Soil Color

Understanding the importance of soil color and how to determine a soil color using the Munsell color book.

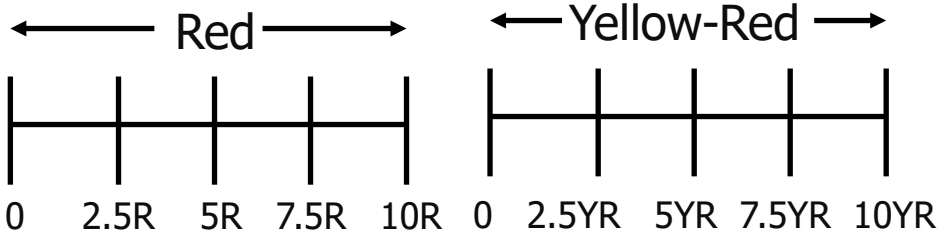
Significance of Soil Color

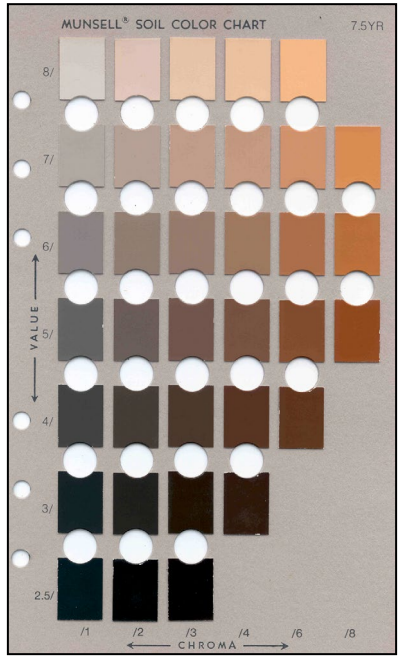
- Used to distinguish soil horizons
- It can serve as an indicator of the amount and distribution of organic matter within a soil
- It can serve as an indicator of the degree of aeration or reduction
  - “Brighter” colors indicate better drained soils
  - “Gray” colors indicate wetter soils
  - Understand Redoximorphic features or mottling serve as an indicator of soil wetness

Soil Color

Hue refers to the spectral color or chromatic composition of light reflected by an object. In the Munsell soil color book, each page represents a different hue.

Hue





Munsell Soil Color Book, 7.5YR page

Soil Color

Value refers to the amount of light reflected from the chip.
Chroma refers to the relative purity or strength of the spectral color.

