



Top Tips for Lighting Dining Rooms

The American Lighting Association offers the following tips for lighting a delightful dining room.

FIRST STEP: A chandelier in the middle of the room defines the space. Choose that fixture first, then work out with accent lights.

HANGING AROUND: Choose a chandelier with a diameter 12" less than width of table. The bottom of chandelier should be 30" above table.

TALL ORDERS: For ceilings nine feet or higher, consider a two-tier style chandelier to fill the space from the fixture's top to the ceiling.

DIMMER SHIMMER: Always use a dimmer on dining room lights. "Light becomes warmer as it is dimmed," says Dan Blitzer, American Lighting Association Continuing Educator.

HOME WORK: For those who use the dining room as a study area, consider bringing in a portable study lamp to brighten up the workspace. "Overhead lighting may work well for general studies, but in depth or close work demands more light," says Blitzer.

GET SMART: So-called "smart" dimmers, driven by microprocessors offer convenience. "When you have several layers of light, smart dimmers can be set to various ambiances. Press one button for dining, another for lighting up homework, another for party-time.

THE LAYERED LOOK: Use multiple layers of light in the dining room. Chandeliers provide the central focus. Accent lights on either side of the chandelier and at the room's perimeter brighten things up. Accessory lights on and/or over other furniture pieces fill in the background.

TABLE THIS: Table lamps add a soft, humanizing touch to a dining room. Display them on a buffet or breakfront.