



Lighting Tips

Lighting is essential to the look and function of any room. And today there are more options in lighting your home than ever before. To help you choose the best type of lighting for your needs, we've provided this simple list of lighting tips.

Choose from:

1. Accent, Table and Floor Lamps
2. Lamp Shades
3. Ceiling Fixtures--Pendants, Swags and Chandeliers
4. Wall-Mounted Lights
5. Bathroom Lighting
6. Decorative Accent Lighting
7. Outdoor Lights
8. Recessed Lighting
9. Landscape Lights
10. Outdoor Utility Lights

1. Accent, Table and Floor Lamps

1. Accent lamps can be used in bedrooms, bathrooms, hallways, entrances and any spot that may need extra lighting. Because they are generally under 20", they provide just the right amount of accent lighting.
2. Table lamps are usually anywhere from 25" to 32" in height and are used for general purpose lighting in living rooms, bedrooms, dining rooms and family rooms.
3. Desk lamps are generally 12" to 20" high and are used to light a specific work area.
4. Floor lamps, an excellent source of illumination, are especially useful in dark corners or areas that regular lighting may not reach.
5. When table space is limited, wall lamps are a good alternative. Bedrooms are popular spots for these lamps.
6. Lamps are essential home decorating accessories. The style and finish of a lamp is as important as the wallpaper, carpet or paint used in a room. Some of today's most popular finishes are neutral tans, off-whites, antique whites and iron. However, polished brass still remains the overall favorite.
7. Remember if you purchase a lamp with a three-way switch, you'll need to purchase a three-way bulb. A three-way switch, on its own, will not provide three levels of illumination.

2. Lamp Shades

1. In general, the height of the shade should be equal the measurement taken from the base of the lamp to the bottom of the bulb socket. However, some newer styles of lamps and accent lamps do not always follow this rule.
2. The lamp shade should be at least as wide as the widest point of the lamp body. Most people prefer the lamp shade to be several inches wider than the lamp.
3. At eye level, the bottom of the shade should cover the bottom of the socket.

4. The harp determines where the shade sits on the lamp base. Harps can be used to raise or lower the shade.
5. Shade sizes are expressed in 3 dimensions. The first represents the top diameter, the second represents the bottom diameter, and the third represents the shade's height.
6. Shades can be made of almost any material, but the most common are silk, cotton, linen, plastic/vinyl and paper.

3. Ceiling Fixtures--Pendants, Swags and Chandeliers

1. All types of ceiling fixtures provide excellent general room illumination.
2. Pendants can be used to add more light to specific areas such as a kitchen table.
3. Chandeliers or pendants with 200-400 overall wattage provide abundant illumination for a dining room. Install 30" above the table to allow for head room when standing. The diameter of the fixture should be 12" less than the width of the table. Center the fixture over the table.
4. To prevent accidents, stairs should be lit top to bottom, with switches in both places. Ceiling fixtures or recessed lighting will offer the needed light for stairs.
5. Use a ceiling mount fixture for general lighting in the foyer.
6. For safety in hallways, use lighting fixtures every 8 to 10 feet. Use increased wattage in areas where tasks are performed, in rooms with ceilings higher than 8 feet, and in rooms with dark-colored floors and walls.

4. Wall-Mounted Lights

1. Wall fixtures are used to provide illumination for a specific area such as a hallway or a bathroom vanity.
2. While traditional wall fixtures with "arms" remain the most popular form of wall lighting, more contemporary wall sconces are gaining popularity, especially for hallway or accent lighting.
3. Wall lighting can offer needed illumination levels to prevent accidents on stairs, especially when an overhead ceiling fixture is not feasible.
4. For reading in bed use two matching wall mounted or pendant fixtures installed 30" above the top of the mattress.

5. Bathroom Lighting

1. In bathrooms, it is quite important to provide adequate light around the vanity and mirror. A light above the mirror to illuminate downward is recommended. Also lights on both sides of the mirror are recommended to reduce shadows on the face.
2. The choices in bathroom lighting have dramatically increased over the past few years. One of the most popular trends is "Design & Combine" Bath Bars. You choose the wall bracket (or fitter) they like the best and then select from the many styles of glass shades available to go with it. You will enjoy custom designing your own bathroom lighting fixture.
3. Use a ceiling fixture in the bathroom for generous overall illumination.

6. Decorative Accent Lighting

1. The most common applications of decorative accent lighting are undercabinet lighting for kitchens, accent lighting in entertainment and curio cabinets, picture highlighting, backlighting on the top of cabinets and "toe" lighting around the bottom of cabinets.

