

# How to Create Wall and Accent Paint Palettes from Your Photos, with Sherwin Williams' ColorSnapTool



Wall paint colors at left and accent colors at right, generated by the same photo and Sherwin Williams' Color Snap Program

## Quick and Easy Techniques for Your Decorating Projects

by Don Berg



If you're a decorator, or a homeowner who's trying to redesign a room, you know how difficult it is to find just the right paint colors. You can carry swatches of fabrics, throw pillows and a lamp or two to the paint stores and search through thousands of paint chips to match them. Or, you can try an easier method: the free, online tool called ColorSnap by Sherwin Williams.

The first thing you need to do is to find or take the photo that you want to work with. It can be a favorite snapshot with colors that you like, an image of a classical painting that you find online or a shot of artwork, accent pieces, a rug or fabric that you plan on using in the room. If you can, it's best to take photos of decorative objects in the room itself and with the room's everyday lighting.

Now, use Sherwin Williams' ColorSnap program at [SnapYourColors.com](http://SnapYourColors.com). Just visit that web site, upload your photo, and it will generate an array of matching colors with retail paint names and catalog numbers.

There is a big advantage in getting actual paint numbers and names to use. You can pick up paint chips or small sample jars of paint at Sherwin Williams' stores, without having to lug your furniture there. You can get samples at other retailers too – most paint shops have computerized formulas to match Sherwin Williams' colors with their own brands of paint. Then, you can view the chips and samples in the room you're planning to decorate, on the walls, with your furnishings in place. With ColorSnap you can be pretty sure of how your walls will look before you purchase gallons of paint.

Unlike ColorSnap, many other online color services provide Internet standard "Hex Code" and "RGB" colors that are useful for web design applications, but not as paint.

The only problem that I've found is that the ColorSnap program seems to work best at finding bright accent colors, and not necessarily the type of paints that I like to use on walls.

As you can see from the names below, the colors that were automatically generated for a photo of a bright cluster of flowers are "Outgoing", "Feverish" and "Electric". They go well with the photo, because that's what ColorSnap is great at, but they might be too bold for your room's walls.



SW 6641  
OUTGOING  
ORANGE

SW 6621  
EMOTIONAL

SW 6871  
POSITIVE RED

SW 6859  
FEVERISH PINK

SW 6921  
ELECTRIC LIME

Here are examples of paint colors that ColorSnap generated from some of my photos:



For my taste, most of the colors shown above would look great mixed into fabrics, decorative crafts, ceramics and other accents. However, most of them would overwhelm a room if they were painted on anything but a small accent wall.

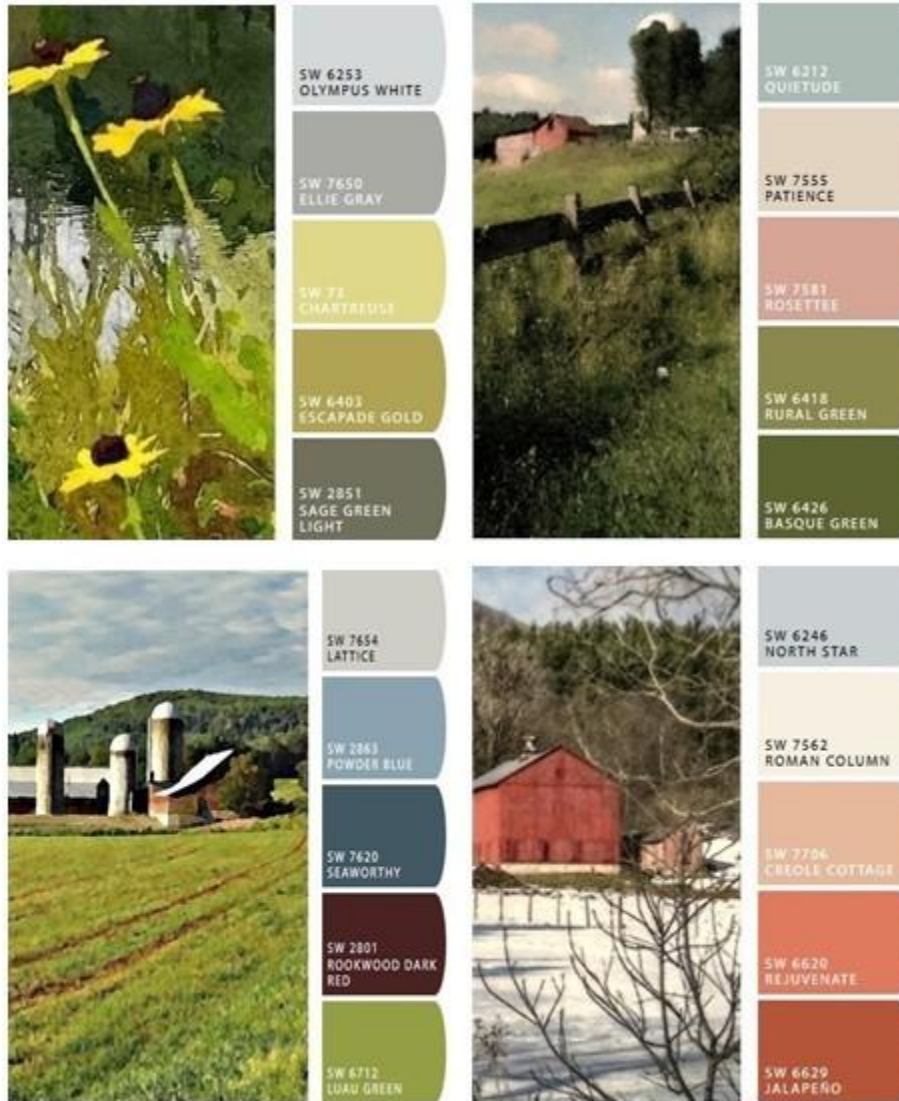
But, don't worry. You can try any of four easy ways to use ColorSnap to find softer, more subdued colors that work better as wall paint.

