

The Vitra Colour & Material Library

Colours and surface materials have a decisive effect on the appeal of a product – determining first impressions and radiating a lasting emotional aura. This is why Vitra initiated a research project in collaboration with Hella Jongerius twelve years ago to study the properties and possibilities of colours, textures, finishes and materials. This long-term project resulted in the Vitra Colour & Material Library. Vitra is continually enhancing its textile portfolio and expanding the collection.

Products designed by Hella Jongerius exhibit her unique manner of fusing industry and craft, high-tech and low-tech, traditional and modern. Throughout her projects, she has consistently emphasised the importance of colours and surface materials in contemporary design. Twelve years ago, Vitra teamed up with the Dutch designer to study the colours, textures, finishes and materials of the company's classic and contemporary products. The Vitra Colour & Material Library was the fruit of this long-term collaboration.

'The goal of the joint project is to establish an intelligent system of colours, materials and textiles that makes it easy to create rich environments in offices, homes or public spaces', says Eckart Maise, Vitra's Chief Design Officer. The resulting colour and material scheme serves to emphasise or refresh the special character of both classic and contemporary designs in the collection.

In her role as Art Director for colours and materials, Hella Jongerius creates designer-specific colour and material worlds in collaboration with Vitra's contemporary designers and the company's R&D team. Updates of classics are also developed in consultation with their originators' descendants. Taken as a whole, the designer-specific libraries result in a wide range of Vitra colours, whose classification scheme makes it possible to combine furnishings in vibrant and expressive collages. Each product is given the greatest possible expressive power, yet still blends in well with other pieces, creating a harmonious overall arrangement without forfeiting any of the product's original intensity.

The Vitra Colour & Material Library comprises a variety of textiles and leathers, but also features solid materials, including the colours and textures of plastics, metals, woods and leathers. Together, these materials form a system offering countless possible combinations with a coherence that makes it easy for architects, interior designers or private clients to define a lively interior collage with a strong identity.

'The Vitra Colour & Material Library encourages creative freedom and fires the imagination – not by making everything possible, but by providing a clear display of options.' – Hella Jongerius