

HVC Color Composer, Photoshop Plug-in for Mac: Standard Version

HVC Color Composer, Photoshop Plug-in for Mac: Standard Version Online Manual

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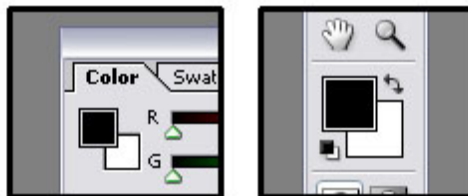
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1. Overview: what am I adding to Photoshop?

2. Using the color spaces
3. Creating palettes

What are you adding to Photoshop with HVC Color Composer? This product is an enhanced version of Photoshop's color picker. You can switch between this enhanced color picker and Photoshop's basic color picker any time you want through Photoshop's preferences. (see [program installation](#) notes to find out how to do this)

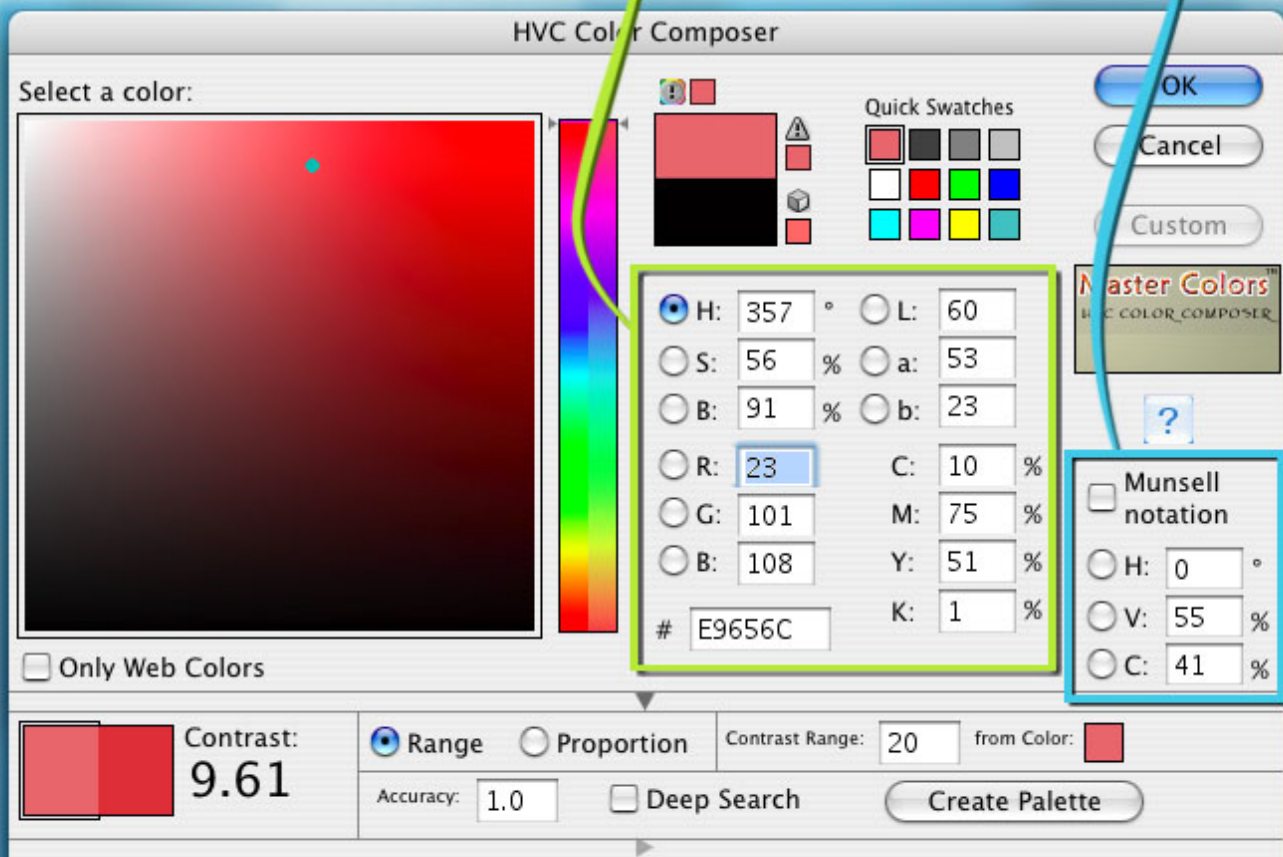
The HVC Color Composer has all of the features as the Photoshop color picker, in the same basic layout, so it will be completely familiar to any Photoshop user while still offering the advantages. You open the color picker the same way you always do in Photoshop. Just click the foreground color swatch, either one of them, shown here:



