

black blue brown  
green grey orange pink purple  
violet indigo copper gold platinum silver  
alloys animals racial

# **The English Language, a Colour Word Compendium**

colour classes , shades, degradation  
paint pigment -chrom- pattern  
appearance

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## THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE, A COLOUR WORD COMPENDIUM

### APPEARANCE WORDS

All illuminated materials have an **appearance**, Latin *apparare*, come into view, which can be comprised of a number of visually perceived properties. These properties include the sensory perceptions of **colour**, Old French *colour*, from Latin *color*, *colorare*, **translucency**, C16 Latin shine through, **gloss**, C14 to flatter, midC17 to make smooth, or shiny, and **surface texture** as well as the spatial parameters of **size** and **shape**. Many words can be used to describe these appearance properties but, at present, it is beyond the scope of this compendium to include words that describe the size and shape of the material. There is also a **sub-surface texture** which applies to transparent or translucent paint layers containing, for example, flakes.

Confusingly, the CIE defines **texture**, Latin *texere* woven cloth, as the visible surface structure depending on the size and organisation of small constituent parts of a material; typically, the surface of a woven fabric. Some use **texture** to indicate a non-uniformity in colour.

**Total appearance** is how we perceive and interpret the appearance properties. The word **cesia** has been used as a term that encompasses the transparency, gloss and lightness of a material.

**Gloss** is a superficial sheen or lustre, as on a smooth surface. Hence, **glossy**, **shiny**, having such a **glaze** or **lustre**; a **glossy** is a magazine printed on shiny paper and using colour photographs. **Gloss paint** is a type of paint producing a shiny surface and consisting of ground pigments in a varnish or oil base. **Sleek** is smooth, glossy, shiny, and in Scotland **sleekit** is sleek, glossy. **Slick** is to make glossy, as the hair or skin. **Glare** is a brilliant, dazzling light; the brilliant reflection of light from a surface.

**Sheen**, C17 beautiful, obsolete denotes **brightness**, **lustre**, Latin *lustrare* illuminate, the quality of **gleaming**; poetically bright, shining. Hence, **sheeny**, **radiant**, **shining**, brightly gleaming, shiny. **Lustre**, also **luster** USA, is the sheen or gloss of a surface, as the lustre of satin. It is also used to denote richness or depth of color, as realised with metallic paints and ceramic glazes. It also describes the radiance or brilliance of light, as well as polish or a substance used to create a lustre. **Lackluster**, also **lack-lustre** is dull, lacking in brilliance. **Orient** describes the lustre of pearl; more specifically that of the finest quality pearl.

Several other words are used to describe light reflected from a surface. These include **splendid**, very bright, gleaming, in light or colour, hence **splendour**, magnificence; brilliance in appearance or colouring. **Glitter** is to shine or reflect light in brilliant flashes, hence **agitter**; also the name of bits of shiny, reflecting material used in decoration or make-up. **Glisten** means to shine or sparkle intermittently with reflected light; **glisten** is the archaic word for this. **Sparkle** is to reflect or emit bright points or sparks of light, having a glittering appearance, hence **sparkler**, describing a vivacious person, a diamond or other glittering gem, or a firework emitting bright sparks. Hence, **sparky**, emitting sparks of light, and animated, vivacious. **Spang**, C15, Germanic, *spango*, is an ornament that glitters; **spangle**, a small piece of material that reflects light in a sparkling manner. To **spangle**, **bespangle**, **bestar**, C16, is to cover, decorate or to glitter with spangles or stars, and **spangled** is thus decorated, or a **bleach** process defect that leaves a stain.

**Bloom**, Germanic flower, is the scattering of light in directions near the specular angle of reflection by a deposit on or exudation from a specimen. The **absence of bloom gloss**, also the **distinctness of image gloss**, is the aspect of gloss characterised by the **sharpness** of images of objects produced by