

Light Your Home Beautifully

A quick reference for choosing bulbs that make your rooms - and everything in them - look their best.

A beautiful fixture is only part of good lighting. The bulb inside it affects the warmth of the room, the way paint and fabrics appear, and even how welcoming a space feels. Use this quick reference when shopping for bulbs, then adjust for the way you use and enjoy each room.

1. Start with Color Temperature

Color temperature is measured in Kelvin (K). Lower numbers produce warmer, more golden light; higher numbers appear cooler and whiter. For many living spaces, 2700K is a beautiful starting point because it creates a soft, warm light without looking overly amber.

Kelvin	How It Feels	Where It Often Works Well
2200-2400K	Very warm / amber	Decorative lamps, candle-like evening ambiance
2700K	Soft warm white	Living rooms, bedrooms, dining rooms, family spaces
3000K	Clean warm white	Kitchens, bathrooms, work areas when you want a crisper look
3500-4000K	Neutral to cool white	Task-oriented spaces; use thoughtfully in traditional/cozy rooms
5000K+	Daylight / blue-white	Utility or specialized task lighting; often feels harsh in relaxing spaces

2. Look for 90+ CRI

CRI stands for Color Rendering Index. It describes how accurately a light source reveals color. A bulb with a CRI of 90 or higher helps paint colors, wood tones, fabrics, artwork, flowers, and skin tones look more natural. When decorating matters, CRI matters too.

3. Choose Brightness by Lumens - Not Watts

Watts tell you how much energy a bulb uses; lumens tell you how much light it produces. A room usually feels better when several light sources share the work rather than one overly bright overhead bulb.

Approx. Lumens	Useful For
400-500	Soft accent lamps, small bedside lamps
700-900	Many table lamps and general household fixtures
1000-1600	Brighter task lamps or fixtures that need stronger illumination

Room-by-Room Starting Points

These are starting points, not rigid rules. Your wall colors, natural light, fixture shades, and personal preference all influence what feels right. Whenever possible, use dimmers so the same room can shift from practical daytime light to a softer evening glow.

Room	Good Starting Point	Why
Living / Family Room	2700K, 90+ CRI	Warm and inviting; flattering to furnishings and finishes
Bedroom	2700K, 90+ CRI	Soft, restful light for winding down
Dining Room	2700K, 90+ CRI; dimmable	Creates warmth and ambiance while keeping colors rich

Room	Good Starting Point	Why
Kitchen	2700-3000K, 90+ CRI	Warm enough for the home, with extra clarity for tasks
Bathroom / Vanity	2700-3000K, 90+ CRI	Good color accuracy for skin tones and finishes
Office / Task Area	3000K, 90+ CRI	A slightly crisper light can support focused work

Layer the Light

Instead of asking one fixture to light an entire room, combine sources whenever possible. Overhead lighting provides general illumination; table and floor lamps add warmth and balance; sconces add character; and task lighting puts brighter light exactly where it is needed. Layering gives you more control over both function and mood.

Before You Buy: Quick Bulb Checklist

- **Color temperature:** Is 2700K the warm, soft look you want, or would the room benefit from 3000K?
- **CRI:** Look for 90+ when accurate, beautiful color matters.
- **Lumens:** Choose brightness for the job rather than relying on wattage.
- **Dimmable:** Confirm both the bulb and fixture/dimmer are compatible.
- **Bulb shape and base:** Make sure it physically fits the fixture and shade. When bulbs are visible, use the same bulb shape and finish throughout the room or open-concept space for a more cohesive appearance.
- **Consistency:** In open-concept spaces or rooms visible from one another, use bulbs with the same color temperature (Kelvin), similar bulb shape, and comparable brightness whenever possible. Consistent lighting creates a more connected, intentional look and prevents one fixture from appearing noticeably warmer, cooler, or brighter than another.

Simply Gracious Tip

Before replacing every bulb in your home, try one high-CRI 2700K bulb in a favorite lamp. Live with it in the morning and evening, then compare it with the lighting you already have. Your own eyes - and the feeling of the room - should have the final say.