THE *effortless* GUIDE TO
MATCHING

SAMPLE

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The Effortless Guide To Matching

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Matching Colors

Ugh. The dreaded color wheel.

If you do a basic web search about how to match colors, almost every article uses the color wheel to explain vague terms and concepts.

Then, you're expected to deduce all that information and miraculously understand how to wear colors together.

That's really frustrating.

I do think the color wheel idea *is* important, but the concepts can get a little convoluted.

So yes, I *do* feel obliged to explain the color wheel my way. If you've felt frustrated by it before, I hope you'll give the concept a second chance, and see if my explanations make things a bit more clear.

I won't leave you high and dry once we go through these color wheel concepts. I'll also show you *a few ways this applies to your wardrobe*, and how it can help when you're putting together outfits. It's a lot simpler than you think.

Let's get started, shall we?

The Color Wheel

Fortunately, color-matching really *is* a science – **complementary** and matching colors are actually identified very easily by using a common tool: the color wheel.

That's right. That same tool you used way back in elementary school art class is going to be your go-to guide for matching colors as a grown man, and it's really quite simple.

First, some definitions:

Hues

When you take a look at any color wheel, you'll generally see 6-12 colors. These are called 'hues'.
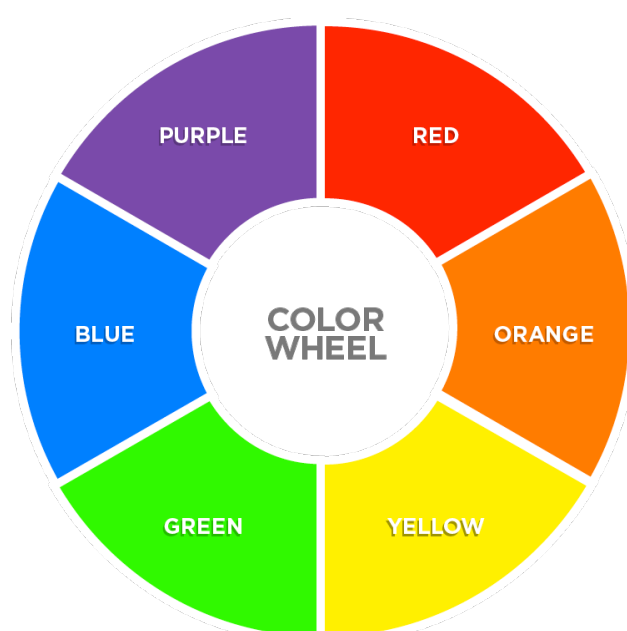

In the case of a 12-color color wheel, where you might consider navy blue and baby blue to be different *colors*, they fall in the same 'spoke' of the color wheel, and are therefore the same *hue.*

Tints, Shades, & Tones

One specific hue can actually have several iterations merely by lightening or darkening the color.

- Lighter colors, created by adding white, are called tints.

- Darker colors, created by mixing in black, are shades.