Now on to what's new. The biggest addition to the picker is the Master Colors Perceptual HVC Space. This is a new color space, resting along side the other spaces accessible through Photoshop. You'll notice off to the right, the H, V, and C radio buttons are placed, similar to the other 3-axis spaces. Just click one of the radio buttons to begin using the HVC space to select colors.

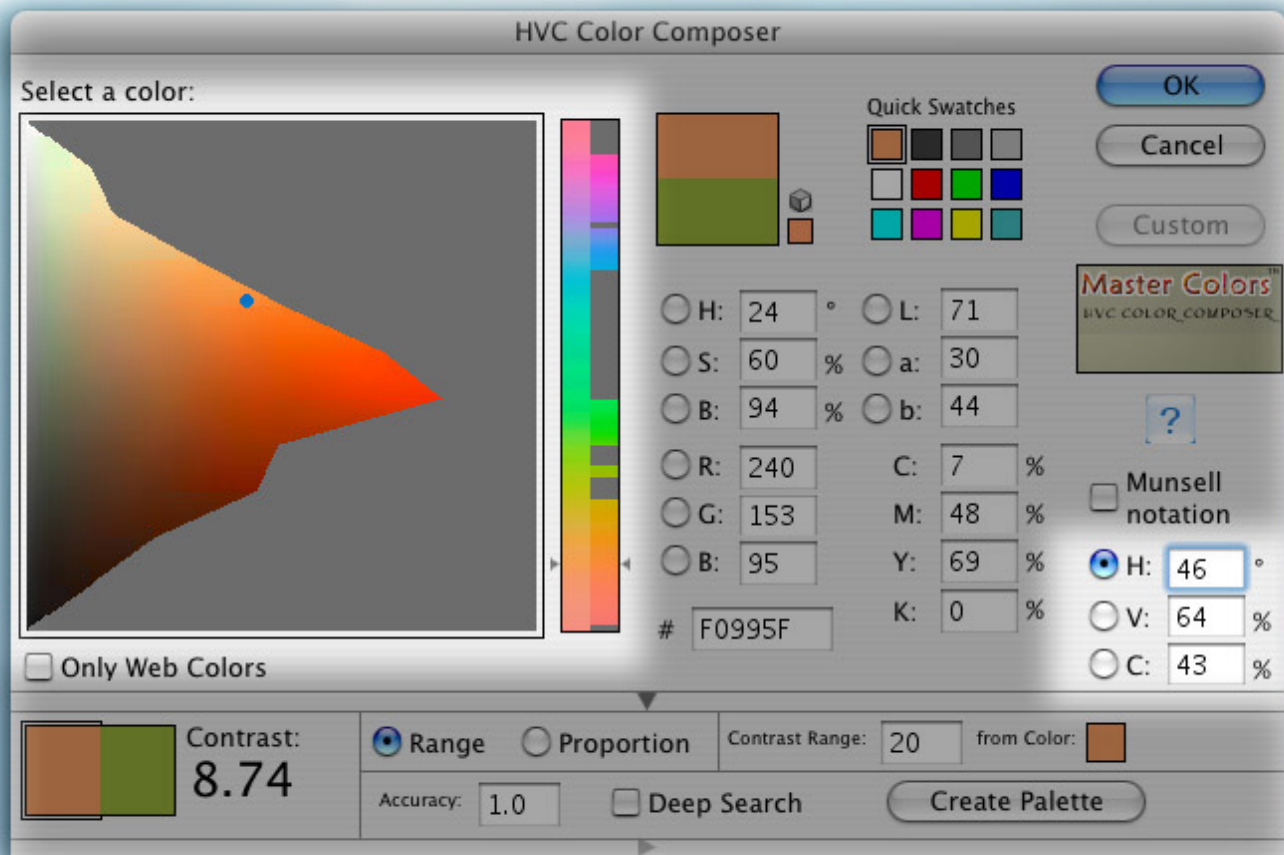
Standard Photoshop
Color Spaces

Master Colors
Perceptual HVC
Space



HVC (Hue, Value, and Chroma) is a far more intuitive, perceptually-oriented space than the others available in Photoshop. Spaces like RGB are just not suited for creative use. The human mind is not accustomed to considering color in quantities of red, green and blue light. There are many visual