

# COLOR THEORY

By Prof. Dan Barnett

Here's my opinion...OPINION....

Make your first color contrast the LEAST with your background. Make your subsequent (SP?) color(s) contrast more and more, with the background, as you apply them. In other words, the last color you apply should contrast the MOST with the background. By doing this, it helps insure that the striping doesn't look like it has "broken" lines, or "dashes". You can do a quick test of this idea...just take 2 panels of the same color and lay down the same 2 colors on it, but switch the order you apply them. Use two contrasting colors for the striping.

Example....

Panel 1. Dark red background with the first striping color being black and the second color being white.

Panel 2. Dark red background with the first striping color being white and the second striping color being black.

Now, if you step back a few feet...which is how the striping will be viewed on a car or bike...you should notice that the white lines in Panel 2 look broken. This, to me, is not a desired effect. I think people tend to forget that the average viewer of the striping is going to NOT be sitting/standing inches away from the work. When you're right up on something, it's harder to notice the flaws.

Keep in mind there will, from time to time, be exceptions to this "rule", but it will usually look best if it's done like I've described above. (in my opinion)

Something else I tend to do...I make the bottom color the more intricate of the two/three. Not always a lot more intricate/involved, but at least somewhat so. It's kind of the anchor for the top color. The top color already has the high contrast working for it, so I tend to tone down the "busy-ness" of it. Like I said...personal preference/opinion. I think when you start using more than 3 colors, though, you have a bit more wriggle room, as far as the order they get layed down, because there is so much going on it's tougher to notice which color is doing what.

Dan