

[HVC Color Composer](#)

Review by Jeff Gamet

Photoshop color selection tool heightens color harmony

HVC Color Composer is a Photoshop plug-in that enhances Photoshop's Color Picker by adding hue, value, and chroma controls. The idea is that because artists perceive colors based on hue, brightness (value), and intensity (chroma), they should be able to select colors the same way. The Color Picker is easy enough to install: Just copy the Master Colors HVC Color Composer folder into Photoshop's Plug-Ins folder, choose HVC Color Composer as your color picker from Photoshop's general preferences, and you're set.



Choosing colors is fairly straightforward. Clicking the Hue button shows all colors with the same hue, Value shows all colors with the same brightness, and Chroma shows colors with the same intensity. Photoshop's Color slider is still there but now includes a split slider that shows the color range on the left and available colors based on the currently selected hue, value, or chroma setting on the right.

Color Composer's real power lies in its ability to show color relationships and build swatch palettes based on them. Range mode builds a palette with colors that all have the same contrast range from a target color, and Proportion mode creates a palette in which all of the colors have the same contrast from two target colors. The Create Palette button builds a palette of colors that work together nicely, and the Pro version adds the ability to fine-tune the contrast ratios and save your palette as a standard Photoshop ACO file.

While understanding color relationships can be difficult at first, Color Composer makes short order of building complementary color palettes. It's currently only available for Mac users, but a Windows version and a standalone application for both Mac and Windows (although not available at this writing) are slated for release in the spring.

PRICE: \$49.95 (Pro \$129.95)

FOR: Mac

FROM: Master Colors

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RATING: 4.0