2. Halogen lights are popular in this category.
3. Newer, more decorative undercabinet lights are available to replace and upgrade older fluorescent fixtures.

7. Outdoor Lights

1. Outdoor lighting makes your home safer and more secure by providing necessary illumination for walkways, steps and entrances.
2. The use of outdoor lighting, in conjunction with timers and photo cells, can add even more peace-of-mind by providing a lived-in look while you're away from home and insuring the area around the house is well lit when you arrive home after dark.
3. The most common type of outdoor fixture is a brass wall lantern, although materials such as cast aluminum have gained popularity because they are rust resistant.
4. Generally, a light mounted to one side of every exterior door is the minimum lighting for the exterior of a house. Try including a lantern or other wall fixture on both sides of the door and a pendant or a post light near driveways and walkways.
5. The popularity of using outdoor lanterns indoors is growing. You can use small lanterns to accent powder rooms, small foyers, sitting areas or stairways.

8. Recessed Lighting

1. Use recessed light fixtures for downlighting. Living areas look attractive and inviting with downlighting.
2. Recessed lighting works best with other lighting and can be dimmed for special effects.
3. Recessed light fixtures can be used for concentrated downlighting. This effect is perfect for lighting a kitchen counter or bathroom vanity because it confines illumination to one specific area, making detailed tasks easier to perform.
4. Recessed light fixtures can be used for accent lighting. You can draw attention to a painting, a plant or any other noteworthy object. This effect is ideal for any room.
5. Make a room appear larger with recessed light fixtures by washing a wall in light. This technique--perfect for small living areas--adds visual depth by creating shadows and contrasts.
6. For an enclosed tub or shower, use a recessed light approved for this specific application.

9. Landscape Lights

1. For both security and safety, light up steps, driveways, walkways and grounds with post lanterns and tier lights.
2. Enhance the ambiance of your property at night with low-voltage landscape lighting of trees, shrubs and flowers.
3. Create a lighting plan by choosing one or two points of interest and make this the centerpiece of your landscape lighting display. Build the rest of your lighting plan around your focal point.
4. Low voltage lighting uses only 12 volts of electricity and is safe to install.
5. Floodlighting is a versatile technique for illuminating a wide range of features. Use floodlights to illuminate walls, garden ponds or gazebos.
6. Use path lighting to illuminate the areas where people walk or drive. This lighting makes a path attractive and safe.

7. Uplighting adds visual interest to objects, such as trees, bushes, statues and fountains.
8. Wall lighting is designed to be incorporated into a wall bordering a building, pool or walkway area for added visibility.
9. Use silhouetting to provide dramatic effects on a broad surface, like a wall, behind a landscape feature, such as bushes.
10. Unique landscape features, such as sculptures and shaped shrubbery, can be highlighted using spotlights. A sequence of spotlights can create an interesting mosaic of colors and textures.
11. For maximum light output, light fixtures should not be covered by foliage, tree branches or bushes. Check the fixtures periodically to see if nearby foliage needs pruning.
12. For maximum safety, light and cables should be installed at least five feet from the edge of a swimming pool.
13. Remember to regularly clean the lenses and fixtures of your landscape lighting. Also take the time to readjust ground level fixtures if needed.

10. Outdoor Utility Lights

1. For safety and security, always light up steps, driveways, walkways, and yards with floodlighting.
2. Consider using quartz halogen motion lighting or floodlighting to save energy.
3. Always select a lighting alternative that will provide the right amount of lighting needed for an area. For complete protection, mount your lights so that the coverage areas overlap.
4. For maximum safety always turn off the power before servicing your light fixtures.
5. Always be sure to read all instruction manuals carefully before attempting installation of any light fixture.
6. Using motion-activated lighting will ensure that front and rear entrances to your home are secure. Motion lights will welcome guests and startle intruders.
7. For added security, choose a motion light with an indoor alarm module so that you know what's going on outside.
8. Choose a motion detector light with a sensor that best suits your needs: A sensor with a broad range of coverage would be better suited to a yard than to an entrance.
9. Because heat from light bulbs can cause false triggering, be sure not to position them too close to the motion detector. Trees, swimming pools, and other reflective surfaces can also cause false triggering.
10. Since motion detectors and utility lighting come in a wide variety of shapes and sizes, it's easy to choose fixtures that are well-suited for your home.

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