



EFFECTIVE USE OF LIGHTING: WHAT TO THINK ABOUT

By Nellie Palmer

LIGHTING CAN TRANSFORM THE LOOK AND FEEL OF YOUR HOME AND IT'S AN ESSENTIAL PART OF EFFECTIVE DECOR PLANNING. LITTLE CHANGES CAN MAKE A BIG IMPACT, SO IT'S IMPORTANT TO APPROACH YOUR DESIGN CAREFULLY TO SEE THE RESULTS YOU HOPE FOR. HERE'S WHAT TO THINK ABOUT BEFORE YOU BEGIN.

1 | START WITH A PLAN

Before getting into the specifics of the lighting you plan to install, map out your home's rooms and the uses they're mainly put to. You'll likely want different kinds of lighting for a bedroom, home office or kitchen. So it's a good idea to set out the differences before you start on anything else.

For each room, decide which types of lighting will be most helpful. For example, in a kitchen you'll probably want bright, focused light over the main work areas. While in a living room a softer and warmer lighting plan will create a more relaxing atmosphere.

2 | CHOOSE YOUR BULBS WISELY

The light bulbs you buy are central to the lighting effects generated for each room. Decide on the total brightness each

room will need, in either watts or lumens, along with a color temperature that will work best for the mood you want to create.

For example, lighting in a bedroom should be a warmer red temperature with less blue light to help encourage sleep. A home office should have the opposite type of light, with a higher blue content helping to promote alertness and productivity.

Choosing the bulbs you use will go a long way toward deciding which kinds of fittings are most suitable for each room.

3 | USE LIGHTING IN LAYERS

For each room, explore ways you can use layering to increase the variety of lights it contains. For example, making up the total illumination from a combination of high ceiling lamps, wall lamps and centerpiece clusters will give you more flexibility by lighting separate elements, ultimately adding more depth and interest to the room's feel.

4 | USE SPOTLIGHTS FOR HIGHLIGHTS

As part of your planning decide if each room has a particular feature you'd like to highlight, excluding any functional considerations. For example, a hallway

or stairwell might feature a particular piece of wall art that would look great with a soft spotlight or two pointing toward it, even if the illumination isn't necessary at all times.

5 | KEEP IT SIMPLE AND COHESIVE

The opportunities for experimentation are limitless, but when planning lighting throughout your home try and keep an underlying theme to tie the rooms together. If the lighting styles are too different from room to room, it can become disorientating to move between them, risking eyestrain and even feelings of subtle unease.

As with most aspects of decor, keeping things simple where possible will create a sense of comfortable cohesiveness and leave space for more dramatic effects where they'll have a particular impact.

When it comes to creating an atmosphere with your home decor, lighting will contribute just as much as your choice of colors and materials, so take the time to plan it carefully before moving on to more detailed aspects of your decor design.



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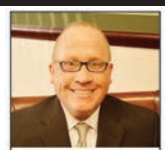
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