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EC62-1166 Selection of Lamps

Magdalene Pfister

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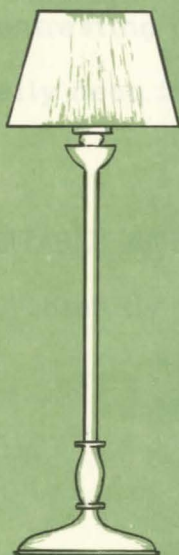
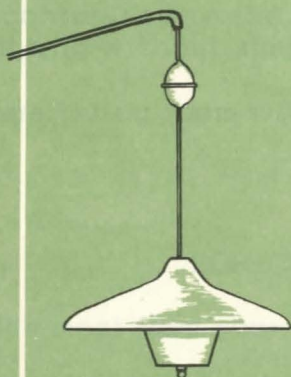
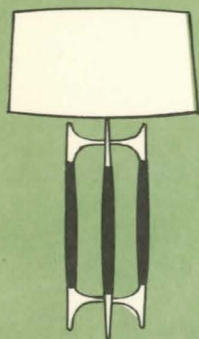
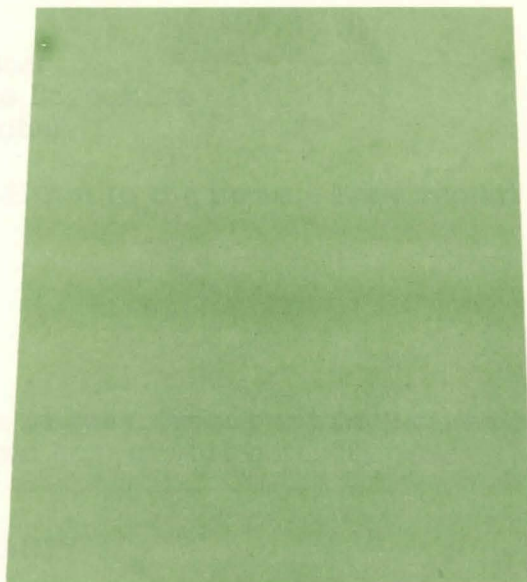
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Selection of LAMPS

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Selection of LAMPS

by Magdalene Pfister
Associate Professor of Home Economics
(Agricultural Extension)

Lamps make an artistic as well as useful addition to the home. They should be selected and placed so that they provide:

Comfortable and easy seeing.

Decorative beauty.

While this publication is devoted primarily to lamps, remember that fixtures and structural lighting such as from coves and valances can help provide both the general and local lighting needed in the home.

FOR DECORATIVE BEAUTY

Choose lamps to harmonize with furnishings in scale, finish and character. They need not match but should be coordinated.

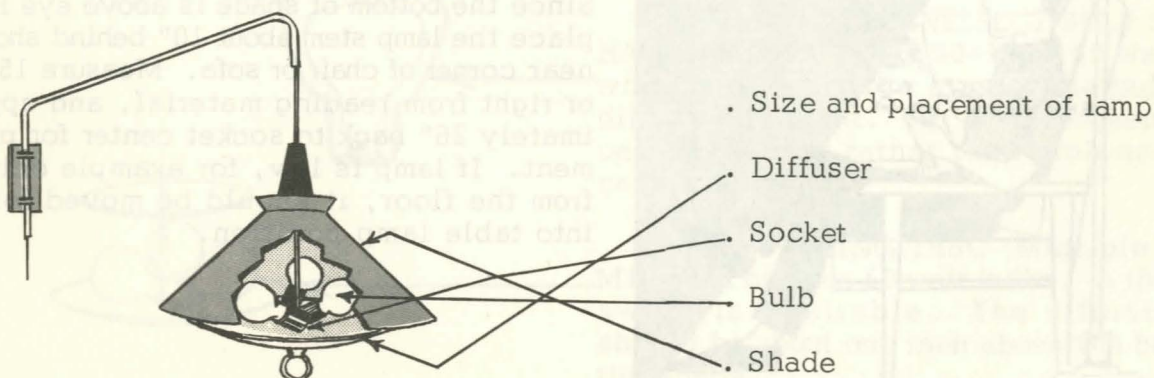
The base of portable lamps should be simple in form and decoration. The shade should be in harmony and good proportion to the base.

A moderate level of background lighting helps make a room look more attractive. However, a room which has few or no highlights and shadows is dull and uninteresting. But, strong contrasts tire the eyes. Enough lamps correctly placed will provide interesting lighting without sharply contrasting pools of light and shadows.

An average living room will usually need five or more lamps.

FOR COMFORTABLE AND EASY SEEING

To get the most from your lamps, carefully consider:



Size & Placement



The size of a lamp is important. If it is too short, light will be confined to a small area. If it is too high, there may be glare.

