Using Color


Color Context

Rule #1: If you want different objects of the same color in a table or graph to look the same, make sure that the background—the color that surrounds them—is consistent.

Rule #2: If you want objects in a table or graph to be easily seen, use a background color that contrasts sufficiently with the object.

Color Usage

Rule #5: Use soft, natural colors to display most information and bright and/or dark colors to highlight information that requires greater attention.

Palette Types

Rule #6: When using color to encode a sequential range of quantitative values, stick with a single hue (or a small set of closely related hues) and vary intensity from pale colors for low values to increasingly darker and brighter colors for high values.

De-emphasize non-data components

Rule #7: Non-data components of tables and graphs should be displayed just visibly enough to perform their role, but no more so, for excessive salience could cause them to distract attention from the data.

Avoid Red-Green

Rule #8: To guarantee that most people who are colorblind can distinguish groups of data that are color coded, avoid using a combination of red and green in the same display.

Avoid visual effects

Rule #9: Avoid using visual effects in graphs.

Bad Example

Quelle: AK Fürst, Mitgliederzeitschrift der AK Wien.

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