

# Well-lit kitchen serves 2 masters

Reading recipes and searching cabinets for beans and beaters are a few kitchen tasks made easier when illuminated properly. But your ability to see well as you work isn't the only benefit. Careful design and decorating decisions profit under the glow of good lighting as well. The appearance of colors and surfaces remains vivid, and your kitchen's cheerful countenance doesn't disappear just because the sun outside does.

With those incentives in mind, follow Country Kitchen Ideas magazine guidelines to create a sound kitchen lighting plan. You'll learn to successfully blend the three types of illumination: general or ambient lighting, task lighting and mood or accent lighting. Here are some tips that will benefit you during your kitchen's use and when you go to sell.

Your first challenge is to place fixtures that cast general or ambient illumination around the room. The number and location of fixtures depends on the size and layout of your kitchen. Ceiling-mounted and recessed fixtures make good choices. In a medium-size kitchen (under 120 square feet), you could center one ceiling-mounted fixture (two or more for larger kitchens) and add recessed spotlights around the perimeter of the space.

When selecting a ceiling-mounted light, look for models that hang flush with or very close

to the ceiling. The fixture should cast light through the sides of a translucent shade, not just downward.

For recessed downlights, use care in positioning them near cabinetry. "Choose downlights with a widespread beam," says Michael Janick, an architectural lighting designer from Washington, D.C.

Dr. Mary Pickett, who teaches interior and lighting design to Iowa State University students, points out another plus of perimeter downlighting — especially in smaller kitchen quarters: "I love lighting around the perimeter of a space because it can psychologically push that space back and make it look larger," she said.

To place task lighting, consider what chores and activities you and your family perform in the kitchen — and where. Then, make sure each work area has its own bright, directed light source.

Every countertop needs light over its under-cabinet lighting works well for counters with cabinets above. When selecting under-cabinet lighting, make sure the manufacturer lists this application as suitable for the fixture you select. Place shallow under-cabinet fixtures, strips of low-voltage mini lights, or fluorescent channels as close to the front edge of cabinets as possible. Run the lengths of light into corners to eliminate shadows.

For countertops with no cabi-

**To keep from dining in the dark, locate lighting over your eating area. Chandeliers should hang over the center of your table and about 30 inches above the surface. So it's not a head-bumper, buy a fixture that's at least 6 inches narrower than the table. Augment this central light source with recessed fixtures. Your buffet or sideboard could benefit from a few well-placed recessed downlights.**

nets above, install a long wall-mounted fixture about 2 feet above the counter. Choose a shielded model that casts light downward and across the work surface.

Enlightened geography. Evenly space directional track-light fixtures; a group of pendants that shed light downward; or adjustable recessed spotlights.

Station brighteners. Your sink and range require their own light source, too. Over each work station, center two 75-watt reflector flood track lights. You can also use two recessed downlights spaced about 18 inches apart.

Shining dining. To keep from dining in the dark, locate lighting over your eating area. Chandeliers should hang over the center of your table and about 30 inches above the surface. So it's not a head-bumper, buy a fixture that's

at least 6 inches narrower than the table. Augment this central light source with recessed fixtures. Your buffet or sideboard could benefit from a few well-placed recessed downlights as well.

Now comes the more artful side to kitchen illumination, called accent or mood lighting. Several approaches and a choice of fixtures let you direct intense beams of light on a prized collectible, a special surface material or a notable architectural feature.

Put accent fixtures above and inside cabinets. Even the cabinet toe space can twinkle with tiny lights. Or, simply shut off ceiling fixtures and let your under-cabinet lights cast a moody glow.

"Light really is a design medium," stresses Pickett. "It literally can make an environment a delight to be in."

# Site condos provide greater flexibility

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ROBERT M. MEISNER

Can you give me some advantages that you perceive in regard to doing a site condominium over complying with the Plat Act?

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- the ability to establish common elements.
- the time required to obtain approval of a plat is longer, and there is extensive review by state agencies, whereas in a condominium, it is merely the recording of the documents with the Registrar of Deeds. The exception is the Department of Health when public water and sewer are not available.
- the avoidance of some public scrutiny that is part of the plat approval under the Subdivision Control Act.
- site condominiums are easier to expand, contract or make other modifications to, whereas the amendment of a plat re-

quires 100 percent approval of all lot owners or a circuit court order. A condominium developer needs no permission of the co-owners if the master deed has been properly drafted to amend the change.

■ There is greater flexibility, particularly with respect to commercial and industrial applications such as less stringent setback, open spaces or other local requirements.

■ A condominium facilitates cluster development for residential applications.

■ General common and limited common elements can be designated and regulated in ways that would be impossible under the Subdivision Control Act.

■ Flexibility to amend and expand a site condominium makes financing easier; you need only to finance a small portion at a time, for example. Robert M. Meisner is a Birmingham attorney concentrating his practice in the areas of condominiums, real estate and corporate law. You are invited to submit questions by writing Robert M. Meisner at 30200 Telegraph Road, Suite 407, Birmingham 48026. This column provides general information and should not be construed as legal opinion. To leave a voice mail message for Robert Meisner, dial 953-2047, mail box 1871.

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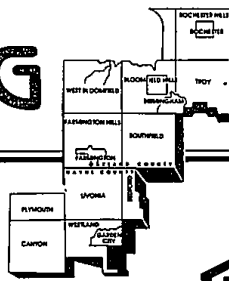
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