Value

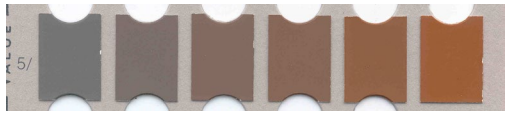
The Lightness or Darkness of Color

Chroma

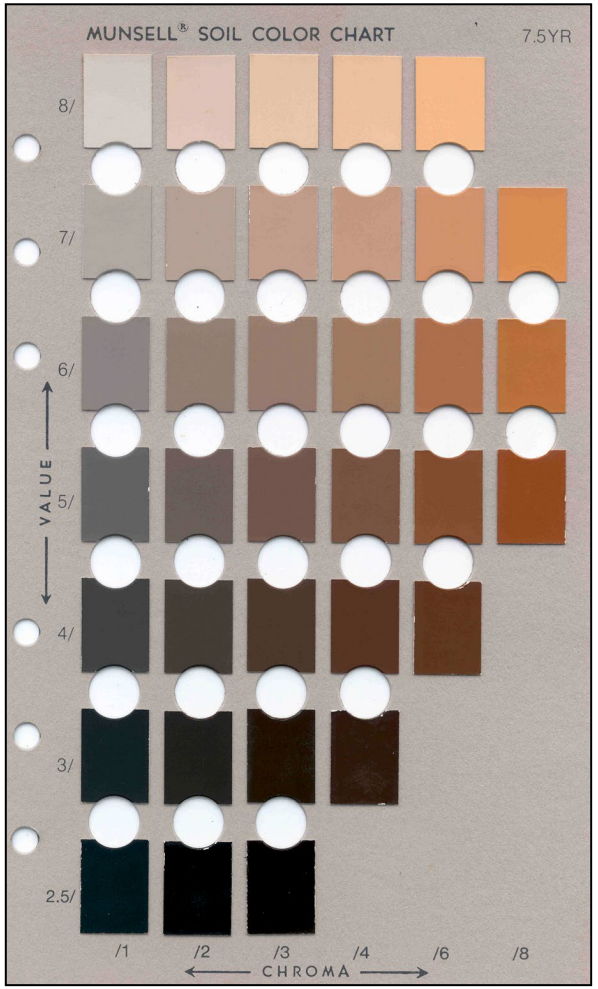
"Neutral" Gray

"Pure" Color

Increasing strength of color

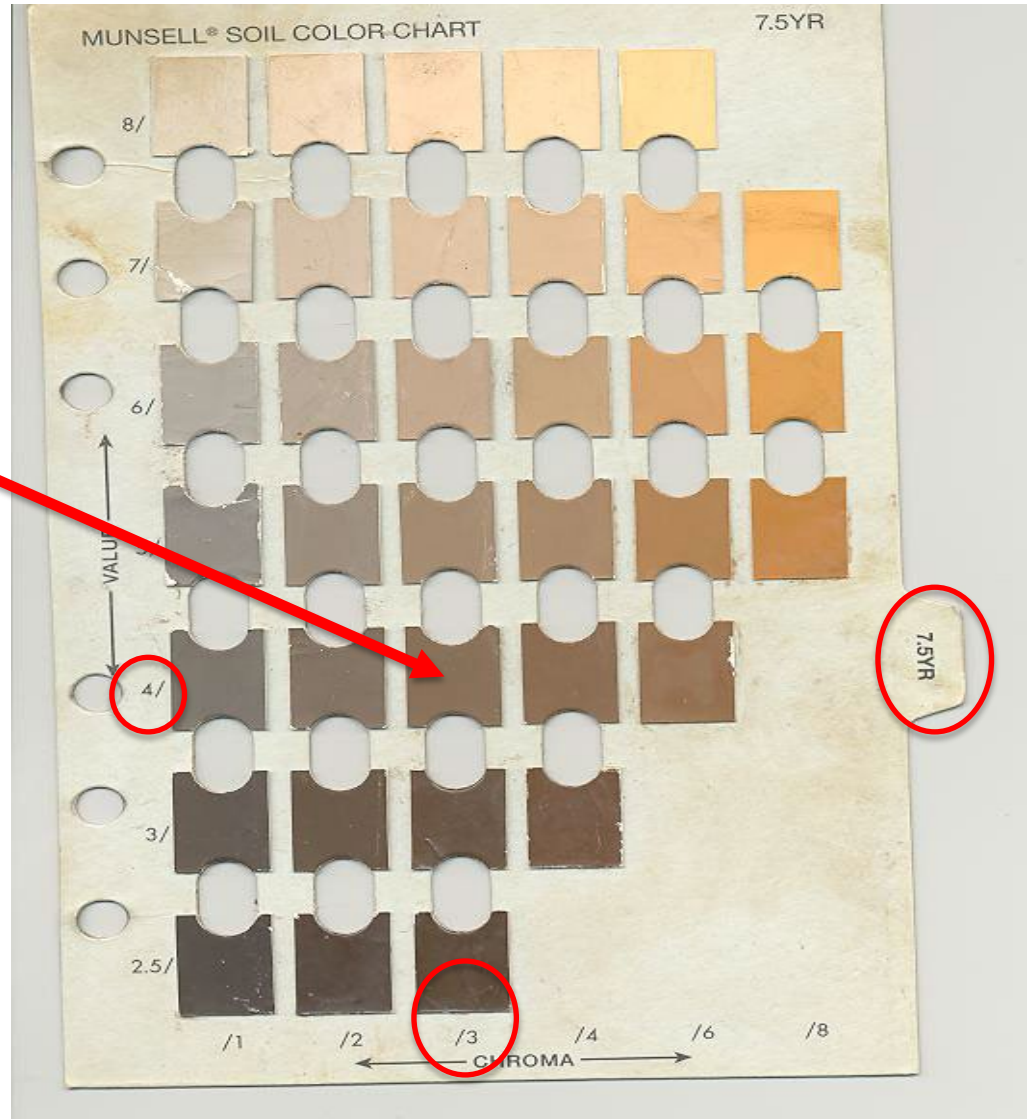