When shopping for lamps keep in mind where you will use them, and how--reading, sewing or study.

When a well designed lamp is placed correctly it will light your task properly with neither direct glare from the bulb nor reflected glare from the task.

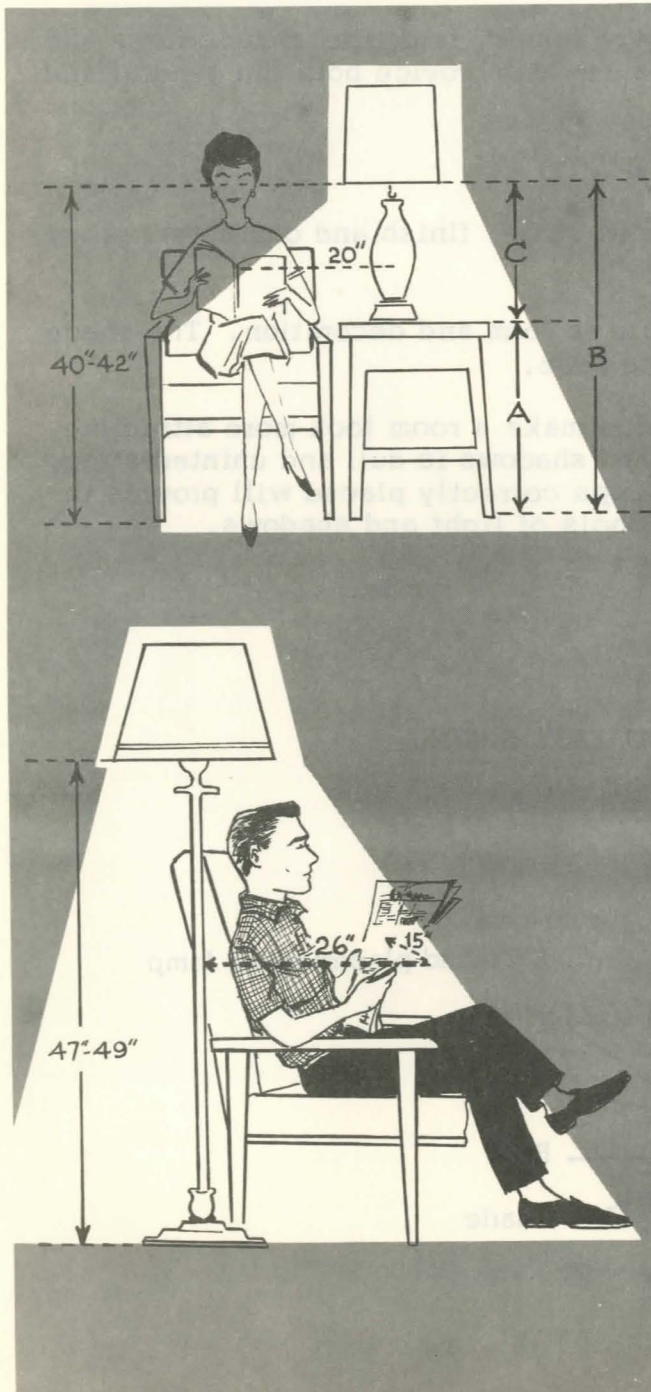
The dimensions which follow are based on the average height of the task above the floor and average height of the viewer's eyes.

Table Lamp

Base height should keep the shade bottom near the eye level of the reader. If it is too low it will not spread enough useful light.

Normal eye position of a person seated in an upholstered chair is 40" - 42" above the floor. To determine the correct height of a lamp base (C) subtract table height (A) from seated eye height (B). Some very tall lamps are planned for use on a low table in floor lamp position.

Place the table lamp with base about in line with shoulder. Measure 20" left or right of reading material, then 16" to rear of chair or sofa.



