve men are colour blind, but not for all colours or the same colours. Infographics are becoming more popular as a means of explaining things. So choosing the best colours is to everyone's advantage. Venngage website has an good guide and …

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Does your access map have the right colours?

Being able to find places easily is key to getting out and about at any age or level of capability. Online maps are becoming more sophisticated with interactive content and different layers of information. Graphics and colour are used to emphasise places and attributes. But not everyone can see certain colours. So, does your access map have the right colours? …

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Colour blindness not just genetic

Colour blindness is an eye condition that changes the way people see colours. It doesn't seem like a big thing to people who have normal colour vision. But when it comes to reading things like maps, it matters a lot. Graphs, maps, diagrams and other graphic information types often rely on colour to differentiate between elements and features. With genetic …

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Good colour contrast for websites

How did you choose the colours for your last website update? Did you choose colours based on your brand logo and text or use the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) algorithm? But can an algorithm guarantee good colour contrasts on digital screens? Probably not. Visual perception is personal and much depends on your eyesight. Maybe it means using humans and not …

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Colour combinations for everyone

Observations during the 2011 Tsunami disaster in Japan showed that the colour of signage matters a lot. A short research paper outlines the colours and colour combinations that are easily seen and interpreted quickly by people who have one of the colour blindness conditions. The result is colour combinations for everyone. The results of this study and other colour studies …

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Readability and colour choices

Colour contrasts can be deceiving because we are subject to optical illusions. The video below shows how two different shades of grey are actually the same. That's why you can't rely on judging contrast by eye. Fortunately there are colour checkers to help with colour choices especially for websites. And why do you need colour contrast checkers? Because more than …

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You can find the last six newsletters in the newsletter archive as well as past summer editions.