

colour charts

When it comes to home decorating, one of the most exciting and satisfying aspects – aside from seeing the end result, of course – is choosing your paint. You get to spend hours pouring over colour charts, selecting different shades, narrowing your choice down to a few lucky contenders and then using testpots to view your colour choices on a larger scale.

However, have you ever stopped to think about just how the colours end up in the colour charts? Who chooses them, and why? And how do they come up with those out-there names?

Many of Resene's colour decisions are based on information supplied by the Color Marketing Group (CMG), an organisation founded in 1962. Its 650 international members meet twice a year in Virginia, USA, to analyse and interpret colour trends, and devise long- and short-term colour forecasts based on global influences. This is combined with information from a number of other colour forecasting forums.

Work on colours for new colour ranges will often start one to two years out. For The Range 2008, for example, decisions will start being made in April 2006. Say that colour trends suggest aqua-toned blues are likely to be popular. A number of these will be considered, with a smaller selection picked for the next The Range fashion fandeck.

Dianne Connell, Resene colour controller, is jointly responsible for analysing colour trends and proposing additions to the latest colour charts.

"As well as information from the Color Marketing Group, we also look at magazines to see what sort of colours are coming through, and check out the recent colour-match requests to see what people are asking for," she says.




Most of the Resene standard colour charts are updated every few years. Usually any changes to standard charts involve replacing less-requested colours with more popular ones.

However, if your favourite colour suddenly disappears, don't panic. Colours taken off a Resene chart are still available.

"The colours are never deleted from the system," says Dianne. "We still have formulas going back to the 1980s, so Resene ColorShop staff can contact our Colour Lab and get the relevant formula for you, so your colour can be tinted."

The enduring popularity of colours such as Resene Spanish White and Resene Pearl Lusta mean they've been in Resene colour charts for years. And they're unlikely to be removed. However, certain shades do need to be taken out to make way for new ones.

Order Resene Colour charts from the comfort of your own home or work – simply visit www.resene.co.nz (NZ) or www.resene.com.au (AUST).

-  Resene Marathon
-  Resene Ventura
-  Resene Spanish White
-  Resene Pearl Lusta

What's in a name?

Asteroid. Copyrite. Endorphin. Wonderland. Awol. Whizz Bang – where do they get the names from?

The names for all Resene colours are selected by the company's managing director Nick Nightingale and marketing manager, Karen Warman. They pick their favourites from an ever-evolving master list of about 2000 names, matching them to colours for the new chart.

"Bright reds, yellow and oranges are the easiest colours to name," says Karen. "Greens and neutrals are usually much harder."

And often they're left with a pile of these trickier colours for which names need to be created.

Many colour charts have names based on a specific theme. For example, the Resene Lumbersider chart features nature-inspired names such as Rattlesnake, Thistle, Gravel and Marshland, while the Resene KidzColour chart includes the child-friendly names Topsy Turvy, Lullaby, Daisy Chain and Candy Floss.

Up to 80 new colours are added each year to The Range fashion fandeck. These have a modern slant and usually include topical names. Kidman, Wellywood and Middle Earth feature in The Range 2006, while past favourites include Kournikova and Hillary.

Each year Resene runs an internal competition where staff are invited to submit names, with prizes going to those whose suggestions make it onto The Range. Nick and Karen also collect names as they go about their day, jotting down ideas from a variety of sources – whether it's a video title or a word from an overheard conversation. In fact, they're always looking for new ideas. If you have a colour name brainwave, email it to advice@resene.co.nz, with 'Habitat colour names' in the subject line and you might just see it in a future colour chart.

Choosing colours can be a relatively quick process, says Karen Warman, Resene marketing manager. However, what comes next – the formulating, coding, creating artwork and printing of the colour charts – can take up to eight months.

Color Communications Inc. Australasia Ltd (CCIA) is the company that creates most of the Resene colour charts. Kirsten Long from CCIA says it's a two-pronged process. One phase is the manufacture of the colour and the colour-matching; the second aspect is the creation of the artwork – the images and text that go on each colour chart.

"After we receive a set of colour standards and the artwork from Resene, we carry out the all-important colour-matching," says Kirsten. "Once Resene has approved each colour, it gets coated onto a paper substrate. It's then dried in an oven and comes off in reels, which are sheeted off and cut into chips. These are then mounted onto the printed cards and the colour charts are compiled."

Traditionally, colour charts were manufactured using CCIA's product, but unlike most colour charts, most of Resene's are now produced using actual Resene paint. When you pick up The Range, the colour chips are printed using Resene SpaceCote Low Sheen, the same paint you would use to paint your home's interior. This gives a more accurate idea of the shade. **H**

