



It is also important to consider what additional lighting needs exist from room to room as well as from inside to outside. Planning all of the lighting needs for a home at one time will help create a general flow and balance throughout the home.

## INTERIOR LIGHTING

Lighting enables us to set a mood in a room while also serving a functional purpose. It can be a critical factor in a room's design, as it is the one variable that brings a room together. When designing the lighting of an interior room, it is important to first consider the numerous functions that lighting serves:

- provide decorative lighting
- highlight a piece of art or cabinetry
- provide lighting to perform a particular task in a room
- act as a substitute for sunlight<sup>1</sup>

Consider what the room is used for and who will be using it, consider what shadows or vacant areas exist in a room and consider how light interacts will certain areas of a room. All of these considerations will help determine how many and what kind of lighting fixtures are appropriate. A single light source will seldom provide all of the functions necessary for any room. Thus, determining the function of the room will help to determine the lighting requirements as well as what blend of fixtures is needed.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The color temperature produced by the lighting units need to be considered.

<sup>2</sup> These can include both permanent and movable light fixtures.

## EXTERIOR LIGHTING

Lighting on the outside of the home is just as important as providing sufficient lighting inside the home. The two design elements should complement one another and create an effect from the outside to the inside of the home. Exterior lighting should also serve to highlight areas of interest on the outside of the house as well as provide some illumination where dark areas or holes, exist. However, it is important to achieve a balance when designing exterior lighting effects. Be careful to avoid providing too much light on a tree, for example, which can create an eerie and unwelcoming feeling.

## LIGHTING FOR ENERGY EFFICIENCY

The last component of lighting design is to consider the impacts on energy efficiency. With the conservation of energy on the rise, more and more products are available to homeowners and businesses that promote energy efficiency. For example, fluorescent bulbs may cost more but they consume less energy and last longer and cost less to illuminate use in the long run. Other tactics to reduce energy consumption through lighting include:

- Installing dimmers on lights, which can save energy and can also provide a soft glow to a room,
- Turning lights off when not used, which is a simple habit to get into that can also cut down on energy bills,
- Understanding lighting and how it interacts with its environment—lighting at a specific angle on a specific piece of furniture can provide the illusion of added light while actually using less.

An understanding of lighting requirements and desires early in the project can also help to conserve energy. Energy conservation must be an integral part of the design from the inception of the project.