



COASTERDIYPROJECT

Bedroom Lighting Guide

PROJECT TYPE

Decorating

DIFFICULTY

Easy

Whether you retire to a small alcove or grand master suite, you probably use your bedroom for more than simply slumber. Dark bedrooms are great for sleeping, but too little light hinders other activities taking place there. Bedroom lighting ranges from basic to bold; dimmed to dramatic. To help you properly light your bedroom, the American Lighting Association offers the following tips:

Be Size Wise

Before buying bedroom lighting, first determine the size of room, says Artcraft Vice President Howard Bernstein. Take your room measurements, along with outlet locations and furniture placement to a lighting showroom. The experts there can help you fill in with just the right light.

Height Right

Consider scale. Bedrooms typically have lower 8 or 9 ft. tall ceilings. Avoid fixtures with longer bodies in favor of shorter or flush-mounted fixtures. "You want a certain level for reading and enough lighting for dressing," says Bernstein. "You also need light to be high enough to reach all the areas."

Room to Glow

Decide what you want to do in the room, then choose appropriate lighting. Home computers, sewing machines and reading nooks in the bedroom need directed lighting. Sitting areas beg for softer, shaded fixtures. Vanities demand brighter light.

The Lighter Side

Avoid shades on lamps or lights that are too opaque, otherwise your bedroom will be too dark, say the ALA experts. The fixtures may look nice, but the light will not be as functional. "When buying a table lamp, opt for one with a softly diffused shade," says Dan Blitzer, ALA continuing education instructor. "Spend a moment to see how you turn it on and off to make sure it is not going to be too difficult to manage when you are in bed."

Location, Location, Location

Don't install lights directly over the bed. You will tend to look up at them while you are laying in bed. Direct light from overhead is less comfortable than soft light at face level.

More is More

No single source of light is as visually comfortable as a combination of portable lamps and installed lighting. "Too much light in one place is unpleasant and glaring," says Blitzer. "It's better to use more light sources of lower wattage."

In the Mood

"A strong dose of ambience is also important in the bedroom," says Blitzer, who suggests installing dimmers on lights for altering effect. Softer or colored light bulbs can also change a room's mood.

Closet Conditions

Few things are more frustrating than dark closets. "Closets need good light," says Blitzer. "But be careful not to put a hot light bulb too near delicate clothes." Attach a closet light 12-inches from the edge of the rod or upper-shelf. Lighting experts favor fluorescent lights because they provide lots of light, are cooler, save energy and can be concealed behind the header of door. If you use a good color tube, you will be better able to tell the color of your clothing.

Bedside Reading

Portable reading lights set on nightstands offer book lovers flexibility. "The guiding principle in buying reading lamps should be the ability to adjust the light to your taste, either by swiveling or moving its arm," says Blitzer. "They should also be well-shielded so you don't see the bulb and you are able to read without bothering your sleeping partner." Lighting controls located at the middle of the headboard allow you to turn off a snoring partner's reading light without disturbing him.

Control Power

Imagine pushing a bedside button and turning the lights off or on. No problem with high tech lighting controls. "There are gadgets to turn off lights with an infrared remote like you use for your TV," says Blitzer. "Lighting professionals can help you install these."

SOURCE

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