Floor Lamp

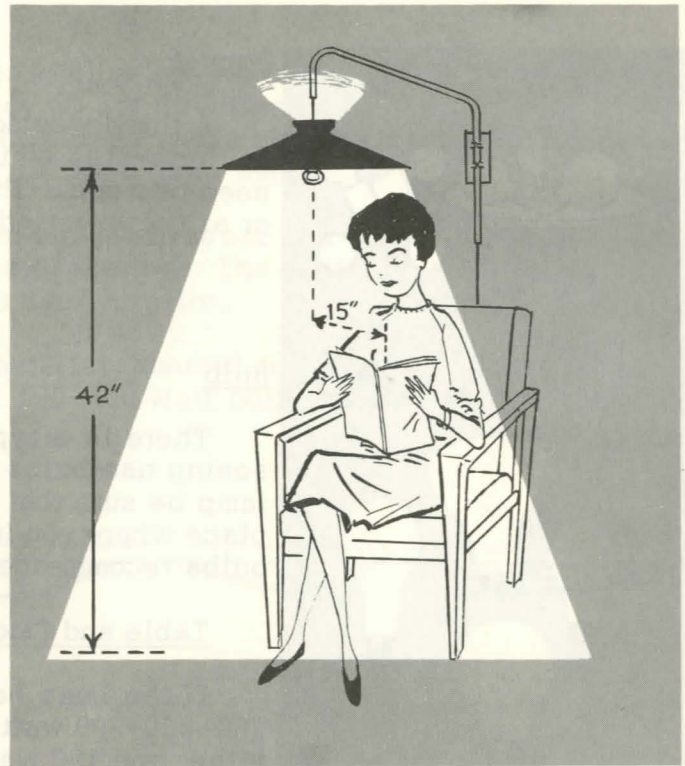
The usual measurement of these lamps is from 47" - 49" from floor to bottom of shade. Since the bottom of shade is above eye level, place the lamp stem about 10" behind shoulder near corner of chair or sofa. Measure 15" left or right from reading material, and approximately 26" back to socket center for placement. If lamp is low, for example only 42" from the floor, it should be moved forward into table lamp position.

Wall Lamp

These are particularly good in a small room. They save space and are out of the way of active children. In children's rooms they allow the child's height and lamp height to "grow up" together.


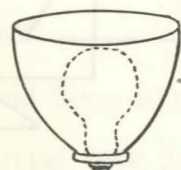
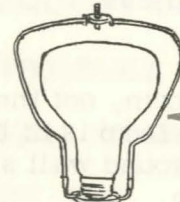
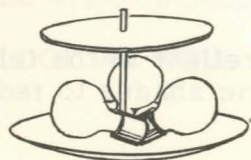
Wall lamps with diffusing bowls are placed for adults so the bottom of the shade is 48" above the floor located 15" to left or right of book center.

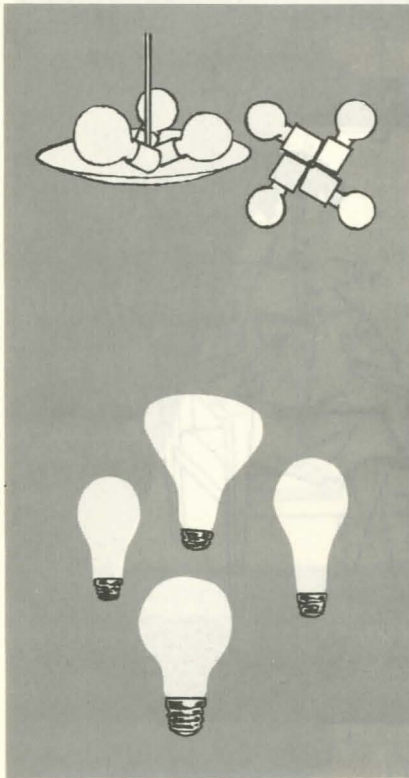
If the wall lamp does not have a diffusing bowl, it should have a diffusing disc at the bottom. Be sure that this disc is above the bottom of the shade. The pull-up and down wall lamp is often of this type. It needs shielding at top as well as a diffuser at the bottom. For use by adults, place this type of lamp so the bottom of the shade is 42" from the floor, and 15" left or right. Since a child's eye level is lower, lower his lamp in proportion to him.



Diffusers

The lamps you select should provide well-diffused light. Diffusers reduce glare because they spread and soften the light. They may be purchased to improve existing lamps. Here are four recommended diffusers. The lamp you select should incorporate one of these methods:

- A. CLM (Certified Lamp Makers) GLASS DIFFUSER 8" top diameter, with 50-100-150 watt bulb or 50-200-250 watt bulb. 10" top diameter with 100-200-300 watt (mogul base) bulb.
- B. BOWL-SHAPED DIFFUSER. White opal glass preferable to plastic. 8" top diameter with 50-100-150 watt bulb or 50-200-250 watt bulb. 10" top diameter, with 100-200-300 watt (mogul base) bulb.
- C. R-40 WHITE INDIRECT BULB IN WIDE HARP. Bulb is 150 or 50-100-150 watt. The whiteness and large size of the bulb helps diffuse the light. It is recommended for casual reading rather than prolonged concentrated work.
- D. DIFFUSING DISC (Multiple Socket) Minimum of three 60 watt bulbs. A three-way switch is desirable. The diffusing disc should be about one inch above the bottom of the shade.



Socket

A three-way socket or a multiple socket combined with a two or three-step switch allows light to be selected according to need or mood. The socket should be positioned slightly below or at the lower edge of the shade.

