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Imaging

Chromaxion™

The Newsletter of Interesting Imaging Stuff

New Color Charts

ColorBuild from Image Science Associates

Years ago I created a color chart with 70 patches of painted paper and a plastic grid cut from a report folder cover. It took two days just to cut the patch grid and the resulting chart has a homemade craft project look.

Making test charts this way is like whacking your thumb with a hammer, it feels so good when it stops.

Now there is a really cool way to build your own custom professional charts. It is the ColorBuild from Image Science Associates.
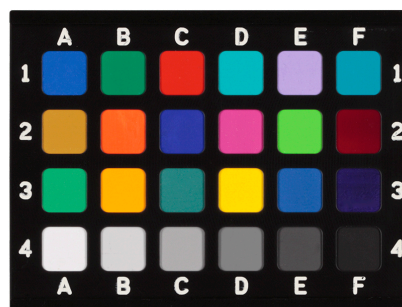
Taking apart the ColorBuild reveals a top grid overlay (lower-right), a ferro-magnetic metal base plate to hold the patches (center, shown here with 18 magnetic patches attached from the Color Checker Classic colors), a sleeve with embedded magnets which holds the assembled upper two

layers (upper-left), and a bag of blank patch magnets.

Making your own chart is easy. Apply your colorants to a paper substrate. Cut out squares the size of the blank patch magnets. Peel the backing from the adhesive on each magnet and adhere the color squares. Now magnetically attach your custom patches to the metal base plate. Put the grid on top of the patch plate, then slide the assembly into the sleeve. You now have a custom chart!

The two super-magnets in the bottom sleeve serve two functions; to help hold the color chip and grid overlay layers, and to provide a magnetic attachment capability to the assembled chart.

To test the ease and quality of making a chart, I made some color patches with acrylic artist paints painted on 300 gsm watercolor paper, then followed the directions to put these patches onto the magnets and assembled the chart. Here is the result.

A professional looking chart made in about an hour (not including the time to paint the patches and let them dry). Much easier than the 2 days for my previous color chart project.

The gray patches from the provided ColorChecker Classic patch set were retained to serve as neutral references for my artist paint chart.

There is one other interesting feature about the ColorBuild; a light trap box can be exchanged for the normal sleeve backplate, which, when one patch is omitted from the chart, creates a light trap to provide a very dark reference.

The cost for the Mini ColorBuild, a 3.5 x 2.5 inch, 24 patch chart is $300. The Mini version with the black trap base is $350.

Two other sizes are also available; the Micro, 2.5 x 1.5 inches in size with 24 patches and the large A3 version which is is 16.5 x 11.7 inches in size with 300 patches. Check with Image Science Associates for the pricing on the Micro and A3 versions.

L* Chart from ImagingEtc

ImagingEtc has joined forces with the Munsell Color division of X-Rite to create a new gray scale chart. This new chart has 19 semigloss patches from L* 5 to 95 in 5 L* unit steps. It also has two gloss black patches to extend the dynamic range of the scale and to serve as glare indicators.

THE MUNSELL LINEAR GRAY SCALE

This chart was designed to be compatible with the Metamorfoze and FADGI imaging guidelines. The equal L* steps makes it very useful in programs with L*a*b* readouts such as Adobe Photoshop, Adobe Lightroom, Lasersoft Silverfast, and others, for setting tonal reproduction curves.

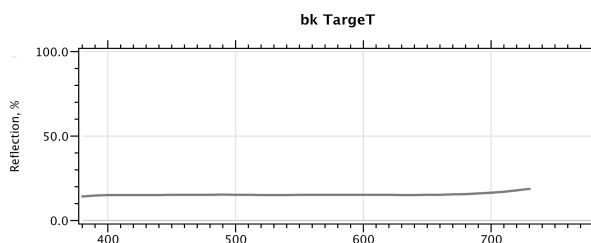The size of the target is 10 x 1.25 inches. The target is available for $97.50 from ImagingEtc.

bk TargeT from bk TargeT

Our Digital Gray Card™ has been a great photographic reference for over 10 years. However, one of our users recently pointed out a big problem, they float. On a diving trip to get a fish to stop for a photo-op, the photographer let his gray card float away. While we were happy to sell him a new card, and to remind him there is a hole in the corner for tying it to his diving rig, now there is another solution; the bk TargeT from a Spanish company of the same name.

This is a gray ceramic material contained in a plastic sleeve. Since it does not float this gray target would have helped our fish obsessed user.

The ceramic material has a semigloss surface. Advertised as an 18% gray, we measured the surface a bit darker at 15% using an i1Pro 2.

Since it is ceramic it can withstand direct sunlight and rain (no need to worry about this in California lately), and it can be washed clean should the surface get dirty.

The target is available in three shapes and sizes; an 80 mm round for €34.95 (includes a lanyard), a 140 mm square for €49.95 and a 210 x 140 mm rectangular for €79.95. The rectangular target consists of a 140 mm gray patch and two additional 70 mm square patches, one white and one black.

The bk TargeT may be ordered from bktarget.com.

CCSII from Lucideon Ltd.

For many years the most durable color standards have been the British Ceramic Research Association (BCRA) tiles. Recently Ceram, the makers of these tiles has become Lucideon Ltd. But the name change is not the interesting thing. The big news is that they took the large tiles and reduced them down to produce the CCSII (Ceramic Colour Standards, Series II), a small portable collection of all 14 tiles, the size of a business card (85 x 55 mm).

Shown here are the matte (upper-left) and glossy (lower-right) versions.

From the top-left, moving right along each row, the tiles are white, pale grey, mid grey, difference grey, deep grey, deep pink, red, orange, yellow, green, difference green, cyan, deep blue, and black. This is the only chart I know that includes two metameric pairs; mid grey/difference grey and green/difference green.

These are the same tiles listed as references in many scientific papers. These tiles have been used as color reference standards, to calibrate spectrometers, check for instrument drift, and to calculate inter-instrument agreement corrections.

The tiles are fixed into a plastic grid and attached to a steel plate. The matte chart has a durable coating applied over the entire chart surface, including the tiles.

For more information visit lucideon.com. For pricing and to order the charts contact Mr. Sean Hillman.

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