



What effect should your lighting give?

- ☐ A romantic glow
- ☐ Daylight even when it's dark outside
- ☐ Soft, but bright enough for conversation
- ☐ Make my art collection shine
- ☐ Energize my kitchen and office
- ☐ Flatter me at the mirror

6. LIGHTING

OPPOSITE: Fireside dining has an enduring appeal, but it can be toasty. Here a Gustavian crystal chandelier and a few candles against the wall supply all the romance that's needed, casting an intimate glow over the symmetrical décor. Tiny electric bulbs hidden in the frame of the chandelier shine upward and supplement its candles. (Markham Roberts)

Sparkling. Flooded with light. Nuanced with intriguing shadow. Dramatically accented. It's a given that every home should be well lighted so that the occupants can see to move around and accomplish whatever tasks they turn to, yet the lighting should create an atmosphere that's not purely utilitarian but instead filled with the poetry, drama, or romance that eludes many of us. Natural light is all around us and we can flip a switch to supplement it with electric light. What should happen when you do this?

The kind of illumination you choose and its placement varies with the purpose of each room—there's no one answer to the question. Light can make you feel happy or sad and make a space seem inviting or cold, so controlling its effect is critical to your enjoyment of your home. Yet it has neither volume nor mass and you can't hold it in your hand; it seems mystifying. If you assess your lighting needs pragmatically, by asking what you want to do and see in each space, and how you want the space to feel at different times of the day and night, you'll see that accommodating these needs is not so daunting; indeed, there are fixtures and bulb types to create every desired effect.

Once you have an idea of your lighting requirements, creativity takes over. Fixtures are like jewelry; they add a finishing touch to your décor—one that changes whether they are lighted or dark. Think of what will suit your chosen look—something that sparkles opulently or has a restrained beauty? Something witty or tailored? Ultra-modern or very traditional? Something discreet that you don't especially notice, or something brimming with personality?

INSPIRATIONS

Paint + Pattern = Individuality

Choose a representational effect that's real enough to fool the eye or intentionally stylized and mannered. Introduce a graphic motif, repeating it as a border, at regular intervals, or as an accent or focal point. Use layers of subtly patterned paint to add mystery and magic. Think of something fun, something quirky, something astonishingly gorgeous. Ask your designer or a local art association to recommend a painter who is skilled in the technique you favor.



LEFT: A hand-painted lattice suggests a gazebo or pergola and makes a charming background for this dining room. (Albert Hadley)



ABOVE: All-over decorative painting techniques can introduce subtle repeating pattern. A sepia glaze has been combed over the walls and ceiling in this dining room; the darker ceiling promotes a sense of intimacy. (Jeffrey Bilauer)

RIGHT, TOP: Indulge your love of a distant or imaginary land by painting a mural. Delicate chinoiserie foliage meanders above a Chippendale border that tops the (real) paneled dado in this foyer. (Markham Roberts)

RIGHT: Unabashedly pretty, this hand-painted arabesque-and-trellis motif gives a fanciful finish to a bedroom cabinet. (Michael Whaley)





ABOVE: Pink and aqua striped fabric allows plain curtains to make a pretty statement in this dressy dining room. Because they're not on rings, curtains like these can't be easily drawn closed, so any pattern on the fabric gains density and loses definition as it hangs, condensed, at each side of the window. (Michael Whaley)

OPPOSITE: Made in ecru textured linen chosen to "take the room down a notch," these swagged valances over matching draperies stand out gently against the prominently figured toile fabric that covers the walls. They're edged with the ticking stripe used for the ottoman and throw pillows—a simple unifying touch, and the little stripe looks great pulled closer to the toile. (Markham Roberts)



MAKING THE MOST OF... OUTDOOR LIVING SPACES

Think of a porch, patio, or terrace as an extension of your living space that can be as stylish, comfortable, and enjoyable as the interior of your home. When you approach the design of these spaces, begin with the same sort of questions you'd ask about any other part of your home—what is the nature of the space, how do you want to use it, and what would you like it to look like? Then as you pull it together, think about the way the outdoor area relates to the interior, what it looks like from inside and from elsewhere on your property or from the street, and don't get so focused on the furnishings that you forget the locale—take advantage of sunrise, sunset, moonlight, a water view, visiting birds, and the sounds of nature.



LEFT: Nothing beats a front-porch swing when you need a lazy place to while away the hours, wait for company to call, or keep an eye on the doings of the neighborhood. Add bright pillows for fun and comfort. (Myra Hoefer)

OPPOSITE: This enclosed porch wraps a seaside family cottage and is perfectly sized to hold several sitting areas. Comfortable wicker and rattan furniture, summery floral fabrics, and matchstick window shades give this cool green and soft white spot a classic, casual summerhouse look. (Markham Roberts)



Public or private?

What is the setting of your home? Is screening your outdoor living spaces an issue? If you're in a neighborhood of individual houses, are front porches part of the social scene? If your home is isolated in a rural setting, are there terraces or porches adjacent to bedrooms or baths where you'd like privacy?

Adjacent or removed?

It's easy to visualize a porch or deck that's architecturally linked to your home, or a terrace that's simply a step down from an interior living space, but there's no reason to limit the location this way. A separate pergola, gazebo, or terrace

can be a destination in your landscape. Is there a pond, stream, pool, glade, or other feature of your property where you'd like to spend time?

Covered or open?

Is there a roof on your outdoor living space? Or a beamed structure that supports vines? Is the area sunny or shaded? Are there screens or glazed windows? Will you want an awning or umbrellas or window shades? Is this an all-weather porch, or three-season, or for dry weather in summer only? Is there a combination of covered and open space?