Trying out a new stain; staining different woods

The strength or depth of a colour is determinated by the concentration of the stain solution. When trying out a new stain, always start with a weak solution and keep applying the stain until you get the desired colour. It is much easier to apply several light coats of stain than it is to wash out an over-stained wood surface (which can prove nearly impossible). The most common classification of stains are pigment wiping stains, dye stains, and toner stains. Different kind of wood fall into two main classes, each with different stain characteristics. These are woods with close grain and tight pores, such as maple, birch, cherry, gum and pine; and woods with open grain and spongy pores such as rosewood, mahogany, walnut, oak, and Philippine mahogany. Stains will "take" much more readily on open grain, "spongy" wood, therefore the stain concentrations should be weaker when used on walnut or mahogany. Generally, close grain woods will need little or no filling, therefore any contrast between the colour and the grain pattern is accomplished almost entirely by the stain coat.

Suggestions on colour matching

Mixing the primary colours (Red, Yellow & Blue) produces secondary colours (Orange, Green & Violet):	Red + Yellow = Orange Blue + Yellow = Green Blue + Red = Violet
Adding White to a colour produces lighter shades or tints:	Blue + White = Light Blue Bluish Green + White = Turquoise Yellow + White = Ivory Vermillon + White = Flesh Black + White = Gray
Adding Black to a colour procuces a duller colour:	Red + Black = Brown Blue + Black = Slate Green + Black = Olive Purple + Black = Plum

When mixing a new colour, use a very small can, noting carefully the proportions of the various colours employed. Larger batches are then made according to the same proportion. Remember that thickness of film and texture of surface will cause a variation in the shade of the same colour. Wiping Stain colours are mixtures of pigments having different specific gravities and therefore different degrees of setting; thorough stirring is essential in order to obtain a uniform shade.