distortions in RGB as well. HSB (just a reorganization of RGB) is a bit better for navigating through colors, but suffers from the same visual distortions. CMYK, Lab, both have their uses, but accommodating the creative process is not one of them. HVC provides fully distortion-free clarity to color selection, and this clarity is now available inside your copy of Photoshop.

You'll notice by clicking the "H" (Hue) radio button, we view the HVC space by hue slices, and navigate the hue axis with the vertical slider. The logic is exactly the same in the basic Photoshop color picker.



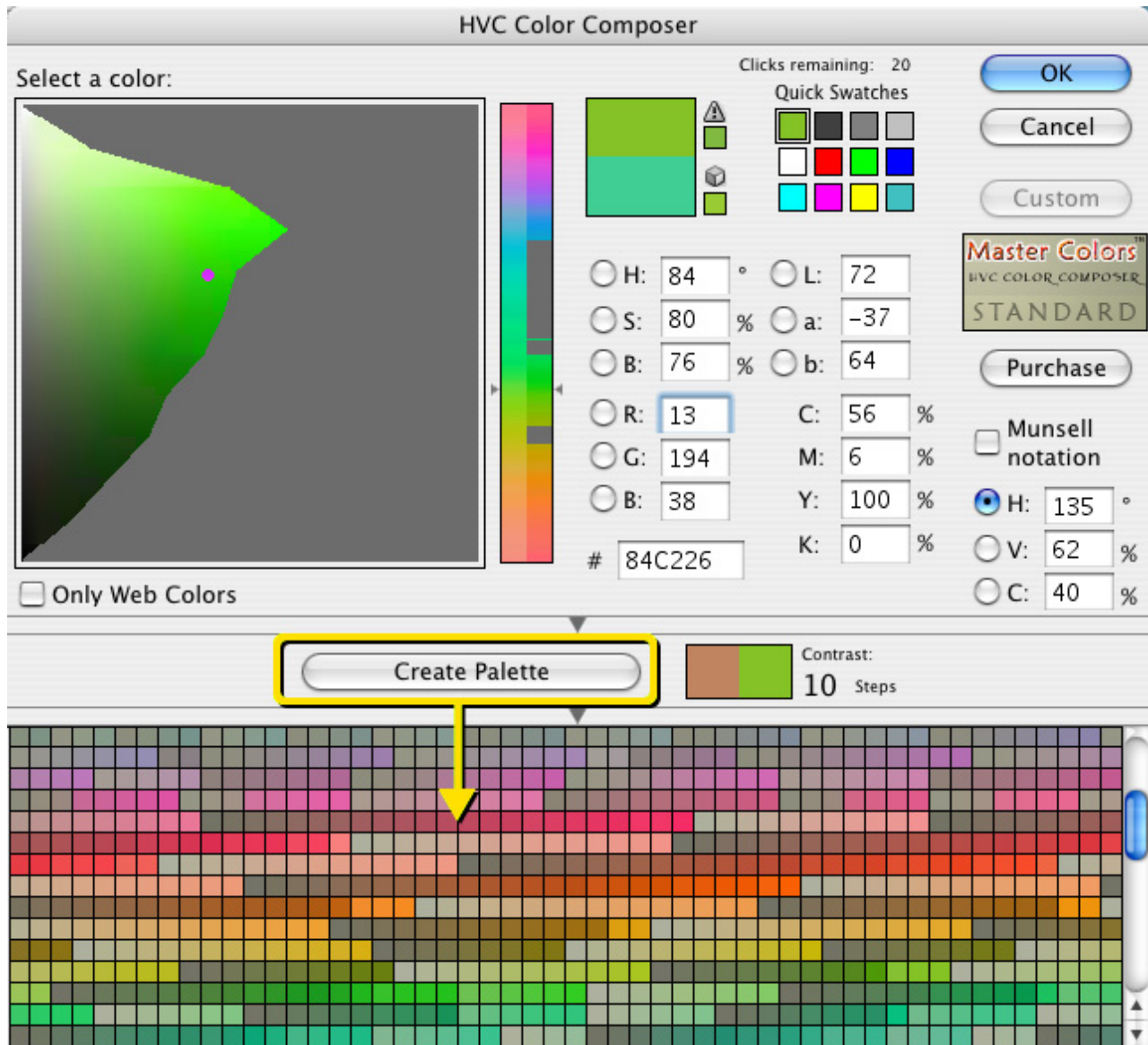
By clicking the "V" (Value) radio, we view HVC by value slices. Value is a color lightness property. With this, we view all colors of a certain lightness at once.

