

Class 10: Raster Graphics and RGB Colors

Held: Tuesday, February 9, 2010

Summary: We consider the basics of *raster graphics*, a common technique for describing and representing images. We also consider *RGB colors*, one of the most common mechanisms for representing colors digitally.

Related Pages:

- EBoard.
- Lab: Raster Graphics and RGB Colors.
- Reading: Raster Graphics: Images from Pixels and Colors and RGB Colors.

Notes:

- Reading for tomorrow: Transforming RGB Colors.
- Reminder: If you're going to miss class (or if you missed class), please send me a note at the earliest possible time.
- Due to popular request, I will be shifting the time of quizzes. How does Mondays sound?
- Due to the weather, our schedule has shifted a bit. We hope to have Prof. Kluber visit on Friday.
- Are there questions on Assignment ?
- EC for Thursday's convocation.
- EC for today's Health Fair.
- It's new partner day!

Overview:

- Representing images, revisited.
- Pixels and colors: The basics.
- RGB colors.
- Those weird numbers.

Raster

- Many ways to represent colors, too.
- Goals: Unambiguous, fast to process, compact
- The color names we've been using are
 - Ambiguous
 - Slow to process
 - Long
- Whoops!

RGB Colors

- The most common internal representation of colors on computers.
- We think of a color as the combination of three *primaries*: red, green, and blue.
 - These are the primaries for the so-called *additive* colors
 - You are probably used to the primaries being red, yellow, and blue, but those are the *subtractive* colors
- On computers, we represent each component as a number between 0 and 255, inclusive.
- It turns out that you can shove four numbers, each between 0 and 255, into the internal representation of an integer.
 - So, the red, green, and blue components are three of those numbers.
 - What's the fourth? In multi-layer images, it's the alpha channel.
- We use `rgb-new` to create these colors.
- We use `rgb-red`, `rgb-green`, and `rgb-blue` to extract the corresponding components.

Those Weird Color Numbers

- We're representing colors as three integers, each in the range [0..255].
- Yet when we ask MediaScript for a color, we tend to get a single integer which is rarely in that range?
- What's going on?
- Well, most computers have different techniques for representing really small integers (particularly integers in the range [0..255]) and standard-length integers. We're using the smaller representation, but shoving three of those into a standard-length integer.
 - We use that representation because it makes everything faster.
- Even those of us who designed that representation can't read it.

Copyright © 2007-10 Janet Davis, Matthew Kluber, Samuel A. Rebelsky, and Jerod Weinman. (Selected materials copyright by John David Stone and Henry Walker and used by permission.) This material is based upon work partially supported by the National Science Foundation under Grant No. CCLI-0633090. Any opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this material are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the National Science Foundation. This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 2.5 License. To view a copy of this license, visit <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/2.5/> or send a letter to Creative Commons, 543 Howard Street, 5th Floor, San Francisco, California, 94105, USA.