NRF STANDARD COLOR AND SIZE CODES
COLOR CODING GUIDE

GUIDELINES FOR SELECTING COLOR CODES
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GUIDELINES FOR SELECTING COLOR CODES

The primary guideline for selecting the correct color code is that it will always be based on the predominant background color of the product. Generally, it is proper to consider only the background color in selecting the appropriate code. However, there are conditions where multi-color patterns and plaids need to be distinguishable for tracking sales activity. Manufacturers who need such analysis should assign additional color codes to facilitate this information gathering.

When assigning codes to designate color with an individual style/model number, there must be a consistency in their use by retailers and vendors. The UPC Vendor Catalog must include the selected color in the Color ID field. Retailers will extract this information for inclusion in their merchandise database for products carried in their inventory—and use it in their reporting systems for the benefit of the merchandising personnel using these reports for inventory decisions.

With this uniformity in designating color for general merchandise, the exchange of information between retailers and their resources (e.g., color analysis and market preference profiles) can be greatly facilitated. This is particularly appropriate in light of the emerging cooperative inter-industry market data interchange programs such as "Quick Response" and "Just in Time."

To insure the effective use of standardized color coding, the guidelines for merchandise intended for the general merchandise marketplace are listed below:

A color code will be selected from the appropriate sub-group to represent each of the color designations in the current product line. As an example, the colors "coffee," "chocolate" and "carob" all fall into the dark brown sub-group, 201-209. Each color should be assigned a unique code (e.g., 201—coffee, 202—chocolate, 203—carob).

The exception to the above guideline is for those vendors whose color descriptions exceed the capacity of a color sub-group. An example of this is a manufacturer having more than 10 colors falling into the dark brown (201-209) category. In this example, the manufacturer with 11 dark brown colors may assign the same color code to more than one of the colors (e.g., 201—"kola nut" and "chocolate").The color descriptions bearing the same color code must never be used for the same style number.

Yes ⇒   Style number 145—kola nut (#201); style number 622—chocolate (#201)
No ⇒   Style number 356—kola nut (#201) and chocolate (#201)

If the above uniqueness of color coding cannot be accomplished within the appropriate color sub-group, the manufacturer must select codes from the proper overflow codes in the 240-249 or 900 series of numbers.

If one of the assigned colors (e.g., kola nut) is discontinued, its color code can be used for a new color description that falls into the same sub-group (e.g., walnut). In this case, the manufacturer must include the correct color description and its assigned code in the Vendor's Catalog.

PRINCIPLES FOR SELECTING COLOR CODES

Principle 1   Vendors select their own NRF Color Codes.

       ○ An open block below each color code number is provided for affixing swatches.
       ○ Users can prepare their own color/shade-specific work sheets by duplicating pages and attaching color swatches appropriate to each U.P.C. Product ID.

Principle 2   NRF Color codes are based on the dominant background.

       ○ The vendor determines the dominant background.

Principle 3   Uniqueness and Consistency

       ○ A unique NRF color code must be assigned to each color variation within a particular product ID

Principle 4   The same NRF Color Code may be used to represent an entirely different shade for another product with a different product ID.

Principle 5   If a color is discontinued, its NRF Color Code may be reassigned to another shade within the same product ID after the required retention period.

NRF COLOR CODE EXAMPLES

COLOR CODING FOR ONE COLOR

The first number in each color group serves as the "Uncompared" color code designation
It should be used whenever no shades of color (e.g. dark blue, pastel blue) are used for a particular vendor Product ID

     Example Using One Color

     A vendor offers only one shade of green sweater for a particular Product ID
     No shade comparison is involved

     Solution ⇒ The vendor selects NRF Color Code 300, the code for "Uncompared" Green

Green	Dark Green								
300	301	302	303	304	305	306	307	308	309
⇑									
Code 300 is Used									

COLOR CODING FOR DIFFERENT SHADES OF A COLOR

If a vendor offers a Product ID in more than one shade of a particular color, then numbers are selected for each different shade from the most appropriate shade range following the general principle shown below.
General Principle: The lower the number, the deeper/darker the shade represented.

    Example Using Different Shades of a Color

    A vendor offers a Product ID of men's shorts in 4 different shades of Blue
    The product is available in:
    1-Blue/Black
    2-Medium Navy
    3-Medium Blue
    4-Light Blue

Solution	Code	Reason

1-Blue/Black	401	Chosen because code 401 is the lowest number in the Dark Blue Shade Sub-Group and because it approaches the darkest shade of blue possible
2-Medium Dark Navy	414	Chosen because 414 is a middle number in the middle of the Navy shade sub-group and will allow for possible future coding of other Navy shades, both darker and lighter, for this Product ID
3-Medium Blue	424	Chosen because code 424 is in the middle of the Medium Blue shade sub-group and will allow for future coding of other variations of Medium Blue, both darker and lighter, for this Product ID
4-Light Blue	434	Chosen because code 434 is in the middle of the Bright Blue shad sub-group and will allow for future coding of other variations of Light Blue, both darker and lighter, for this Product ID

COLOR CODING FOR
- o **ALL THE CODES IN A COLOR OR SHADE GROUP HAVE BEEN USED OR THERE ARE**
- o **SOLIDS AND STRIPES OR THERE ARE**
- o **PLAIDS OR THERE ARE**
- o **MULTI-COLOR DESIGNS**

Solution ⇒ Use the COLOR DEDICATED OPEN RANGE when codes in a group have been used, or when there are solids, stripes, plaids or multi-color designs

* Note: The dominant background color is the primary basis for assignment of color codes; however, when vendors and retailers require tracking of multi-colors, plaids and other designs, the color open range codes may be used.