Creating Palettes

Aside from navigating through the HVC space and using it to pick colors, there is another important feature of HVC Color Composer. It gives you the ability to generate dynamic palettes based on color contrast relationships. It's simple:

1. You pick a color.
2. Click "Create Palette" to make a palette that "works" with that color.

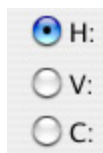
The resulting palette contains an array of colors that have certain relationships from your color.



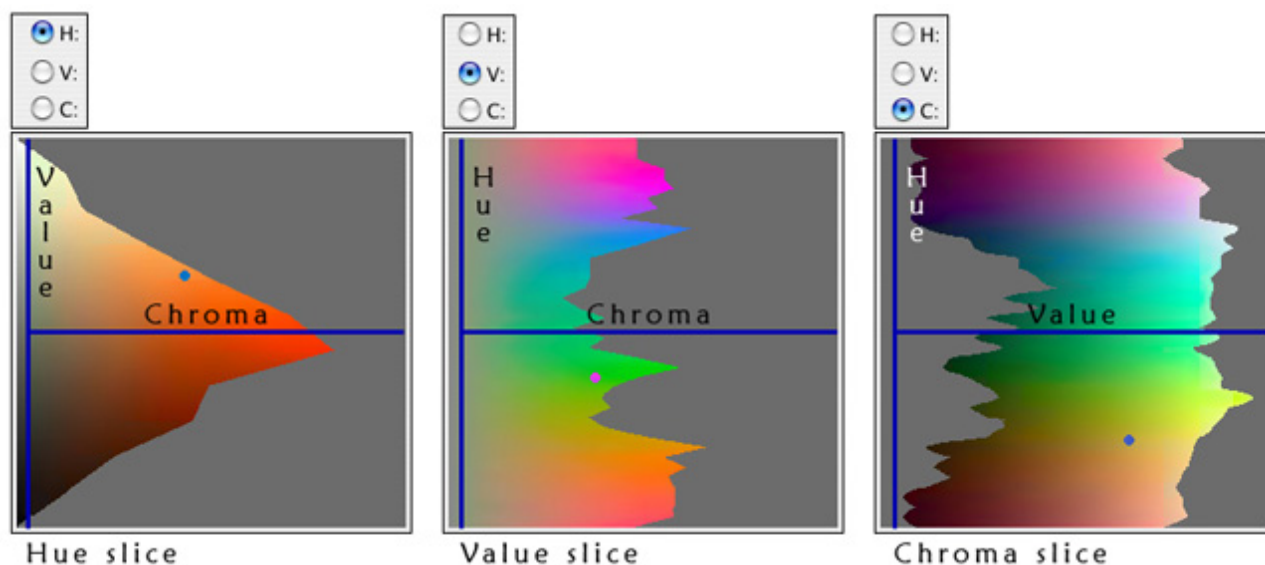
The palettes that are generated are very unique, vibrant, interesting arrays of color that you would not be able to find using any other methods, not even by flipping through professional design swatch or palette books. Yet, the palettes have actual significance to your own work. You chose the starting colors, and now you know the exact relationship between your colors of importance and all the palette colors. There is rhyme and reason to the palette's existence. It fits into a game plan, a greater vision of color selection for your personal work. That's something a static, prefab palette could never accomplish.