- Tones are created by adding grey, which instead of lightening or darkening, *tones down* the boldness and is often an easy way to make a vibrant color easier to work with.
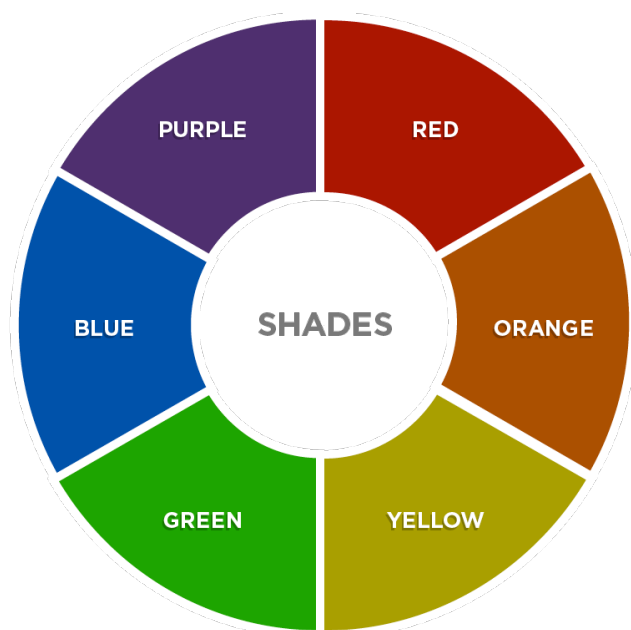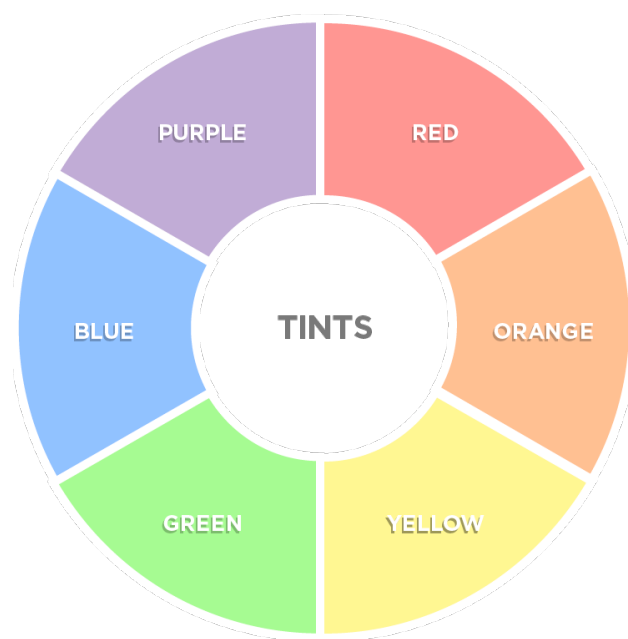
From there, use a monochromatic hue, but lighter tint and pair with some lighter, greyish-blue trousers. Fill in the blanks with neutrals, like a white shirt, brown belt and shoes, and you're good to go.

But heck, fashion and style are about breaking the rules as much as they are about knowing the principles, so don't be afraid to throw the book out the window and **go with your gut**.

Over time, you'll find the colors that suit *you* and your tastes the best.

This is just one example. We'll have a few more for you later on in this guide.

A note on seasonality

In addition to the changes in fabric selection (which we'll get into later), **consider matching the colors you wear to the season you're currently experiencing**.


LIGHTER COLORS VERSUS RICH EARTH TONES, VIA LOOKASTIC

First, the simplest move is to choose contrasting pattern styles – in other words, don't match two of the same pattern. If you're rocking a houndstooth shirt, it's generally safer *not* to pick a houndstooth tie, or even pocket square. Instead, put a polka dot next to some checks, or paisley on top of a faded pinstripe.

