



KITCHEN LIGHTING

When planning a kitchen few tend to consider lighting. Adding lights to the kitchen is often a last-minute thing when there is little left in the budget for effective and attractive fittings. Your kitchen lighting should be planned as part of the fundamental design of the kitchen. Not only is good lighting important for the effective use of the kitchen but also for its aesthetics and, believe it or not, your emotional well-being.

Your kitchen lighting should be layered. While in the past a big fluorescent tube attached to the kitchen ceiling would suffice, the modern kitchen is part of an integrated living space and needs more than just practical cost-effective lighting.

Obviously natural light is the first prize. Maximising natural light is not only aesthetically pleasing but it comes with no electricity bill. But, you will still have a need for good general lighting – normally ceiling mounted, that gives general illumination. Downlighters work very well for this purpose and are easily maintained.

After ensuring the general illumination of your kitchen your focus should be task lighting. This is the lighting aimed at making the kitchen a practical place to work in. It ensures that all the areas where you prepare food, cook and wash dishes are well

lit to ensure cleanliness and efficiency. The most important task lighting will focus on ensuring your countertops and workspaces are well lit. This is usually done by placing lighting on the underside of your eye level cabinetry. Most commonly used to do this is LED strip lighting or LED downlighters – both are economic and low heat generating. It is preferable that you don't actually see the light fittings so the use of L-shaped channels and light shields is important.



Placement of the fittings is key. If you are focusing on task lighting the light should be placed within the first third of the underside of the cabinetry. If you are rather looking for the undercabinet lighting to accent a splashback or just to add ambiance it should be placed towards the back of the cabinet.

You must know what material you are using for your countertops when you plan this lighting as many surfacing options are shiny and reflective. You need to choose a diffused light source to ensure you don't get reflective glare with a shiny surface

like granite or quartz. With matt surfaces you want to consider the placement of the light fittings, particularly with downlighters. It is recommended you place the units approximately 500mm apart as this will allow the pools of light to overlap creating a more consistent spread of light across the countertop.

Task lighting that is often forgotten is the lighting of drawer and cupboard interiors. Being able to clearly see what is inside your cupboard or drawer makes your kitchen more practical and user-friendly. For glass fronted cupboards this lighting is not only task orientated but accent orientated as well. LED strip lighting is most commonly used for this but downlighters can also be used for a cupboard application. Systems now exist that allow this lighting to be motion activated so that drawer lighting will activate as you open the drawer. This is also an advantage when applied to the lighting of parts of your kitchen infrequently used like the scullery or laundry.



Accent lighting is lighting that is added to give your kitchen greater depth and to highlight features. Remember, the kitchen itself is a feature and can be accented with kickplate lighting and over-cabinet lighting.

Over cabinet lighting can help to give the illusion of height to a room. If you are stuck with fairly low ceilings this is a fantastic trick to give you a greater illusion of space. The lighting can be fixed to the top of the kitchen units and can either create a thin highlight between cabinet and the ceiling if the cabinets are tall giving an intimate feeling, or a warmer, space-enhancing light if there is a larger gap between cabinet and ceiling.

Kickplate lighting definitely adds dimension, a sense of space and sophistication to a kitchen. LED strip lighting is placed unseen along the underside of the bottom cabinets at the kickplate. They are also a useful 'night light' option for those late-night snack runs.



Other accent lighting can be used to highlight art works or focal pieces in the kitchen. In order for this to be effective this accent lighting should be at least three times brighter than the ambient light.

Lighting a kitchen island or breakfast bar is also important. It will need good task lighting but also accent lighting. Both an island and a breakfast bar / eating area offer you the opportunity for a bit of aesthetical flair. This is your chance to hang a beautiful feature light like pendent lights or a chandelier. If opting for pendent lighting you need to give thought to the space you have. A good recommendation is that a 2500mm area can accommodate three smalls to medium pendants or two large ones and a 3600mm area can accommodate five small to medium pendants or three large ones. On the whole the rule of aesthetics would recommend working in odd numbers. Your pendant lighting can be a real feature combining more than one style or with the lights at staggered heights and groups. The important thing to remember with any chandelier or pendant lighting is that you will need to do regular cleaning and maintenance. A kitchen is a messy place so the lights will collect dust and grease even if you have a good extractor.



No matter what lighting you eventually choose there are important things to consider. Don't just look at wattage but more about the actual amount of light that can be created (measured in lumens). The amount of light needed varies from person to person and the older we get the more light we need to see effectively. Under fifty's generally only need to work with 2.5-watt lighting but over 50's fair better with 5-watt lighting. Put your various lighting on their own switches so you can turn them on and off

according to your mood or needs. Add dimmers so that you can adjust the ambiance. Psychologically the brightness and warmth of the lighting in a room can affect our mood. Choose energy efficient options. This is not only good for your bank balance but for the environment too.

Lastly, make sure you consult experts. Not only to buy your lights but to fit them too. Working with a registered electrician is essential.

AUSTRO
SHOW

10-13 JUNE 2020

INTRODUCING
INTELLIGENT TECHNOLOGY
UNLOCKING A WORLD OF POSSIBILITIES...
(AUTOMATED SYSTEMS TO MAXIMIZE YOUR PROFITS)

WWW.AUSTRO.CO.ZA