Using the Color Spaces

Understanding a few basics on the nature of the HVC space, and how to operate within it, will help you a great deal with using this program and making color selection decisions altogether. In the [overview page](#), you saw that, just like with other color spaces in Photoshop's color picker, you can choose which axis to control when viewing HVC slices, by clicking the radio buttons next to the HVC boxes, shown here.



And that the three configurations give you access to the types of HVC slices shown below.

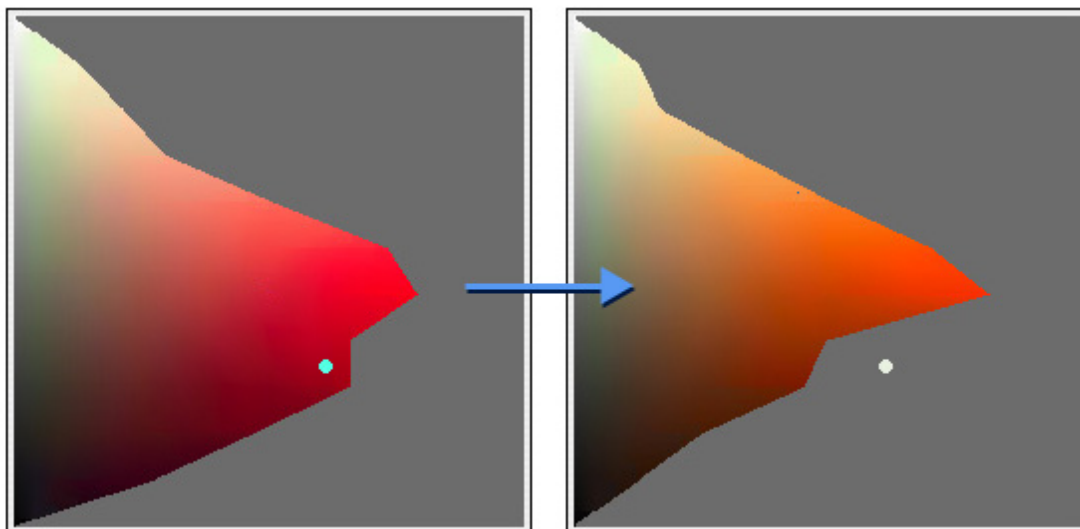


These diagrams show, for each setting, what qualities are indicated by the horizontal and vertical directions. Notice the variation in the shape of the color space. For instance, when looking at a hue slice, the peak (maximum chroma) generally occurs in the middle (mid value). Whereas the top and bottom (white and black) are always at 0% chroma.

