

# Practical *lighting solutions*

Flexible designs ensure your new extension is well lit by day and night

Words *Ifeoluwa Adediji*

Choosing an effective lighting scheme for your new extension begins with how you are going to use the space. 'If the area primarily functions as a kitchen-diner then you will need to think about cupboard heights, plus where units and the main pieces of furniture are going to be positioned,' says Sian Parsons, senior designer at John Cullen Lighting (020 7371 5400; [johncullenlighting.co.uk](http://johncullenlighting.co.uk)). Establish where various activities will take place and discuss these with your lighting designer or electrician, so that they can consider where to run cables and install sockets. Think about the level of brightness you will need at different times of day and how you will adjust it.

## A bright scheme

If your extension features swathes of glass then lighting the space might require more creative thinking than in other rooms, because there is less space to mount fittings. 'Look for possible custom options such as glazing bars, and don't ignore the floor as you can install cool-to-the-touch LED recessed uplights to emphasise the height of a space – just ensure you make provision for the cables and fixing locations if laying screed for underfloor heating,' advises Iain Shaw, director at Brilliant Lighting (01845 525 664; [brilliantlighting.co.uk](http://brilliantlighting.co.uk)).

Once you've decided on the types of lighting you need in the space, you should consider how you are going to manage them. You could opt for a bank of traditional wall switches, with different circuits for each individual light. However, modern controls can offer a simpler and more efficient method of organising your scheme – and they can save you money, too. For instance, a wireless system from Fibaro (+48 537 450 050; [fibaro.com](http://fibaro.com)) enables you to dim individual or multiple sets of lights at the push of a button. You can switch everything off, even when you've



**Wow factor** A bespoke chandelier in polished stainless steel is a real statement (020 3637 4236; [architectureforlondon.com](http://architectureforlondon.com))

already left the room, so you'll never need to worry about leaving the lights on.

Controls also allow you to programme different lighting scenes for various occasions, from having breakfast and studying to atmospheric evening dining. 'These systems make a lot of sense for extensions. They can help you manage a space using a simple keypad rather than a mass of traditional light switches,' says Shaw. →

## TAKE NOTE

» Light is measured in kelvins (K), with high temperatures of more than 5,000K offering a cool output, and levels of 2,700-3,000K resulting in a warmer tone. Residential lighting should be low-glare with an output of about 2,700K, because anything above 3,000K can appear cold and almost blue, which dramatically affects the look of a space.

» Building Regulations state that 75 per cent of fixed lights must be efficient. But you can go even further by making sure all your lights are dimmable LEDs, so that you can save energy and extend the bulb life.



## Lighting types

The best schemes are developed with task, accent and ambient layers. Here's how to use them

### FIT FOR THE TASK

Decide where task lighting is required. Are you going to need extra illumination above a kitchen worktop or the sink? 'Consider the geometry between the placement of the lighting and the person standing at the worktop, so as to avoid harsh and unwanted shadows,' says Richard Bolt, partner at Dpa lighting consultants (01869 337 412; dpalighting.com). 'Lighting from concealed under-cupboard fittings can work well.' Also allow for floor lamps to be plugged into wall or floor sockets for localised tasks in seating areas.

#### Smart buy

Unfold silicone shade in mustard yellow, £119, Muuto at Made in Design (020 7692 4001; madeindesign.co.uk)



#### Smart buy

Slim light in brushed aluminium, approx £280, TM Lighting (020 7278 1600; tmlighting.com)

### ADD AN ACCENT

This layer is usually introduced to highlight interesting features within the interior layout such as paintings and sculptures, or even architectural elements within the building design, as above. 'Uniform light on walls and art makes the surface as important as a picture, and can lead to a flattening of a room. Make sure you pick out the points of interest to illuminate in the space,' advises Parsons. Another way of achieving accent lighting and benefiting from any spill light is to illuminate the ceiling, by installing recessed uplights in the floor.

### CREATE AMBIENCE

Atmospheric lighting acts as a backdrop, in which multiple elements such as downlights, table lamps, wall lights and pendants allow you to build different moods. 'With the evolution of LED light sources and their corresponding small-scale dimensions, it is now extremely practical to integrate lighting into the fabric of an interior and achieve a good level of ambient light in this way,' says Bolt. Be sure to conceal the fittings, so it's the effect that can be seen and not the hardware itself. **GD**

#### Smart buy

Lago bronze-plated wall light, £165, Astro Lighting (01279 427 001; astrolighting.co.uk)

