
Subject: Re: Plot colors

Posted by on Thu, 20 Jun 2013 15:44:47 GMT

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On 2013-06-20 14:28, David Fanning wrote:

> Mats Löfdahl writes:

>

>> What are your favorite colors for overplotting several data sets in the
>> same diagram? (I'm assuming Coyote graphics here.) You'd want them to be
>> easy to tell apart and to have a good and similar contrast against the
>> (white) background.

>>

>> For two colors it's easy: red and blue.

>>

>> But already for three colors, if you add green you get something with
>> less contrast. And for more colors, if you add the complement colors
>> cyan, magenta, and yellow, both yellow and cyan have the same problem.
>> So then I usually inspect the color names in cgcolor and pick darker
>> versions of the too light colors and some redder version of yellow. And
>> if I need more than six I don't really know what to do...

>>

>> So, what is a good strategy? Do you have a good list that you always
>> use, and truncate it to the needed length? Or do you start the list
>> differently depending on how long it has to be? Has anybody written a
>> function for this?

>

> Ah, good question. I pick drawing colors based on the light at a
> particular time of day (mornings are usually blue, afternoons tend to be
> shades of red), what flowers are blooming in the rock garden outside my
> office window, the particular "gestalt" of the graphics display I am
> creating (an IDL feng shui thing), and my emotional state. (You don't
> want to see the colors I pick when I am doing something with function
> graphics!)

>

> Every plot seems to be different. I use cgPickColorName to help me
> decide. :-)

OK, so you're no better than me... :o)

But I can't help thinking that there should be a better way. Something
like picking colors that are evenly distributed in some color space and
at the same distance from white? I don't know. I think I can handle
thinking about gray scale pretty well but colors are trickier.
