



Lighting up our homes is very important. Get it wrong and you will have succeeded in adding another irritant in your life. We naturally crave for good ventilation and good lighting. Dark and dingy is passé. The latest and emerging trends in lighting solutions for homes, along with a good lighting plan can make all the difference between light and a glow.

Imagine an expensive piece of art, be it an art object, a painting, a crystal. If you light it up badly you will gag its beauty. Further, inappropriate lighting can even cause it permanent damage. How often have we found that after buying something that looked great in the store window display looks pale in the house? We don't seem to like it as much. Something happened along the way. Could it be that lighting was a probable factor? Very likely, because a good lighting plan in your house will not only go a long way towards enhancing the beauty of the interiors but also provide greater comfort and functionality.



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● Interiors by Mahesh Punjabi

The perception of light

How often have we slowed down to absorb the beauty of a radiant sunrise or a sunset? However the same scene at noon can knock you unconscious because it is too harsh. Lighting in nature can manipulate the perception of the landscape making it beautiful and soothing or making it harsh and unbearable. It also plays a vital role in your homes, writes **SANJIV MALVI**

LET THERE BE LIGHTS

A glossary of lights

General lighting: It is also called ambient lighting. It takes care of the general illumination level in a space. It should be bright enough to comfortably see and walk about safely. It must not be overbearing and neither too dim. General lighting is the skeleton upon which you can further build your lighting plan.
E.g. corridors, foyers, etc.

Task Lighting: As the name suggests, it is that part of the lighting plan that assists you in performing specific tasks like reading, writing, working, homework, games, etc. The aim here is to help you perform specific tasks without causing eye strain, due to lack of intensity. Well designed task lighting is free of glare and irritating shadows and is brighter than general lighting, but limited to specific areas where tasks

are to be performed. E.G. Reading lamps, kitchens, etc.

Accent Lighting: Its primary goal is not functional but instead to highlight and accentuate. It is used to create and add drama in a room. One would use it to light up paintings, art objects, drapes etc. As a rule of thumb the lighting intensity of accent lighting is at least three times that of general lighting. This way it can attract attention towards the object/space it is lighting up.

A term that has become popular in lighting parlance is "Mood Lighting". As the name suggests, it is about creating moods with lights, or literally about setting up various lighting combinations using a single button for each combination.

THE LIGHTS FANTASTIC

If you're setting up home, my best advice to you would be to plan ahead. Freeze the layouts and

then proceed with the construction. I would then call in the Lighting Designer and have a joint meeting with the Interior Designer and Automation Consultant. It is vital for the Interior Designer to transfer the vision of the space in detail to the Lighting Designer, who then plans the scheme of lighting. This requires to be approved by the interior designer conceptually and the automation consultant for technical feasibility.

The magic of light and technology has the power to transform any space indoors and outdoors. The transformation is not only aesthetic but adds a definitive functionality too! In my experience the maturity of the interior designer, lighting designer and the automation consultant is vital for success.

LIGHTING THE WAY AHEAD

The lighting designer will help decide the placement of the lights; the kind of fixtures that are suitable for the purpose; the type of source be

it Halogens, Tubes, PLs, energy saving LEDs, Metal Halides for outdoors, Fiber Optics, etc. Further, it is important to design the loops and circuits to facilitate the various scenes or combinations as per the design and keeping your requirement in mind.

Your role in this is to ensure that this complex matrix of lights with multiple scenes is easy to operate. There are various options of lighting control systems available. The most advanced among these are manufactured by Crestron and Lutron.

So what does all this do for you? You get an enchanting space; the lights have great accuracy in terms of intensity, positioning, color amongst others. The control feature is of immense value, since you have full control of every light bulb at the touch of a button. Scene setting is a breeze. Putting the house on a timer is simple, this helps to save electricity. The dimming feature also adds value to the economics. Switching the whole house off or any particular part of it is again a matter of



seconds. The ease of use is a great asset. The set up can be planned to be made maid-friendly in the Indian context. Taking it many steps further I would incorporate into the system advanced features such as remote monitoring, control and integration into the security system.

The interface between you and the lights would generally be a key pad and also various kinds of touch sensitive panels. Believe me automated, intelligent lighting is a very useful feature to have, once you use it you will not want to go via the conventional route.

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Light up your Art



Art and light share a love hate relationship. Light in any form, natural and artificial is damaging to art. At the same time, not lighting a piece is like pulling a cloth over a precious piece of work. A few tips to make your art last.

- Avoid placing paintings in the line of direct sunlight. The UV rays will damage the work.
- Avoid any direct full light for long lengths of time. Galleries get away with placing focus lights on art pieces because pieces are exhibited only for a few days.
- Rotate your paintings if possible. This is easier said than done, considering you will have allotted a special space for a special size of art work. However, if you have a cluster of art works, it makes sense to rotate paintings every few months or so.
- There are a few lights available in the market, ensure you get the right ones. Fluorescent light is not recommended for paintings. Incandescent light is good for warm colours. Experts suggest that a combination of incandescent and halogen lights may be the best solution.