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New Ways to Layer Lighting with LEDs

Almost any room can be transformed into a picturesque space by lighting it based on its architectural makeup and focusing on its aesthetic features and blind spots. According to the American Lighting Association (ALA), appropriate interior lighting will diminish shadows, accentuate textures, and draw attention to just the right areas.

Until relatively recently, conventional lighting techniques relied on a select few types of lighting to effectively layer the lighting in a room. Now LED lighting - deemed safer, sturdier, and more durable than CFL light bulbs by the Department of Energy - is becoming a go-to lighting source for all areas of the home.

Three layers of light

Layered lighting focuses on three main functions: general, accent and task lighting. A wide wash of light is usually exerted by a ceiling light for general illumination. A decorative layer of light might come from sconces or a table lamp. For specific tasks, pendants or undercabinet lighting are a few examples of appropriate lighting. The concept of layering the three lighting types remains true, but the idea behind layering itself is changing as much as the light sources.

A constant in any residential lighting project is making sure it results in an area in which you will actually want to spend your time, says Terry McGowan, ALA director of engineering.

To guarantee that you enjoy a room, the lighting should be easy to navigate and easy on the eyes. This is usually the job of ambient (general) lighting. To complement all-purpose lighting, LED lights have traditionally been used in the subsequent layers of accent and task lighting. It is with accent lighting, that LED lights may be the most useful.

For example, "track lighting is often used for accent lighting so the lighted area can be easily adjusted in size, color or direction," says McGowan. "Note that some new types of LED track lighting can be adjusted by hand to change the color or size of the light beam, and there are even fixture types with built-in adjusting systems that can be operated by remote control or a cell phone app.

"For all layers," McGowan continues, "consider controls that not only turn the lighting on and off, but dim it as well. LEDs can be easily dimmed, and almost as easily, their color can be controlled so that the lighting can match the time of day or the preferred appearance of the space."

Using adjustable lights ensures that a room can uphold a unique design element, yet will not be overly flooded with light.

For more about how to use LED lighting in your home be sure to visit us at www.genielighting.com.