COLOR CODING WHEN ADDITIONAL CODES FOR A SHADE ARE NEEDED OR WHEN ALL THE CODES IN A COLOR OR SHADE GROUP HAVE BEEN USED

Example when additional codes for a shade are needed

A vendor offers a Product ID of men's neckties in 12 shades of Dark Blue, but the Dark Blue Shade Group offers only 9 available code numbers (codes 401 to 409)

Solution ⇒ To achieve color coding for each of the Dark Blue shades, additional code numbers from the Blue Group Open Ranges (460 to 499) may be used

Blue Group

Blue	Dark Blue								
400	401	402	403	404	405	406	407	408	409
	⇑	⇑	⇑	⇑	⇑	⇑	⇑	⇑	⇑
	Codes (401 - 409) are used for the first 9 shades of dark blue								

Blue Group (Continued)

	OPEN								
460	461	462	463	464	465	466	467	468	469
⇑	⇑	⇑							
Codes 460 - 462 are used for next 3 shades of dark blue									

Example using solids and stripes

A vendor offers a Product ID of "plain, un-patterned" men's neckties in 9 shades of Medium Red

Solution ⇒ Use 9 of the Red Group's Medium Red Shade code numbers (610 to 618).

Additionally, the same Product ID also offers 2 of these shades (coded 613 and 616 in their solid-color versions) in different stripe-patterned versions. These stripe patterns need to be distinguishable for sales tracking.

Solution ⇒ Use the additional codes from the Red Group Open Ranges (640 to 641) to code for the stripes

Red Group

Medium Red									
610	611	612	613	614	615	616	617	618	619
⇑	⇑	⇑	⇑	⇑	⇑	⇑	⇑	⇑	
Codes 610 to 618 are used from the Medium Red Group for the Solid Color Versions									

Open									
640	641	642	643	644	645	646	647	648	649
⇑	⇑								
Codes 640 and 641 are used from the Red Group Open Range for the Stripe Versions									

COLOR CODING WHEN ALL THE COLOR AND OPEN RANGE CODES HAVE BEEN USED

Solution ⇒ Use the MISCELLANEOUS OPEN RANGE

EXAMPLE USING MULTI-COLORED DESIGNS

Example using multi-colored designs
- A vendor offers 120 multi-colored abstract designs screen-printed on a white T-shirt
- All the shirts have the same Product ID and are different only by the screened design
- Each design must be individually tracked

Solution
⇒ Use all the white color codes including the open ranges (100 to 199) for the first 100 multi-color codes
⇒ Use the Miscellaneous Open Range of codes for the last 20 color codes for the multi-colored abstract designs

Note: the terms "Vendor Product ID" and "Product ID" used in this Guide, are frequently synonymous with the term "Style Number" used by many vendors. These terms should not be confused with "U.P.C. Product ID" defined previously.

Miscellaneous (Continued)

	Open								
960	961	962	963	964	965	966	967	968	969
⇑	⇑	⇑	⇑	⇑	⇑	⇑	⇑	⇑	⇑
Use Codes 960 to 969 for the next 10 multi-color codes									
	Open								
970	971	972	973	974	975	976	977	978	979
⇑	⇑	⇑	⇑	⇑	⇑	⇑	⇑	⇑	⇑
Use Codes 970 to 979 for the last 10 multi-color codes									

Example when there's No Recognizable Background or Dominant Color

The color mixture is such that no background color can be determined and no color in the mix

<u>Solution</u>
⇒ Use the Miscellaneous Open Range of codes

Miscellaneous (Continued)

	Open								
960	961	962	963	964	965	966	967	968	969
⇑	⇑	⇑	⇑	⇑	⇑	⇑	⇑	⇑	⇑
Use Codes 960 to 969									
	Open								
970	971	972	973	974	975	976	977	978	979
⇑	⇑	⇑	⇑	⇑	⇑	⇑	⇑	⇑	⇑
Use Codes 970 to 979									

<u>COLOR CODING FOR METALLIC COLORS AND SHADES</u>

- COPPER or RUST
  - ⇒ Located in the Brown Group page 0-6
  - ⇒ Color Codes 220-229

- GOLD
  - ⇒ Located in the Yellow Group page 0-16
  - ⇒ Color Codes 710-719

- SILVER
  - ⇒ Located in the Grey Group page 0-2
  - ⇒ Color Codes 040-049