



Kitchen Lighting Solutions: Types of Lighting Explained and Planning Your Space

When it comes to planning your perfect kitchen, lighting is a key part of your design plan. Lighting establishes a mood, it complements your colour palette, and it plays upon the textures and surfaces of your furnishings and flooring. Think about the favourite times you've had when cooking and eating. There's every chance you didn't even think about the lighting, and that's a sign that it was wonderfully designed and provided a natural effect.

In order to achieve that effortless effect, it's worth the time to research different lighting options and to understand how they'll work for your kitchen. To make it as painless as possible, we've provided a guide that explains your options and the process of choosing for your specific space, so that spending time in your kitchen feels joyful and relaxing.

Choose Multiple Light Sources

To create an appealing, peaceful ambience in your kitchen, it's best to combine a variety of light sources. These four types of lighting are ideal for the kitchen: ambient lighting, task lighting, accent lighting and decorative lighting. Here's what you need to know about each type.

1. Use ambient lighting as a base

Ambient lighting, also called general lighting, provides overall illumination for a room and is intended to create a uniform light level throughout a space. It's the foundational layer of lighting in your space. As with other rooms of your home, it typically originates from the ceiling. Wherever you're likely to walk or stand within your kitchen is where you'll want well-lit space. You may opt for recessed lighting, which is a popular choice, to cover spaces not already lit by pendants or undercabinet lighting.



2. Add practical task lighting

Task lighting provides increased light for specific tasks in a room that may already have some ambient light. Its primary purpose is to illuminate workspaces. Whether you're slicing up cucumber or grilling eggplants, you don't want to be working in dim lighting. Consider where you're working and what the source of light is above you. While your countertop is key, undercabinet lighting is also useful to the functionality and the ambience of your kitchen. Sometimes, appliances have intelligent lighting built into their design, such as the NEFF [integrated](#) and [slideout](#) rangehoods that use energy efficient [LED lighting](#).



3. Use accent lighting for dining

Accent lighting highlights a particular area or object, for example a piece of artwork. Common types of accent lights include wall sconces, floodlights, recessed lights, torchère lamps, or track lighting.

Having laid the foundations to ensure your space is lit for safety and functionality, accent lights are the design flourish. Commonly, accent lighting is placed above an open countertop, such as an island, the kitchen counter, or the dining table in open plan kitchens. The rule of thumb is to place the light 30 – 36 inches from the surface, but this can be adapted to your height. You might opt for a pendant, a directional downlight or a sconce. Depending on your design aesthetic, you might combine various bold options, or take a minimal approach and blend the lighting into the existing palette of your kitchen.



4. Customise your space with decorative lighting

Used to create mood and/or interest in a room, decorative lighting enhances aspects of your space. Design begins with your floorplan. Since you have likely already planned your foundational lighting, decorative sources of light are used to contour the space and play up the textures and colours of your furnishings. This is where you'd play with the idea of pendants, linear suspension lighting or chandeliers (why not?).



Positioning for perfection

To ensure that you've got clear vision of your space, and to complement the colours and textures of your kitchen, the right placement of your lighting is fundamental. Pay attention to the height of your cabinets, pantry and benches to ensure your lighting highlights these surfaces and adequately lights the full space.

As a general rule, lighting should be placed 12 inches away from tall elevations, such as your fridge or cupboards, to ensure it isn't obstructed and sheds light.

In galley-style kitchens or around an island bench, single rows of spaced

recessed lights are a good choice. The spacing depends on the height of your ceiling and the strength of the lighting.

Point In the right direction

Consider the orientation and sources of natural light in your kitchen and how this changes over the day. North-facing rooms are likely to get little light; east-facing rooms receive less light in the afternoons; and south and west-facing kitchens tend to stay light well into the afternoon.

Where do you need the light when you're in the kitchen? Focus on how to best light those areas. When you're whipping up fudge brownies, inhaling the steam from a fresh brioche, or putting your groceries away, you'll want lighting over the cooking area, the cleaning area and the food preparation area.



Shapes and Textures

The most creative aspect of lighting is in your chandeliers, pendants, cord lighting and lamps. There's so many options available that it is impossible you won't find something to suit your tastes: geometric forms, round, textured brass, smooth ceramics, organic materials and fabrics, pastel or bold colours. The options are endless! Take into account the overall colour scheme and the fabrics and textures you've already used when deciding upon your fittings, but don't be afraid to make a statement with colour and shape.



Intelligently lit kitchen appliances

Is there anything more tiresome than having to open the oven to check on

your meal? Intelligent built-in lighting means you no longer need to spoil your cooking in your search for light. [NeffLight](#) is located in the oven door, which helps to evenly distribute light so that you can view every corner of the oven. Some of the rangehood models, such as the [NEFF integrated rangehood](#), have a convenient dimmer function, while the [NEFF slideout rangehood](#) and the [NEFF integrated rangehood](#) use energy-efficient LED lighting.

With better lighting built into your kitchen appliances, you can better prepare your food in all lighting conditions.