Increasing grayness



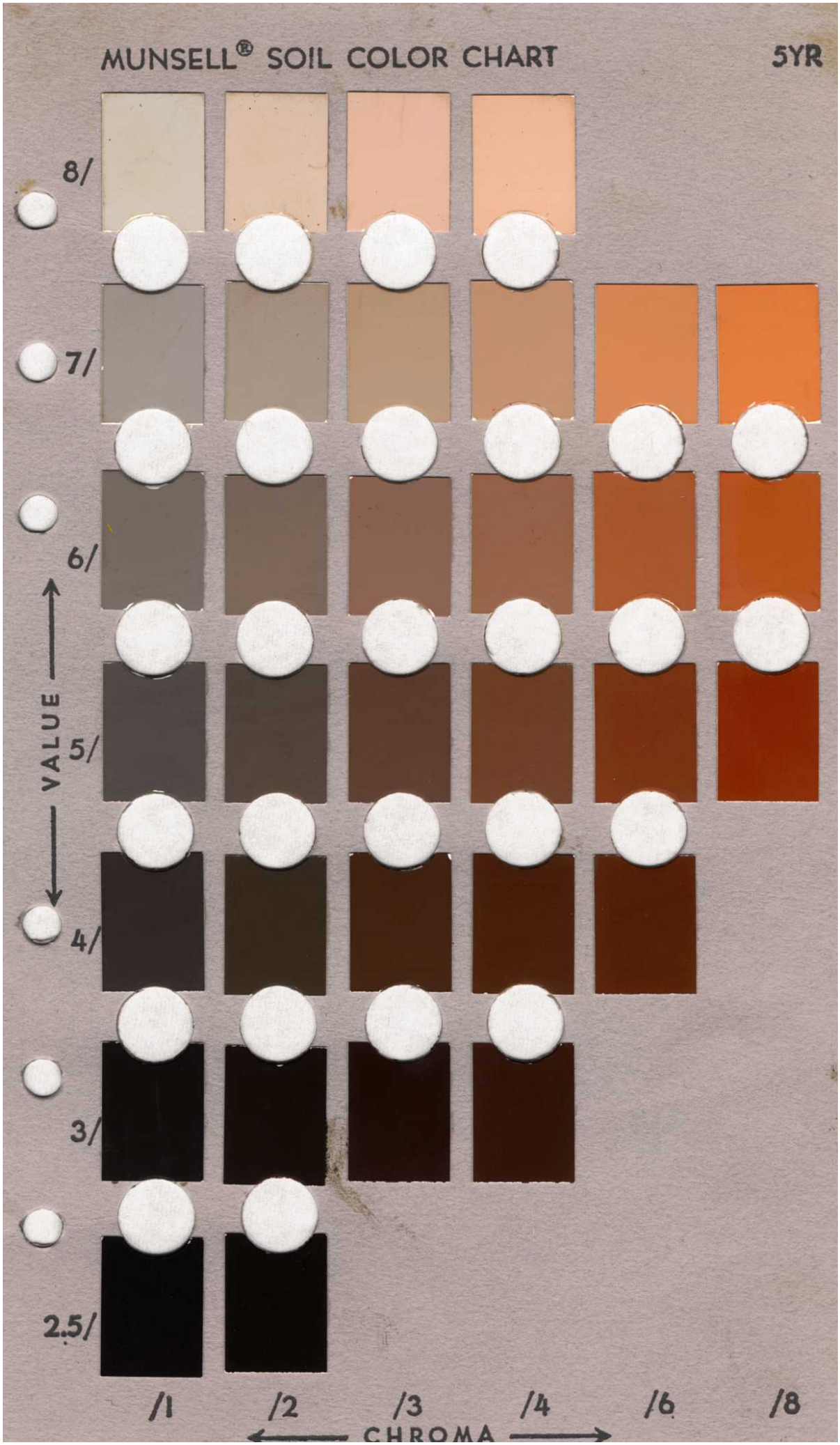
Munsell Color Chart

7.5YR 4/3 (Hue, value, chroma



Example of reading a Munsell Chart (A soil sample matches the chip where the arrow is pointing)

