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## Color Imagery

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### Definition

The ability to visualize a color in its absence. When asked, most individuals would be able to identify the outer color of a watermelon as well as that of the inside of the rind, the fleshy part of the melon, and its seeds. Color imagery is more than an ability to simply recall a particular visual image; it also involves the capacity to mentally conjure up and manipulate colors at will. For example, one may imagine a blue horse or a person wearing an article of clothing of a specific color, never having seen either before. While disturbances of color perception and color imagery are frequently linked, in some cases the two can be distinguished clinically. Thus, while a given patient may be able to name or match colors presented visually, that same patient may not be able to name the color of an apple in its absence.

Similarly, while accurately identifying the color red from an array, the patient may not be able to match it to a black-and-white picture of the fruit, although the latter may be identified by its shape. While the exact anatomical site responsible for disturbances of color imagery has not been firmly established, the left temporal-occipital cortex is believed to be involved in most cases.

### Cross-References

- ▶ [Apperceptive Visual Agnosia](#)
- ▶ [Associative Visual Agnosia](#)
- ▶ [Color Agnosia](#)
- ▶ [Color Anomia](#)

### References and Readings

- Farah, M. J. (2003). Disorders of visual-spatial perception and cognition. In K. M. Heilman & E. Valenstein (Eds.), *Clinical neuropsychology* (4th ed., pp. 146–160). New York: Oxford University Press.
- Tranel, D. (2003). Disorders of color processing. In T. E. Feinberg & M. J. Farah (Eds.), *Behavioral neurology and neuropsychology* (2nd ed., pp. 243–256). New York: McGraw-Hill.