

Turn it on

Still stuck with tube lights, boring bulbs and patchy illumination in your home? Time to see the light

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Who hasn't, at some point, cursed bad lighting for ruining their Instagram feed? If good lighting results in good posts on social media, why not apply the same principles to your home? Intelligently lit areas don't just flood rooms with more or less light, they can add drama, make a corner look bigger, give the room different moods through the course of the day and transform your home.

Lighting, however, tends to be the lowest priority for Indian homeowners. We're pretty satisfied with boring old tube lights and bulbs. But the interior lighting industry has seen a revolution in terms of design, utility and purpose. Switchboards are out; smart apps controlling the lighting are in. Single purpose lights are out; automated lights with sensors capable of transitioning focus from bright to dim are in. And sustainability and environmentally friendly lighting are slowly gaining importance. "From people randomly picking up lamps from local stores to homeowners scouting for lighting designers, there has been an evolution," says Arjun Rathi, founder at Arjun Rathi Designs.

LIGHTING UP

Perhaps the most visible change has been in residents wanting to highlight one part of their home—a painting, an alcove filled with objects, an altar or a book nook.



■ Accent lighting is used to highlight one part of the home and enliven objects and spaces. PHOTO: LIME ROAD

This is where accent lighting comes in. "Accent lighting helps bring life to any object or space," says Dewangi Lad, director at Prodigio Designs. She used this lighting trend recently for one of her clients who has a view of the sea link. Lad created a series of light frames around the window from where the view was visible, making it look picture perfect. "My client says it's the most soothing way to highlight the house at night."

Pradeep Singhvi, CEO of Houseome.com too is a fan of this trend. "I have used spotlights in many projects to highlight family portraits or art pieces in home spaces," he says.

When you're working out lighting, consider creating a dramatic glow by using lights in unusual shapes. "They act as a statement piece, and add intrigue and character," says Natasha Jain, CEO of Bent Chair. You could hang a figure of Cupid holding a bulb wire from the ceiling or get a table lamp in shape of a pug—Jain says there are tons of examples reflecting this trend. Avoid going too flashy. "Avoid using loud colours or high-voltage lights in interior spaces, as home is for comfort and relaxation," she says. "It's best if lighting at home is durable and functional."

Indians love a two-in-one deal. So, how about a light fixture that doubles as a fan? "Decorative lights with retractable and hidden fan blades are new and a good mix," says Anil Lala, founder and director of Fanzart. They are ideal in places with space constraints.

CHECK THE TECH

Indians are welcoming automated lights, app-controlled lighting and Internet of Things (IoT) powered home lighting, say



■ Designer pieces can add statement and character to living rooms and dining areas. PHOTO: GA DESIGN

home decor experts.

"Ugly switchboards are now being replaced with apps on your smartphones, which let you control the entire lighting system," says Shaali Awasthi, founder and principal designer at Stories Design Studio. This helps make spaces more interactive and functional. You might also think of getting a system that senses when you enter or leave the room and turn the lights off accordingly. "Smart lighting can control your lighting systems with respect to occupancy, time and mood," says Mithun Sheth, CEO of AMA Design.

Radeesh Shetty, director at Purple Turtle, explains this with an example. "There are music-

controlled lighting apps," he says. "In such a system, jazz will be accompanied by low or dim light, whereas pop music with peppy lights."

Ranbir Mehra, director at Jaquar Lighting suggests that if you're really looking for something unique, consider customising. "You can convert your living room into a weekend party zone by choosing from the 16 million colour options in a single smart LED bulb," he says.

Shami Goregaoker, design director at GA Designs says she also sees 3D lighting projection mapping as an emerging lighting trend. "Common objects like walls can be turned into interactive displays using 3D lighting."



■ Lights in abstract shapes can create a dramatic glow. PHOTO: SOGANI

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