

15. LIGHTING PART II

The last article discussed lighting in general related to what light fixture types and bulbs are available. We also touched on the fact that different rooms require different levels of light. In this month's article I'd like to discuss actually laying out the lighting in a kitchen, living room and bedroom of a typical residence.

Kitchens have become one of the most important people spaces in a house. Light must be provided for many different activities; reading, food prep, doing dishes, cooking and the list goes on. When laying out lighting in a kitchen I start by providing general area lighting over the circulation areas and around the perimeter of the room. This is usually done with recessed down light cans. I then proceed with locating areas which require special lighting. Two areas I always wash with lots of light is the sink area and if there is an island or peninsula I locate recessed downlights over these areas to insure you have plenty of light to work. Where we have counter space under upper cabinets I always locate strip florescence or strip halogen lights under the upper cabinets so all surfaces are well lit where food prep may take place. If you use halogen strip type lights you can incorporate dimmers which can make a kitchen quite a nice space. Be sure your upper cabinets have an apron on the bottom so your lights are not visible and are concealed behind this wood trim or apron.

If the kitchen has a desk area make sure you have a light directly above it or some strip lights mounted to the underside of the upper cabinets so the desk has plenty of light. If the kitchen has a walk-in pantry I like to provide plenty of light and a nice trick to do is to put the light switch in the door frame so every time you open the door the light automatically goes on. This saves you from looking for a switch with your hands full.

On to laying out the Living Room. I always start by determining where the main seating arrangement is going to be. Above this seating area I locate some downlights so a pool of light is formed over the couches, coffee table and lounge chairs. Typically, I also locate a floor outlet and floor phone outlet so you can plug in a lamp or phone by the seating arrangement. Some Living Rooms will also have a games table or possibly just two chairs and a table for reading. I also locate downlights above this area.

If the Living Room has a fireplace I always locate a spot light preferably switched separately to accent the face of the fireplace. I also sit down with the owners and determine which

walls will have art on them and either locate track lights or accent lights. Care must be taken in locating these accent lights to insure there are enough fixtures and they are far enough off the wall to shine on the art piece. If there are niches I also locate real small light fixtures inside so pots, kachinas or what ever is inside is accentuated. Other nice touches are: 1) Locating a recessed downlight above a series of glass shelves so one light will shine through all the shelves. 2) With solid shelves putting in small strip lights at the edge so each recessed shelf is well lite. 3) Putting dimmers on everything! 4) Lighting all four corners of the room so they are not dark. 5) Locating the controls to the outdoor lights so they can be controlled from the Living Room. 6) Locating a ceiling fan in the room for air circulation. (Do not locate recessed lights near fan or you will get a strobe light effect).

The bedroom layout is a more personal choice. Do you read before you go to bed are there any special activities that occur at night in the bedroom that requires special lighting? Ask yourself these questions and then your ready to proceed. I always start by locating the bedwall and an area for a casual seating area to dress or read in. At the bedwall I determine whether the client prefers lamps or overhead lights to read by. If it is lamps I typically locate switched duplex outlets on either side of the bed with the switches next to the bed at arms reach or by the door entering the bedroom. If you do use in the ceiling lights be sure to either have lenses or offset the lights so they are not shining down directly into your eyes. If the house is not air conditional I locate a ceiling fan central to the room but always watch where the bed and fan are located because you could get hit by the fan blades if for some reason you may be standing up in bed.

Opposite the bed wall is probably where a TV or stereo might be located so I always provide power, cable outlets and possibly a light to help read the controls on the TV or stereo.

In the area where there is an informal seating area I locate lights above to allow for reading, dressing or any other activities. As in the Living Room it is nice to have control of the exterior lights from the bedroom so in case you need to light up the exterior from the safety and comfort of your bedroom. See attached copy of a proposed Master Bedroom layout. I hope this has been informative to helping you see how to provide different and required types of lighting in different spaces.