The **Double** Primary System

Why it is best to use a palette with **two reds**, **two blues** and **two yellows**.

Dan China

Everyone knows the three primary colours

It is helpful to use the colour circle as the basis for looking at colour

If you mix the three primaries you get grey
Therefore mixing complementary colours is the same as mixing three primaries.

Mixing yellow + (blue and red) = grey

Complementary colours are opposites in the colour circle

Mixing blue + (red and yellow) = grey (good for skies)

These greys and browns mixed with complementary colours are tertiary colours (they contain the 3 primary colours)

Looking at colour
These standard school colours are part of a continuum. For instance, red moves from a reddish purple through to a deep reddish orange.

Brilliant red is close to orange and contains some yellow.
Brilliant yellow is close to orange and contains some red.
Brilliant blue is close to purple and contains some red.

Some yellow in the red makes the purple slightly dull.
Some red in the yellow makes the green slightly dull.

Lemon yellow and cobalt has no red at all and will mix brilliant acid lemon greens.

Crimson and brilliant blue contains no yellow and will mix brilliant greens.

We need two reds, two yellows, two blues to mix clear secondary colours. This is the double primary system.

Double Primary System

**Brilliant Red**
(scarlet, strawberry, tomato, pillar box)

**Crimson**
(raspberry, wine)

**Brilliant Yellow**
(sunflower, buttercup)

**Lemon Yellow**
(lemons)

**Brilliant Blue**
(Ultramarine, Bluebells)

**Cobalt**
(sky, Cornflowers)

+ white + black or prussian blue
Note use of complementary colours here.
Look at Seurat, Cezanne etc – greys and complements.

Using equipment
Being in control

Shared equipment
Personal equipment

Sponge or cloth
dirty water
8 section paint palette
paper
mixing palette
clean water

Sponge or cloth
dirty water
8 section paint palette
paper
mixing palette
clean water
The End