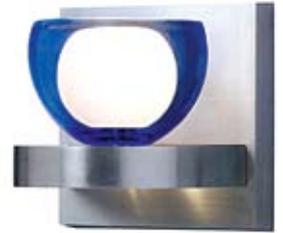


Laura J. Casella
ASID, Allied Member

Home comes alive with *Light*

Without the proper lighting, all the other wonderful selections and architectural details within the home may very well go unnoticed.

Lighting choices can be time consuming and overwhelming for today's homeowner. When walking into the local lighting showroom, nothing seems more intimidating to the inexperienced shopper than hundreds of suspended fixtures glaring them in the face. This is why most people tend to down-play their lighting possibilities and adapt the "when in doubt, use a can" mentality. However, without the proper lighting, all the other wonderful selections and architectural details within the home may very well go unnoticed.



Remember two things

A homeowner needs to remember two things: keep it simple and do your homework. Lighting is great because one can get a lot of bang for their buck. For instance, hiding rope lighting behind crown molding and over kitchen cabinets is a great way to highlight ceilings and add ambiance to a room. Also, under cabinet lighting is simple, inexpensive and can aid the functionality of a kitchen.

Track lighting is still around, but today it is more decorative and fun. The adjustable tracks are very popular in both contemporary and traditional styles and really help highlight many elements of a home. One can get creative and use the tracks to make an original lighting artwork.

New LR6 bulb uses 85% less energy

Have lighting and recessed fixtures really come that far in the past few years? Homeowners have a tendency to over "can" their homes, sometimes to the point where it creates a landing strip effect. Unless one is trying to flag down their local alien, take it easy on the cans! The new recessed lights are amazing. The standard 6" can be purchased for about \$15.00 a piece but only have 2,000 hours of bulb life. One fixture can cost approximately \$900.00 over an eight year span. The new LED lights can cost about \$145.00 each (including bulb) but average 50,000 hours (20 years) bulb life. The new LR6 bulb uses 85% less energy than a conventional incandescent, less than half of a comparable fluorescent AND does not contain mercury! They are warm to the touch and create a beautiful glow. If one wants to go green, they should definitely consider using the new LR6 bulb.

Speaking of green, by adding dimmers to overhead lights, lamps and fixtures, one can save energy and easily control mood lighting in the home. It is an inexpensive way to change the mood of a room.





Finishes range from bronze to nickel to glass to fabric.

As far as finishes and fixtures, the chandelier is back and one can see them everywhere from bathrooms to bedrooms. They can be funky or fun, traditional or sleek. A chandelier is a great way to add a focal point or conversation piece to the room. Scale is very important as well. With huge entryways and two-story ceilings, it is important to fill up those voids with a fixture that really fits the space. One shouldn't be afraid to be whimsical or eclectic with their lighting. It does not all have to match. If someone has a traditional home they may want to throw in a contemporary, unique fixture to add sparkle and elegance. Today's finishes range from bronze to nickel to glass to fabric. Although brass is still around, today's trend leans more to the bronze fixtures, even in traditional and historic homes. Chrome and nickel pieces tend to be more popular in the bathrooms since the trend in faucets is the same.

If someone is still struggling, they should not be afraid to hire a professional. Interior designers, architects and especially lighting designers are knowledgeable in the latest trends and products and can help in adding that final element that your home requires not only for beauty, but also for functional purposes.