Additional Munsell Color Book Pages


MUNSELL® SOIL COLOR CHART
5YR
8/
7/
6/
5/
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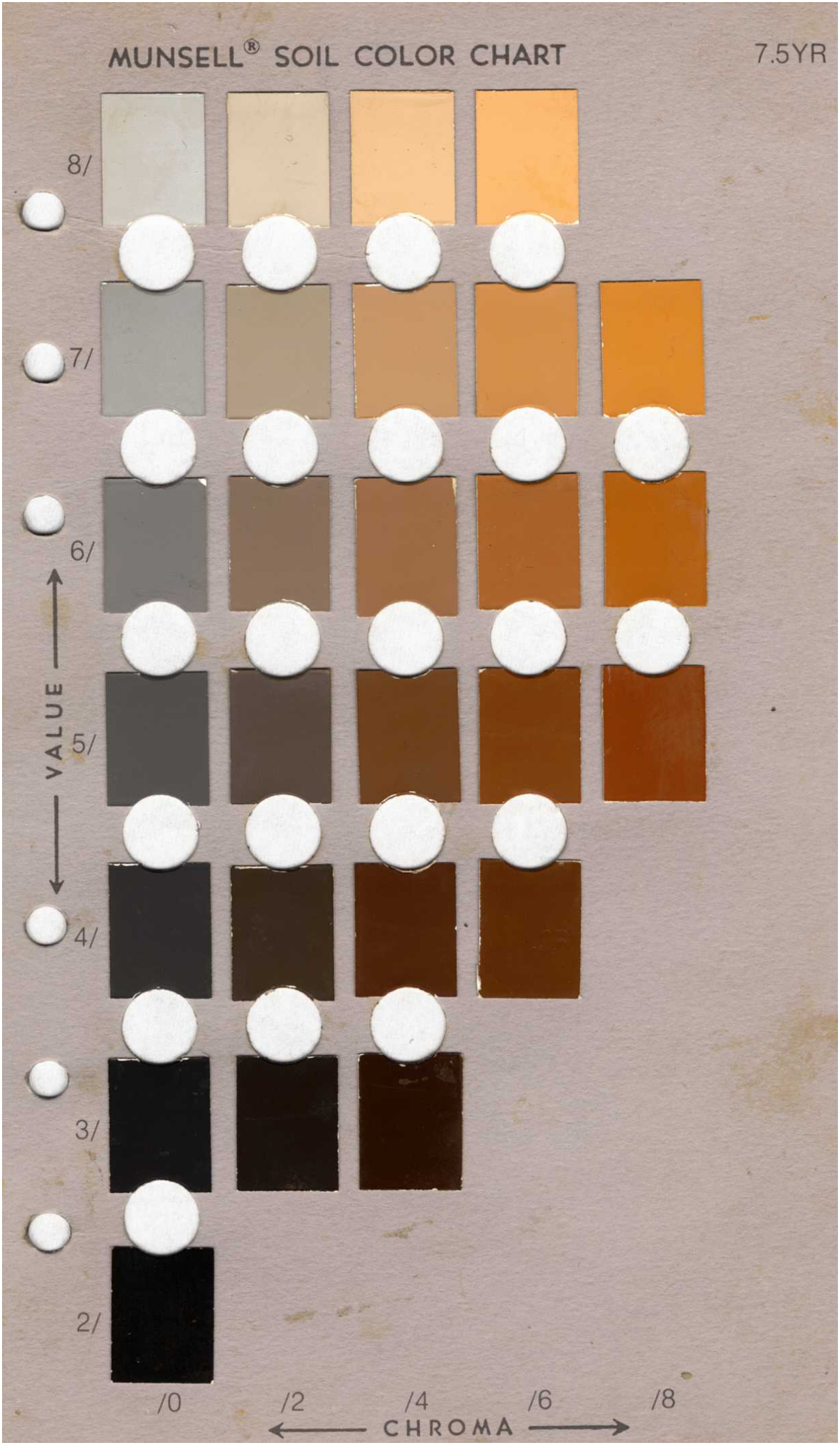
3/
2.5/
VALUE
/1
/2
/3
/4
/6
/8
CHROMA