Second, you'll always want to contrast the scale of the patterns. In fact, this is the one way that you can make it acceptable to match two of the same type of pattern.
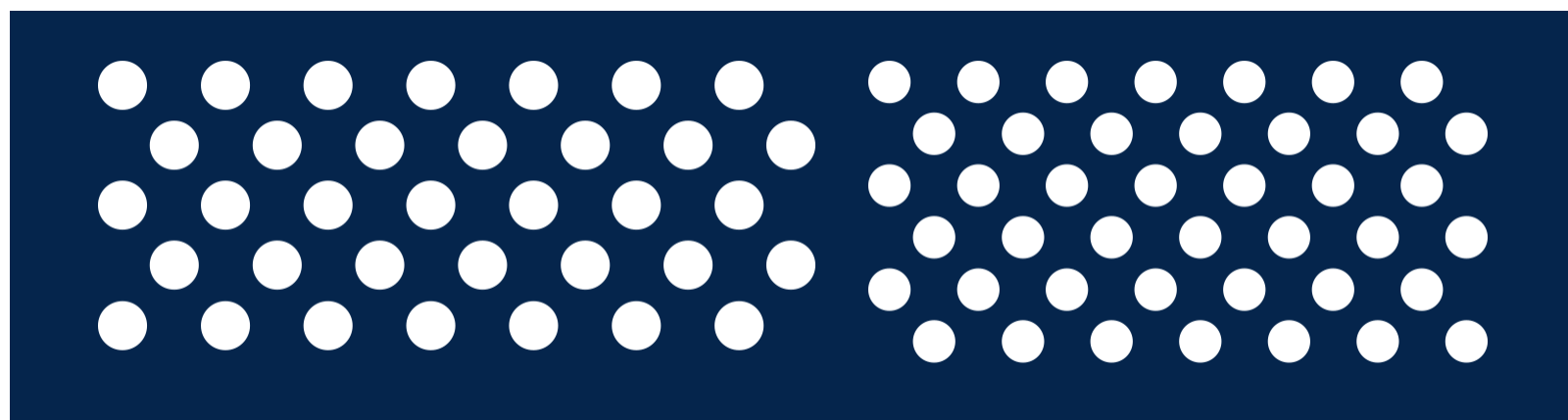
AWKWARD… NOT MUCH DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE TWO SIZES
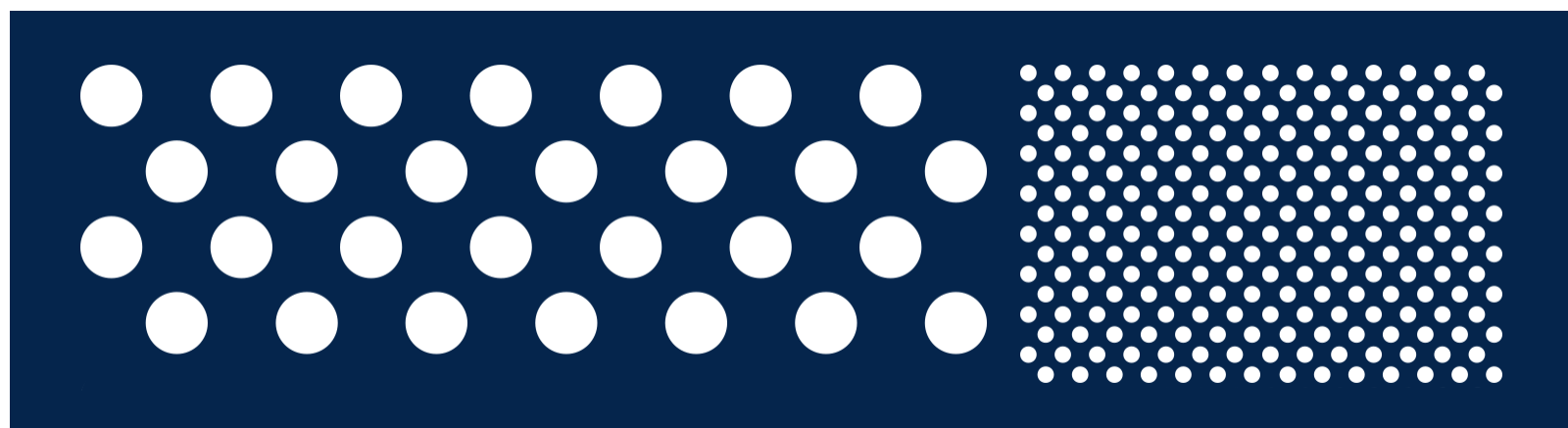
AAHHH… BETTER

For example, a striped tie *can* work with a striped shirt, as long as you make the scale of the stripes decidedly different. Think a repp stripe tie with a pin-stripe suit, or a bold, large-scale polka-dotted tie with a pin-dot shirt.

Last, consider contrasting the boldness of your patterns. This allows you to work with *more* patterns without coming across as clownish.

Smaller scales and lower contrast can make even the busiest patterns come across as almost solid, which makes them significantly easier to work with.

Matching By Style

The final consideration to make when you are matching your outfits is the style you are trying to put forth.

And, as always, this comes down to a decision to either match, or contrast.

Matching

Sometimes, it really makes sense to adopt a pretty uniform 'style' across all the pieces of your outfit.

For example, you may be going for a 100% American preppy style — from the chinos, to the penny loafers, to the OCBD and navy blazer. In this case, it will look kind of funky if you swap out those penny loafers for a really sleek, european dress shoe, or a heavy workwear boot.

Likewise, if you are channeling a continental businessman in a sharply-tailored Italian suit, a pair of brown penny loafers will look silly and out of place.

On the following pages are some examples of outfits that fully conform to a given style...

