

# Does Color Affect Taste and Smell?



Research says YES!!!



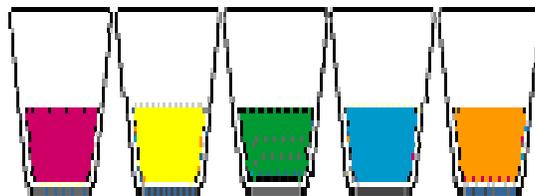
People are not always able to identify food by just smelling or tasting the food.



The colors of foods and liquids can affect whether or not people can identify them. When the color of the food matches what it is supposed to be, then the taste is identified more easily. For example, if cherry soda is colored red, people are able to identify the taste easier than if the same cherry soda was colored green.



Also, when colors and odors match, people are able to identify them easier as well. So, if people have been able to correctly memorize what color goes with what smell, then they would say the color orange when smelling an orange. .



Want proof? Subjects in an experiment tasted grape, lemon lime, cherry, and orange drinks. When they saw the color of the drinks, which were colored their correct color for example, grape drinks were purple, then they were able to identify them correctly. But, when they could not see the color of the drinks, they had trouble identifying them. Only 30% of the people that tasted the cherry drink thought it was cherry!

What People Said (%)

| Real Flavor | GR        | LL        | CH        | OR        | OT |
|-------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----|
| Grape       | <b>70</b> | 15        | 5         | 0         | 10 |
| Lemon-Lime  | 15        | <b>50</b> | 5         | 15        | 15 |
| Cherry      | 0         | 40        | <b>30</b> | 10        | 20 |
| Orange      | 0         | 50        | 5         | <b>20</b> | 25 |

GR=grape; LL=lemon-lime; CH=cherry; OR=orange; OT=other  
(Correct % in **BOLD**).



Who cares? Food companies do!! If companies can sell more food or drinks based on the color of the food, then they will do what they can to make food or drinks the proper color to make more money. This advertisement slogan was used on a web-site that discussed how color affects taste and smell:

“Increase Sales with Color, Sound, Taste, Smell and Touch”



Try out the importance of color and taste for yourself by doing this experiment. (This experiment was found at <http://faculty.washington.edu/chudler/chsmell.html>)

Materials:

- 4 different flavored sodas, 1 unflavored, clear soda
- Cups
- Food color

Procedure:

Get four different fruity flavored sodas. Make sure that the flavor of the drinks match the color. For example, lemon soda should be yellow and grape soda should be purple. Color the unflavored soda orange. This will make people think it is orange flavored even though it is tasteless. Pour each flavor into a cup. Get taste testers to taste each drink and tell you what each drink tastes like. How many people thought the orange colored drink was orange flavored? What does this say about the importance of color and taste?