

Scientific colour map demonstration

A photograph of Marie Skłodowska-Curie (by Henri Manuel around 1920), the Earth from space, and an apple demonstrate the superiority of scientific colour maps as they are shown a in their original form (middle) and in distorted (left) and in undistorted (right) colour versions. Inferring the true picture from an unscientifically (e.g., jet) coloured data set is incomparably harder than from a data set represented in a perceptually uniform and ordered colour map, like *batlow*. By knowing what something looks like in advance, the distortion by unscientific colour maps, like *jet* or *rainbow*, becomes instantly obvious. The look of scientific data is, however, usually unknown a priori, which makes the distortion of an unscientific colour map, and the true data representation of a scientifically derived colour map, like *batlow*, less apparent, but not less significant. Figure originally published in Crameri et al. (2020).

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- Related reference: Crameri, F., G.E. Shephard, and P.J. Heron (2020), The misuse of colour in science communication, Nature Communications, 11, 5444. [doi:10.1038/s41467-020-19160-7](https://doi.org/10.1038/s41467-020-19160-7)

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