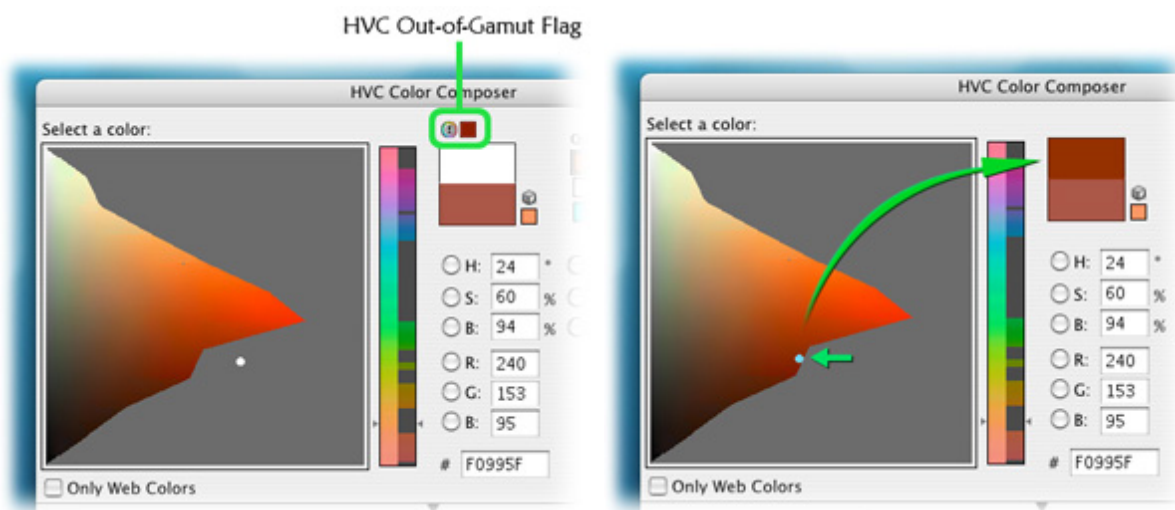
The variation in shape is due to the fact that not every hue at every value level will have a fully saturated chroma level. The hue peaks are as saturated as a color can be for that hue (and even then, not many peaks are even near 100% chroma). The less saturated colors progress on an interesting contour, according to their true visual properties, until reaching white and black.

This is part of the true power of the HVC space. Geometric simplicity is sacrificed for visual accuracy. Every color's position in the space is dictated by its precise visual properties.

But this means it's possible to select outside the boundaries of HVC. Notice below, how a position that is valid in one hue, may not be valid in another.



When the hue was changed, the boundary receded, but the value and chroma (vertical and horizontal) position of the selected color remained the same. The result is an invalid HVC (which defaults to white). **To select the nearest in-bounds color, click the HVC Out-of-Gamut Flag.** The flag appears whenever you select a color outside the HVC gamut.

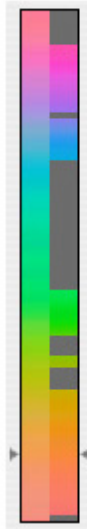


Split Slider

As an added convenience, the color picker features a "split slider". On the left side of the slider is an unchanging gradation, showing you the general range of the active axis (hue, value, etc). On the right side is a gradation showing the range for that axis (e.g.), given the current position of the other two (e.g. value and chroma). So the right side depends on the selected color, and changes as you pick new colors. It also shows positions on the axis where the colors are outside the HVC bounds.

Hue Split Slider

This side shows a static range of hues, so you can see the full hue range you have to work with.



This side shows the hues available given the current value and chroma of the selected color.

The gray areas show invalid hues.

This side changes depending on the color you select.

Value Split Slider

Again, a static range is shown on this side. The full value range, from black to white.



The range given the current hue and chroma.

Other Color Spaces

All the other color spaces standard to Photoshop are included: HSB, RGB, Lab, and CMYK. Activate these the same way you activate HVC for selection: click one of the radio buttons next to the space and particular axis you want to view. The other spaces benefit from the split slider as well. And just as with the standard color picker, if you select a color using one space, the numbers for that color in the other color space text boxes are automatically shown.

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