

home design guide

Lighten Up: make the most of your lighting

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Lighting is a vital part of any design - a finishing touch to a good design. It should be thoughtfully laid out in your plan to be sure each and every room has sufficient lighting levels for each room's purpose.

During the early design phases of your new home or remodel plans, discuss your lighting needs with your home design professional. Be careful that some design professionals may only provide you with a "code minimum" layout so that your plans can pass the building permit review. Also, the builder may provide a lighting allowance in his bid based on the designer's layout, and you may find out later, possibly after construction, that the lighting in your home does not meet your requirements.

While reviewing your plans with your design professional, walk through each room of your plan to locate switches, fixtures and outlets for your convenience. Here are some design tips to consider with your lighting plan:

Indoor Lighting

■ **Day Lighting** – it's the most inexpensive lighting and yet the most dramatic. Maximize windows in each room (but be sensitive to have proper shading from the hot summer sun). Studies show that sunlight improves our health, our attitudes and it lifts our spirits. The more daylight that is used to your benefit, the less reliant you will be on artificial light, which will save money on initial installation costs and on your monthly power bill.

■ **Ambient Lighting** – which is general overhead lighting. Consider each room's function, whether you want bright lights (like fluorescent bulbs) or soft light (like incandescent bulbs). A lighting consultant can do a room-by-room photometric analysis to ensure you have the right degree of light in each room.

■ **Task Lighting** – direct lighting for specific activities, such as a desk lamp or under-counter lamps to illuminate your countertops

■ **Accent Lighting** – focuses light on an object, such as a piece or artwork.

■ **Decorative Lighting** – total pleasure lighting, used to create a mood or focal point.



■ **Security Lighting** - think about lighting your house for security at night or while you are away on vacation. Some timers will turn lights on and off to match your normal at-home evening lighting patterns.

■ **Night Lighting** – soft illumination at night as needed, controlled by motion. These are dim lights specifically planned to aid in finding your way to the bathroom or kitchen in the middle of the night.

Outdoor Lighting

■ **Security Lighting** – lights that will brightly illuminate your driveway and the front, side and back yards, usually with motion detecting flood lights or timed front porch lights.

■ **Utility Lighting**– lighting to illuminate the porch and driveway to help navigate guests to your front door at night.

■ **Aesthetics** – landscape and uplights to illuminate certain architectural features.

■ **Seasonal Lighting** – decorative lighting for celebrations and holidays. Pre-plan locations for power outlets on your front porch, around the garage, or anywhere else on the front of your house for convenience as an alternative to multiple extension cords.

Your design professional should consult with a lighting design specialist. The specialist can advise you on the correct types of fixtures and inform you on the latest energy saving wattage like compact fluorescent bulbs or LED. They should review the preliminary plans and provide a photometry analysis to be sure each room is achieves the proper lighting levels.

Do you have questions about home design or remodeling?



Contact Tony at tweremeichik@canin.com or visit his company's website at www.canin.com. Years of research in custom home design, remodeling and home building has led Tony Weremeichik, Principal of Canin

Associates' Architectural Design Studio, to be a strong advocate for home buyers and home owners to get the best design and construction value for their money. He leads clients and builders through a well-orchestrated design process that provides his clients with the utmost attention and creative design solutions.