Bulb

There is a type and size of bulb for each lamp. For good seeing use bulbs of recommended wattage. When selecting a lamp be sure that it uses the size bulb, or bulbs, needed in the place where you intend to use it. Here are the minimum wattage bulbs recommended:

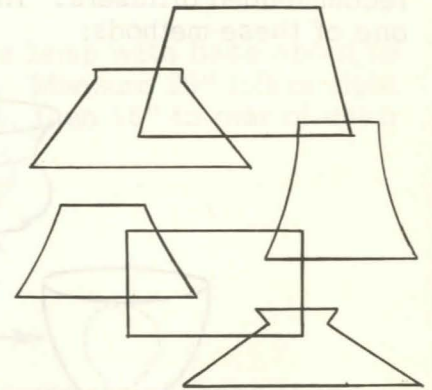
Table and Floor Lamps

If the lamp has Mogul (extra large) socket, use a 3-light 100-200-300 watt bulb. If the lamp has a standard socket, use either one 150 watt bulb, or 3-light 50-100-150 watt bulb, or a 50-200-250 watt bulb.

Shade

A good shade will be:

1. Open at the top to provide upward light on walls and ceilings.
2. Wide enough at the bottom to spread light over entire working area.
3. Deep enough to conceal light bulb from view when either standing or seated.
4. White on the inside to reflect as much light as possible.
5. Dense enough to prevent a glaring bulb brightness from shining through.



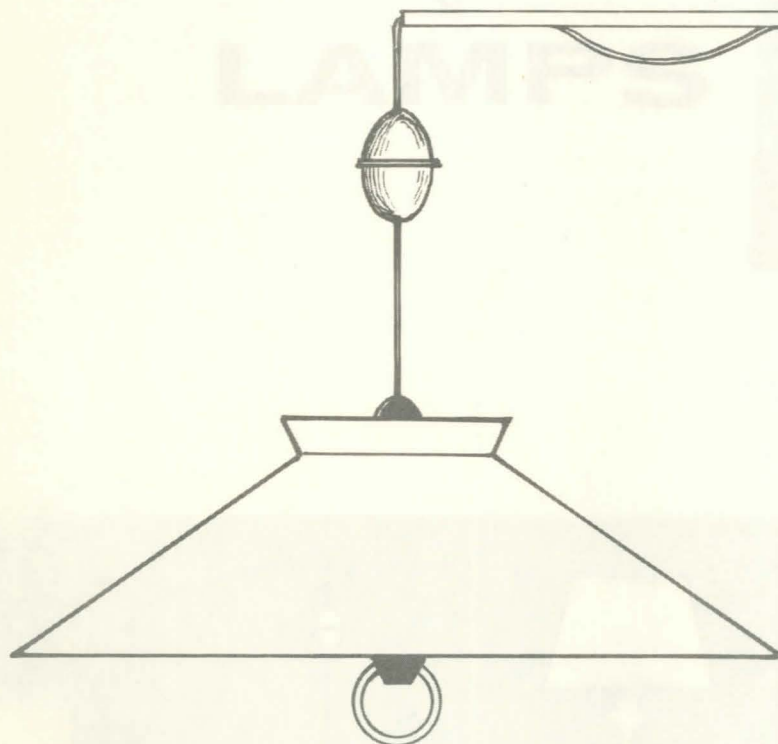
Shades of opaque material will direct light up and down, not through the shade. This kind is best if a bright or dark color is desired, or if the lamp is to be placed along a dark wall. For best appearance the opaque shade and background wall should be related. For visual comfort there should be other lighting in the room.

If it is impossible to position lamps so that they do not reflect in the television screen at the viewing positions, choose opaque or dense fabric shades to reduce the reflections.

Translucent shades direct light sideways as well as up and down. They are desirable where lamps are the only source of light. They do not direct as much light up and down where needed for reading. Choose a dense white lined shade open at the top for reading with bottom diameter 16" for a table lamp and 18" for a floor lamp.

White translucent shades are recommended for dresser and dressing tables with shade bottoms at least 9" in diameter and open at the top. The center of the lamp shade should be cheek-bone height. They should be used in pairs.

For a lamp used at the piano use dense material, neutral in color, 16" in diameter, over a glass diffusing bowl with a 50-250 or 100-300 watt bulb, placed so it transmits light generously on the music.



SUMMARY

A good lamp will:

- PROVIDE THE AMOUNT OF LIGHT NEEDED
- PRODUCE COMFORTABLE GLARE-FREE LIGHT
- DIRECT THE LIGHT WHERE NEEDED
- BE ELECTRICALLY SAFE
- LOOK AS WELL LIGHTED AS UNLIGHTED