

# LIGHT UP Your Life



▲ (Above) Popular pieces today are finished off in a variety of metals combined with an array of fabrics and rattan.

◀ A decorative lamp is a unique fixture that should find a place in every room.

By **AMANDA MARRAZZO**  
Photos by **DAVE SHIELDS**

## Your

home's decor is important to you, so when selecting all the fine details, consider lighting the most essential item in setting the right mood in the right space.

So says Mary Meyn, redesign and home staging expert and owner of Yours and Meyn Simply Designed, 37 N. Williams St., in Crystal Lake. Meyn has worked in the home industry since she was a child, when she would walk model homes with her father, a home builder.

Meyn says when selecting lighting for your home, consider what task you want to perform in each room or what mood you are looking to

portray.

"The main thing [to remember] with any good lighting of any room is the overall lighting should be felt and not noticed," Meyn says. "The function of lighting is such that we all know when lighting is bad."

Every room has its own function that dictates what lighting is needed. Thus, there should be different lighting in a kitchen than in a den or family room.

The best way to select lighting is to simply spend time in the room and determine what that room's purpose is and what you want to do while in

that room, Meyn says.

*There are four main lighting functions that determine a room's purpose:*

- **Task lighting:** Essential in a reading area or a kitchen and commonly placed over a sink, countertop or island
- **Ambient lighting:** Used to set the mood of a room
- **Accent lighting:** Used to show off a special object, such as a unique chachki or artwork hanging above the fireplace
- **Decorative lighting:** A way for the home dweller to show off his or her personality

Meyn says each room should have at least one decorative fixture that "... tells a little about the person."

A decorative lamp, for example, is a unique fixture that should find a place in every room. But quantity is important — typically no more than one decorative lamp should be housed in each room.

Meyn says barrel or drum shades with simple, classic lines are quite popular today and indicative of the current overall lighting trend.

"The classics are a trend because of our economy," Meyn says. "People are looking back to the classics. They want to go back to what they know will stay in style for a long time."

— **Jessica Trinkus**, lighting designer and owner of Crystal Lake Lighting and Design

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For kitchens and foyers, the colonial era lanterns are making a comeback.

"People are just looking for different looks versus the standard lighting," she says.

Jessica Trinkus, lighting designer and owner of Crystal Lake Lighting and Design, 150 S. Virginia Road in Crystal Lake, agrees that today's lighting trend involves simple, clean lines, rather than ornate patterns and crystals. She echoes Meyn's words that the latest preferred style is a sign of the times.

"Anytime the economy is struggling, design elements tend to be more contemporary," says Trinkus. "People are more simplistic in their choices."

Popular materials such as wrought iron and chrome mixed with white colored glass are preferred over tinted glass. Art glass used to create mini pendants also is popular.



◀ Popular materials such as wrought iron and chrome mixed with white colored glass are preferred over tinted glass for lamps.



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When selecting lighting for the home, Trinkus recommends following a few guidelines to avoid common mistakes:

- 1. A chandelier in a dining room should hang 30 to 36 inches above the table.
- 2. When centering a chandelier, the space between the edge of the fixture and the edge of a table should be between 6 to 12 inches.
- 3. When looking for colorful, art glass pendant lighting for a kitchen, the color of the glass should match the countertop or another permanent element in the room such as the tile in a backsplash. Over time, paint colors and furniture might change, but permanent pieces like tile and countertops likely will remain.
- 4. To properly light a bathroom, overhead lighting should be placed above the vanity, and a side lighting fixture should be installed to rid the room of any shadows. Shadows make it difficult for women to apply makeup and equally difficult for a man to shave his face. Suggested bathroom lighting includes a sconce with white glass and an

incandescent or halogen bulb to provide the best color.

- 5. Lighting fixtures in a bathroom should match the plumbing fixtures, any tile in the room, a bath tub or toilets. *mc*

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— **Mary Meyn**, redesign and home staging expert and owner of Yours and Meyn Simply Designed in Crystal Lake.

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