

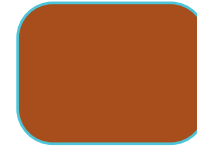
Describing colour



Light pinkish white



Mid sandy yellow



Dark reddish brown



Light pinkish grey



Mid yellowish grey



Dark greyish brown



Light pinkish brown



Mid yellowish brown



Very dark yellowish brown

When describing colours, it is useful to break it down into its constituent parts. Archaeologists often use a Munsell Colour Chart to help identify specific colours. This uses three elements (value, hue and colour) to describe a colour. A simpler method can be used to cover the soils you will see at most sites, and the colours and descriptions you see above give a good range of what you might find. When describing a soil colour, make sure you have a clean sample on the end of your trowel. Next, try and break the colour you see down into three main elements:

modifier - lightness or darkness, eg how would you describe the tone, is it light, mid or dark?

hue - the group of colours which the soil colour might fit into, such as reddish, yellowish, greyish, brownish

colour - the main description for colour? Is it a grey, brown, yellow?

Now you just need to combine these elements to give your colour, mid yellowish grey, or dark greyish brown. The colour blocks above are not exhaustive, but should give a guiding hand!