## 1. Find Wall Paint Colors by Using ColorSnap's "Edit Colors" Feature



When you upload a photo or digital image to ColorSnap, you'll be given a choice of five paint colors and a button that says "Edit Colors". Click on that button and you'll be shown five more colors that you can easily drag and drop into your palette. Among the ten colors, you can sometimes find some that would work well as wall paint with your original image and with some of the bolder accent paint colors.

## 2. Generate Wall Paint Palettes by Choosing Images with White, Gray, Neutral and Subdued Tones



If you're specifically trying to find wall paint colors, try starting with a photo or image that includes soft tones, whites, grays and neutrals. Photos with gray clouds, sand, snow, weathered wood and dry grass work well. Upload your photo to ColorSnap, run the program and then hit the "Edit Colors" button to select your favorite wall tones, as well as accent colors, from among the ten choices generated.

### 3. Find Wall Paint Colors by Cropping In On Just the Neutral and Subdued Tones in Your Photograph



Even the most colorful of photographs usually have some areas of subdued or neutral tones. Trick ColorSnap into focusing on those areas by cropping in on them. You'll see that it will generate some soft paint colors that you might like on your walls.





You'll find easy-to-use photo cropping tools at [iPiccy.com](http://iPiccy.com), [PicMonkey.com](http://PicMonkey.com) and most other free, online photo editors.

#### 4: Create a Wall Paint Palette from Any Digital Image, Sherwin Williams' ColorSnap Program and an Easy DIY Trick



Here's a trick that I stumbled on that seems to work most of the time.

Upload your image at [SnapYourColors.com](http://SnapYourColors.com), let it do its thing, and record your favorite accent paint colors. You can use the names and numbers to pick up paint chips at a Sherwin Williams store to help choose furniture, fabrics and, well, accents.

Now, upload the same image at [PicMonkey.com](http://PicMonkey.com), a free, online photo editor. When the image opens, click on the "Exposure" button on the left of the screen. Adjust the "Brightness" bar to about 50. Apply that effect and then click on the "Colors" button. Adjust the "Saturation" bar to negative 50 and apply that effect.

Other free online photo editors will work just as well. Most have controls to increase brightness and reduce color saturation in photos. Some even have "Vibrancy" adjustments that you can use to tone down your photo.

No matter what editor you use, your goal is to create a bleached-out, dull version of your original image. Make it and save it, but make sure to give it a new name so you don't overwrite your original.

Upload the bleached image at [SnapYourColors.com](http://SnapYourColors.com) and the program should generate a selection of paint colors that will include nice choices for your walls and nice backgrounds for your photo, art or fabric accents.



The wall colors you get using the bleached photo should still be attractive when viewed with the original photo and with the accent colors that you created from the original photo.



The Wall paint colors at left and the Accent colors at right, were generated from the same photo with Sherwin Williams' ColorSnap Program at SnapYourColors.com. – Photo by Bill Williams at StockSnap.com

Remember, before you buy gallons of paint and start your decorating project, visit your favorite paint retailer to get actual paint chips or small jars of paint samples. View them in the room you're planning to decorate, on the walls, under the lighting that you plan to use, and with your selection of furnishings.

I hope that these hints are of some help. Best of luck with your painting projects. Send snapshots!

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Sources:

Sherwin Williams' Color Snap Program: <https://SnapYourColors.com/>

Free Online Photos: [http://www.todaysarts.net/free-art-reference-photos.html#Photo\\_Archives](http://www.todaysarts.net/free-art-reference-photos.html#Photo_Archives)

Free Online Photo Editors: <http://www.todaysarts.net/free-photo-lessons-beginner.html#OnlinePhotoEditors>

Architect Don Berg was a consultant to Roger Moss on his book *Paint in America* and on Sherwin Williams' *Heritage Colors Collection*. He has been a guest and consultant on HGTV and has published fifteen books on traditional American country building and landscape design. Don's designs, interviews and articles have appeared in Home Magazine, The Old House Journal, Better Homes and Gardens, Country Magazine, Traditional Building Magazine, Hudson Valley Magazine, Period Homes Magazine, Mother Earth News and many other publications.

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