



FENG SHUI WITH BOON YAP

PHOTOGRAPHY: KENNY YAP



Significance of colours in feng shui

COLOURS HAVE AN important effect on our behaviour and our emotions. There are various disciplines that describe the impact of colours on our lives and their use in evoking particular feelings and outcomes. But like so many “alternative” subject matters, some have their basis in deep, albeit empirical, knowledge, while others are subjective interpretations of the original. True knowledge works regardless of whether or not we believe it, while improvised content will only work if we believe in it.

The concept of colours in feng shui comes from the Five Element Theory and the proper application of colours to derive feng shui benefits must follow the Five Element

Transformation principle, also known as Wu Xing. The five element transformation describes the interaction of the five elements of Fire, Earth, Metal, Water and Wood. Each element is represented by specific colours, which can be used to enhance, weaken or control different qualities of qi that affect an individual. But which colours to use and when?

Take heed that applying the concept of colours alone does not lead to feng shui improvements. It is not a simple case of pink for romance, red for fame, or black for career. Only when colours are appropriately used in conjunction with principles and systems of classical feng shui, can colours help enhance good qi and remedy bad qi, bringing benefits to our lives.

The room featured here is earthy in tone and feel therefore it suits an earth Kun or Gen Gua person. The cream walls and sofa are earth colours, as are the brown earthy tones of the drapes and warm browns of the floorboards. Earth colours strengthen earth gua persons using the room. The maroon lounge settee is the colour of fire. Fire produces earth thereby energising earth Gua persons using the room. This room is good for Kun or Gen Gua people and not good for wood Sun or Zhen Gua persons, because maroon 'fire' will burn wood. Additionally, the wood Gua person in an attempt to destroy so much earth hues will himself or herself be weakened.

arrangement of numbers 1 to 9 in a magic 9-grid square that is a principle of classical feng shui (see table below). But for the purpose of this article, we will focus on colours and their significance in feng shui.

4	9	2
3	5	7
8	1	6

Fire is represented by the colour red and its associated red spectrum comprising purple, crimson, magenta, red, vermilion, sienna and orange. Earth is represented by the earthy hues of yellow, chocolate, brown, ochre, fawn and beige. Metal is denoted by the colour of metal such as silver, gold and white. Water is represented by the black murky depths of the ocean to the clear blue of a fresh spring or brook. Wood colours are the greens hues of living plants.

Five Element and colours

Element	Fire	Earth	Metal	Water	Wood
Colour	Red Purple	Brown Yellow	White Silver Gold	Black Blue	Green Lemon

THE FIVE ELEMENT THEORY OF COLOURS IN FENG SHUI

The concept of colour is part of classical feng shui if used according to the Five Element Theory. Colour is a part of qi for qi is thought to encompass the whole of the electromagnetic spectrum and more. After all, colour is the visible part of this vast spectrum.

As mentioned earlier, the five elements are Fire, Earth, Metal, Water and Wood, with each having specific colours associated with it. In addition, the five elements are associated with shape, matter and forms from our natural world, and the Lo Shu magic square numbers. Lo Shu is the special

FENG SHUI APPLICATION OF COLOURS

The way to use colours in feng shui is to first know which element we wish to strengthen and which we need to weaken. In order to know this, we need to understand what each element symbolises. Each element can symbolise many things including the following:

- Individuals according to their Life Gua
- Individuals according to their Day Pillar
- Type of qi according to the Flying Star system
- Type of qi according to the Ba Zhai system
- Type of qi according to the Yi Jing Ba Gua system

In this article, we will only deal with colours for individuals according to their Life Gua.

YOUR LIFE GUA AND COLOURS

To find out what colours would suit each individual, we have to know their Life Gua. According to the Ba Zhai system of classical feng shui, each person falls under one of the 8 Life Gua. Check the table below for your year of birth to find out your Life Gua number.

