

# GETTING LIT

*Lighting plays a significant part in setting the tone and atmosphere of your home – brighten your world with these three layers of illumination*

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Since the invention of the light bulb, electric lighting has practically become a fundamental human need and one of those things most of us take for granted, so much so that whenever there's a power cut, we still find ourselves absent-mindedly flicking the light switch – yes, we've all done that.

But although it has become a basic necessity, the lighting arrangement in your home doesn't have to be basic. There are several ways in which lighting can be used for different purposes in the various rooms of your house. They can be classified into three groups: ambient, task, and accent lighting.

## AMBIENT LIGHTING

This is your general form of lighting, which includes the natural light that is allowed in

through your windows as well as the main lighting in your house when natural light is absent or low. It can be seen as the first layer and the most basic form of lighting. Ambient lighting inside your house can come in the form of chandeliers, ceiling lights, wall sconces or fixtures, or standing lamps. This type of lighting is meant to be equally distributed throughout a room in all directions, to illuminate as much of the space, and eliminate as many shadows, as possible. Keep this in mind when choosing your ambient lighting and try to use bulbs that emit a warmer light – lampshades also help for this.

## TASK LIGHTING

The more functional aspect of lighting, task lighting should be seen as an additional light source to ambient lighting. It refers

to all types of lighting that are needed to perform the general activities that you do in your home for which you need a strong, more directional beam of light, such as cooking, doing your make-up, reading or doing paperwork, and so forth. When it comes to choosing lights for the different rooms in your house, it's important to keep in mind what you will be doing and where, so that you can place your task lights in the most practical places. For example, in the kitchen, it's a very good idea to have bright lighting directly above your countertops, to improve visibility when preparing food. Desk lamps are essential for your home office or on your bedside table for bedtime reading. We recommend the ones with adjustable necks so that you can aim the light directly on your work, and make sure to place them at arm's reach so you can

adjust them as needed. LED light bulbs are always the best for this type of lighting, as they tend to be brighter, with a cooler colour temperature which has been shown to better stimulate the brain and increase productivity than lighting with a warmer colour temperature. LED lights also last longer and are more energy efficient, which is very important if you're spending many late-night hours at your desk.

### ACCENT LIGHTING

Accent lighting is the third and final layer of lighting that can be added to your home and falls in the more decorative category. It can be used to accentuate a specific area or object, to create a focal point, or for dramatic effect. This is a very useful technique of drawing attention to special details in your home, such as paintings and artwork, fireplaces, furnishings, plants, or even to complement architectural designs such as staircases or walls. This type of lighting comes in the form of backlights, floor lights, spotlights, track lights, cabinet lights, or wall-mounted picture lights. However, for it to be effective, you need to keep the following in mind:

- 1.** Don't overdo it. If you're trying to emphasise too many areas in your home through accent lighting, it can overwhelm the observer and cause your home to seem disorganised – focus the lighting on only one specific area or object in a room.
- 2.** Place the light source as close to the focal point as possible and aim it directly at the area of interest.
- 3.** Angle the light with the help of fixtures or shades that will hide the light source, reduce unwanted reflections, and create shadows around the specific illuminated area.
- 4.** Accent lighting should not compete with your ambient lighting. Keep the ambient lighting around your focal point at a minimum.

So there you have it. Minimise life's dull moments and have fun with layering your home in light, not only so that you can see what you're doing, but also to complement your decor and even make it pop.



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