Workwear

SELVEDGE DENIM VIA LEVIS, CHORE COAT VIA APOLIS, WORK SHIRT VIA
GRAYERS, WORK BOOTS VIA RED WING

Continental Businessman

NAVY SUIT VIA SUITSUPPLY, DRESS SHIRT VIA HIGH & CRYE, TIE VIA J.CREW,

LEATHER OXFORDS VIA JACK ERWIN, SQUARE VIA THE TIE BAR

Likewise, you will want to maintain some contrast through the scales of any patterns that may occur in the shirt or tie, as we covered in lesson two.

Contrast

As we mentioned, contrast is the most popular choice when pairing shirts and ties, but it *is* an accepted move to opt for a monochrome look and pick a tie that is as close to an exact match with your shirt as possible.

Some folks will match the texture as well, picking a shiny silk tie to go with a sleek and slick dress

shirt, but if that's *too* matchy for you, there's still the opportunity to add some contrast in texture (as discussed in lesson three) while maintaining the single color.
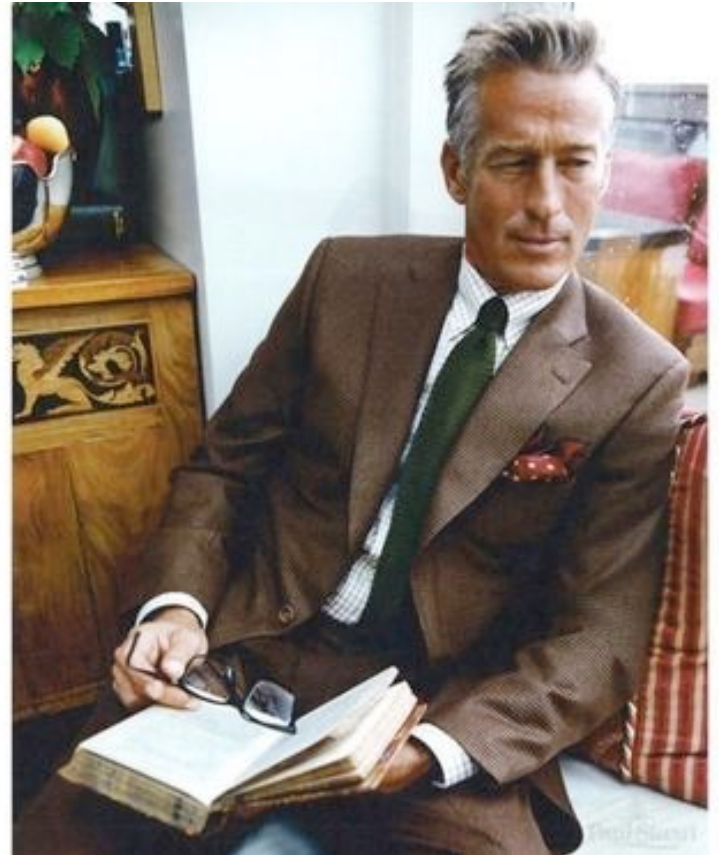
> **Summary: Pick a contrasting tie in a complementary color, or go monochrome with a tie in the same hue as your shirt.**

Shoes, Belt & Watch

In general, when wearing leathers, **you want them all to match.**

Brown shoes? Match them with a brown belt and brown watch strap. Black belt? You guessed it: black shoes, black watch strap. However, there are some opportunities to break from this rule.

First, we'd be remiss to not point out that **exact matching is not entirely crucial here**, as these three items are spaced out enough that slight variations in shade will most likely go unnoticed.

For example, I often wear burgundy loafers or wingtips, but don't have a burgundy belt. Instead, I wear a dark brown belt, and since it's never seen right next to the shoes,

Wrapping Up

I'd like to end this guide by answering a few questions I often receive.

Some have already been answered. Others could potentially turn into their own sections in future versions of this guide, but for now, I'm answering them simply and succinctly.

I hope you find them useful.

"How and when can black and brown be worn together?   Such as brown shoes with black pants?"

Traditionally, you don't mix black and brown. Their shades are too close in value to look "right".

However, there are ways to wear it well.

In a less formal situation, if you're wearing **washed black denim** (not completely black, but faded a bit), you can wear a brown belt with brown boots or chukkas.

I like to mix faded black denim with a chambray shirt, and throw an olive green military jacket or burgundy mid-layer in the mix, to draw from the autumn palette we talked about earlier in the guide.

Did you enjoy this sample?

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