MUNSELL® SOIL COLOR CHART
7.5YR
8/
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3/
2/
VALUE
/0
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/6
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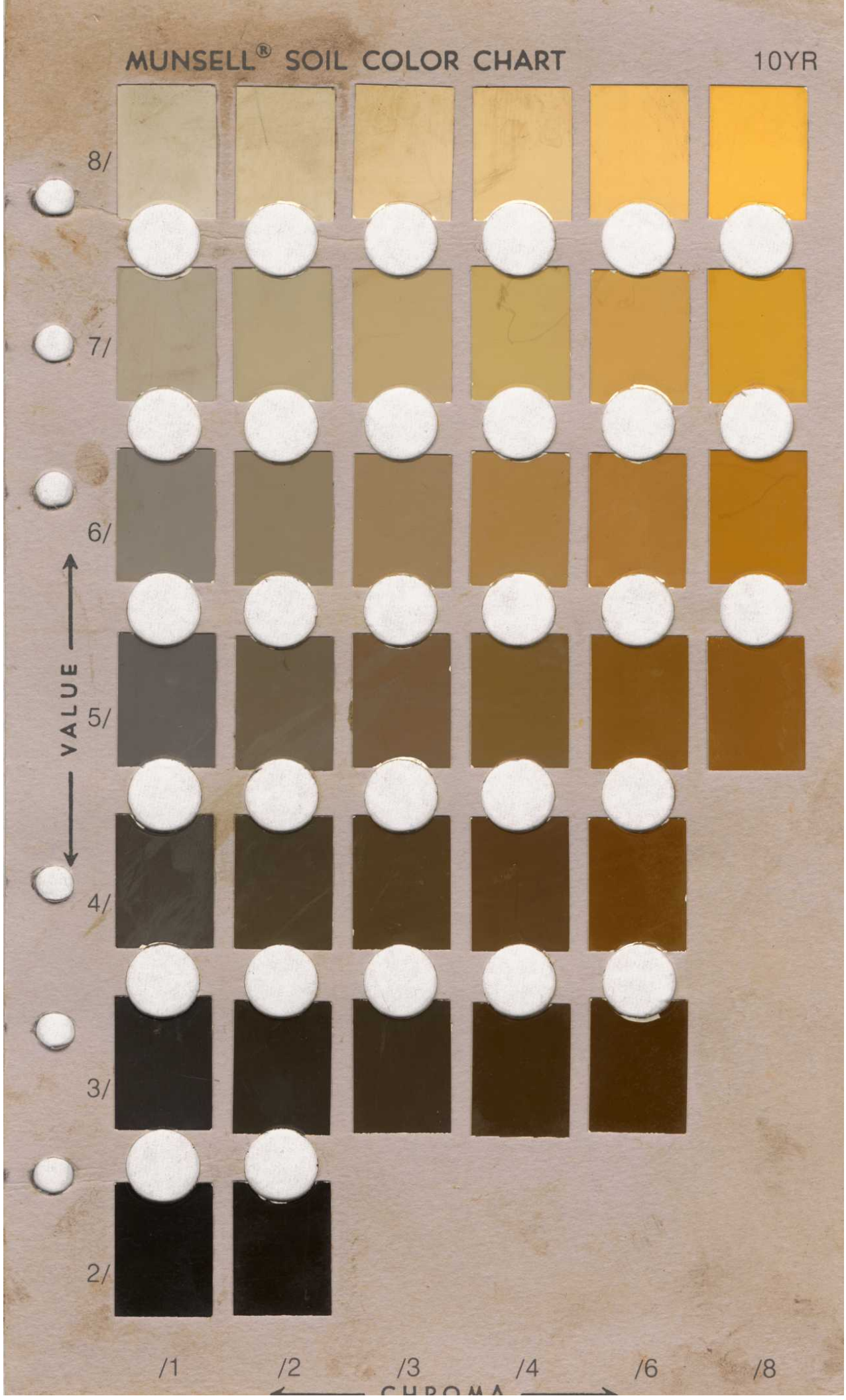
CHROMA


MUNSELL® SOIL COLOR CHART
10YR
8/
7/
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VALUE
/1
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/8
CHROMA