HUE, SATURATION AND TONE

HUE – Is the basic colour found in your subject

In this stem, you can see that the **basic colour (hue) is a mid-green.**

First: I identify the **basic hue mix** as French Ultramarine and New Gamboge.

Next: For the lighter areas I can use a **Tint**, which is a dilute mix of the basic hue, using the white of the paper for light.

For the **Shade** I add a small amount of complementary colour or a neutral tint to darken.

NOTE: There is also the interaction of warm or cool light and reflected light but we deal with this later by building on the concepts here.

SATURATION – the strength of the hue. The hue is **de-saturated** with the effect of light and shade i.e. when it becomes lighter by the addition of white or darker/ more grey with the addition of a complementary colour. As discussed above.

Tint	Basic Hue	Shade
Lower saturation	**Maximum Saturation**	**Lower Saturation**
Higher light value	Mid Tone	lower Light value

TONE – The lightness or darkness of the hue. Within the same hue the light green has a higher light value than a dark green. With separate colours you need to be able to distinguish light and dark tones e.g. to use an extreme example lemon yellow is lighter in tone than French ultramarine.

We can see the **tonal difference** if we convert colour image to black and white using the same colour green TINT and SHADE strip as above.

Higher light value	Mid Tone	lower Light value
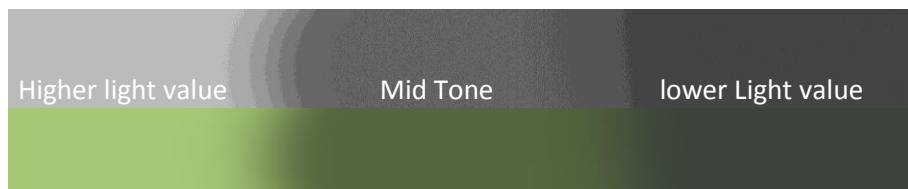
Also with different colours, compare the different tonal values
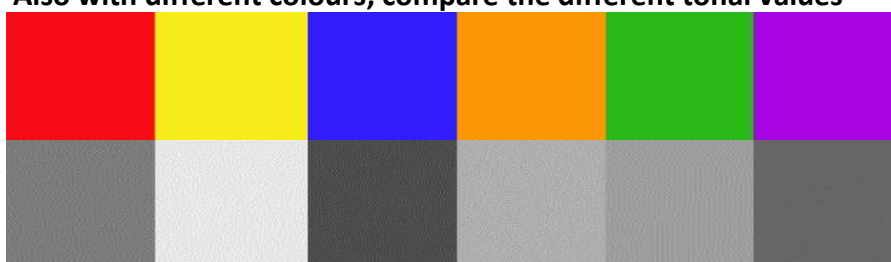
KEY POINTS

- **Hue, saturation and tone are all interlinked but it will help you to work out your colours mixes if you break them down in this order.**
- **The subject has a basic hue normally found in the mid tones.**
- **The basic hue in your subject is affected by light (and shade).**
- **The light and shade effects the basic hue by lowering the saturation of the hue and it becomes lighter, darker or greyer.**
- **Learn to see the lighter and darker tones – important in the overall tonal balance of your painting.**

To highlight the point further, in the watercolour module you will explore and construct 12 point colour wheels from your palette and will paint colour cubes using TINT and SHADES.

LIGHT SOURCE

Tint – a dilute mix of basic hue. Has **low saturation, high light value**
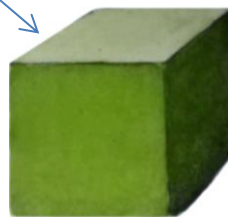
Shade – add complementary colour. Has **Low saturation** and **low light** value.

Basic Hue- has **highest saturation. Mid tone**

The tones can also be compared by changing to greyscale