Year	Male	Female	Year	Male	Female	Year	Male	Female
1900	1	8	1936	1	8	1972	1	8
1901	9	6	1937	9	6	1973	9	6
1902	8	7	1938	8	7	1974	8	7
1903	7	8	1939	7	8	1975	7	8
1904	6	9	1940	6	9	1976	6	9
1905	2	1	1941	2	1	1977	2	1
1906	4	2	1942	4	2	1978	4	2
1907	3	3	1943	3	3	1979	3	3
1908	2	4	1944	2	4	1980	2	4
1909	1	8	1945	1	8	1981	1	8
1910	9	6	1946	9	6	1982	9	6
1911	8	7	1947	8	7	1983	8	7
1912	7	8	1948	7	8	1984	7	8
1913	6	9	1949	6	9	1985	6	9
1914	2	1	1950	2	1	1986	2	1
1915	4	2	1951	4	2	1987	4	2
1916	3	3	1952	3	3	1988	3	3
1917	2	4	1953	2	4	1989	2	4
1918	1	8	1954	1	8	1990	1	8
1919	9	6	1955	9	6	1991	9	6
1920	8	7	1956	8	7	1992	8	7
1921	7	8	1957	7	8	1993	7	8
1922	6	9	1958	6	9	1994	6	9
1923	2	1	1959	2	1	1995	2	1
1924	4	2	1960	4	2	1996	4	2
1925	3	3	1961	3	3	1997	3	3
1926	2	4	1962	2	4	1998	2	4
1927	1	8	1963	1	8	1999	1	8
1928	9	6	1964	9	6	2000	9	6
1929	8	7	1965	8	7	2001	8	7
1930	7	8	1966	7	8	2002	7	8
1931	6	9	1967	6	9	2003	6	9
1932	2	1	1968	2	1	2004	2	1
1933	4	2	1969	4	2	2005	4	2
1934	3	3	1970	3	3	2006	3	3
1935	2	4	1971	2	4			

Now check your Life Gua against the element and colour in the table below.

Life Gua	Li	Kun, Gen	Dui, Qian	Kan	Zhen, Xun
Lo Shu No.	9	2, 8	7, 6	1	3, 4
Element	Fire	Earth	Metal	Water	Wood
Colour	Red Purple Pink	Brown Yellow Beige	White Silver Gold	Black Blue	Green Lemon

Once you have established which Life Gua you belong to, then we can find out which element strengthens, produces, weakens or conquers you. The use of colour can be

on anything or anywhere and not restricted to wall colour or swathes of furnishing.

A Kan Life Gua person belongs to the Water element, therefore blue and black strengthen him while the metal colours of white, silver and gold energise him (producing cycle). He should avoid wood colours of green or lemon because they will drain him of energy (weakening cycle) and luck. Earthy colours will clash with his Water (destroying cycle). Therefore, the Kan Gua owner of a house may choose to paint the exterior of his house or his room or study blue to strengthen himself, or white to give him more energy. He may choose to use white sheer curtains, blue blinds, or black tiles on the floor. (Look out for the Five Element Transformation and the dos and don'ts of feng shui placement of items in the next issue of *haven*.)

A Li Life Gua lady belongs to the Fire element. Wood green will fuel her Fire, while Earth browns will quell her flames. Her bedroom is in shades of maroon, the colour of fire for strength, and she surrounds herself with greenery as that enlivens her. She has orange and pink scatter cushions in her parlour and lights candles to enhance her well-being.

A CAUTIONARY NOTE

The most successful feng shui outcomes stem from a combined approach of various schools and systems. The use of colour according to the Life Gua of a person is but one method of practical application of colours based on the Five Element Theory. There are other methods that also use colour based on the same theory which are not discussed here.

It can be said that colour is used to enhance good qi and weaken undesirable qi. There are many other ways to enhance and weaken qi that do not rely on colours. So colour and Life Gua are only a small section of this vast speciality of feng shui. Furthermore, we must understand that representation is not as powerful as the real thing, for example, placing a painting of water is not as powerful as an actual water feature, or that the colour green is not as effective as a potted plant.

Therefore, what is described here is only a small part of classical feng shui and one should not expect a great feng shui effect until the other aspects of colours are considered together with the various schools and systems in their entirety. ■

Master Boon Yap is the daughter of Grandmaster Datuk Yap Cheng Hai and the principal of Feng Shui for Enriching Lives. She teaches and consults classical Feng Shui worldwide and can be contacted by phone at 012 303 1991 / 012 677 4600 or via e-mail at boon@masterboon.com