

YOUR COMPLETE GUIDE TO choosing breakfast nook lighting

In a breakfast nook, there aren't a lot of design choices to be made or places to inject style. This small set-apart dining area located in or near the kitchen needs little to be a comfortable place to eat, enjoy a morning cup of coffee, or flip through the newspaper.

For this reason, the few decorative objects and furniture included need to pack a punch. All the texture, color, and style are wrapped up in a few design elements, so you must be very intentional when choosing a table, chairs and light fixture. And at the same time, you must remember that what is chosen for this small space needs to coordinate with the style direction of the kitchen it adjoins.

Not every kitchen is going to have this special space available, but if you do, here are some tips to help guide you to make the best possible decision about your eating nook lighting.

FIGURING OUT THE CORRECT SIZE + SHAPE FIXTURE

Hang a light that is too large for the space, and the entire room could feel dwarfed by it. On the other hand, a light that is too small will be lost and can't act as the decorative accent that it should be. You want whatever light you choose to be seen, but also not be the **only** thing you see. It must be scaled to the size of the space.

No. 1: Measure the Room

A good rule of thumb is to add the length and width of your room together (in feet) and choose that size in inches. *For example, a room 12 foot by 10 foot needs a light that is about 22 inches around (10+12=22).*

No 2: Measure Your Table

The light fixture should be about three-fourths the size of the smallest width of your dining table. That way it can be appropriately sized to light the entirety of your table, yet not so large that someone hits their head when they sit down.

No 3: Consider the Shape of the Room and Table

If you have a circular nook and/or table, a round fixture will look most appropriate. For an extra long table, consider a rectangular light or hang two pendants rather than just one to ensure enough light is cast on the entire table. Square tables work with any shape of light hanging above them.

TYPES OF LIGHT FIXTURES TO CONSIDER

When shopping for a kitchen nook light, there are a variety of finishes, materials and styles to choose from, as well as options about the number and type of bulbs in a single fixture. There are four main types to look at for this room:

HANGING PENDANTS

Pendants are light fixtures mounted to a chain, stem, or wire and hang down over the table. They are often able to be adjusted vertically, allowing you to hang the light exactly where you need it. This type of lighting includes styles like industrial barn lights, glass globe lights, and lights surrounded by sculptural metal or wood framing. They may be one single light or include multiple lights in the same fixture. A hanging pendant is the option you will most likely end up with for the breakfast nook.

CHANDELIER

A chandelier is a hanging light with multiple arms coming off a central body. While many lend a formal style to a room, there are countless options with a contemporary, more laid-back vibe to choose from. A chandelier will likely have multiple small chandelier bulbs. This option is best for ceilings that are about 10 feet or higher for proper clearance and will probably be your most expensive lighting option.

FLUSH MOUNT

Flush mount light fixtures attach directly to the ceiling and attract minimal attention. They are best for eating nooks with very low ceilings (about 8 feet high). They will provide adequate light for the nook area, but will not lend much to the overall style of the room.

SEMI-FLUSH MOUNT

Semi-flush mount lights are a combination of a flush mount fixture and chandelier. This option is a great choice for rooms with low ceilings where you still want to have a statement light fixture. It will typically hang between 4 to 8 inches from the ceiling and work best for ceilings between 8 and 10 feet high. An added benefit is semi-flush mount fixtures will direct light down to the room and light the ceiling at the same time making the room seem larger and the ceiling higher.

HOW MUCH LIGHT DO YOU NEED?

The exact number of bulbs and total wattage that you need depends on how large of a space you're trying to light and exactly what you need light for in the breakfast nook. If you like to do tasks at the table in the evening after the sun goes down you are going to need more light than if you only occasionally turn the light on for a cloudy morning.

Installing a dimmer switch in the breakfast nook allows you to alter the mood and brightness of the light so it is perfect any time of the day.

Modern lighting is complicated even more when it comes to shopping for lightbulbs. While they may be more energy efficient, the terminology may leave you wondering what is best.

- For the kitchen nook, you'll probably want to look for between 3000 and 4000 lumens to provide the right amount of light for your space.
- Also, the color temperature of the bulb will determine the way the room feels. If you are looking for a traditional warm and cozy feeling (like that from an ordinary 100 Watt bulb) aim for a temperature of 2700K(Kelvins), or if you want a whiter light and more energetic feel, pick up a bulb around 4100K.

HOW TO COORDINATE BREAKFAST NOOK LIGHT WITH KITCHEN FIXTURES

If your dining nook area is a part of the kitchen or opens directly into it, you'll want to find a light fixture that looks like it goes with the kitchen lighting. For example, if you have glass pendant lights over a kitchen island that are hanging from black metal poles, you don't want to choose a nickel-plated finish for the breakfast nook light.

At the same time, you should not choose the exact same light for the two spaces, because the contrast between the two is a great way to inject a little added style and accent the room with something different.

- Only one light fixture can be front and center.
- You want the light fixtures in the breakfast nook and kitchen to go together, without completely matching. Look for lights that are in the same finish and material family (e.g. all oil-rubbed bronze) and also look for ones with similar lines and style (e.g., all modern style or all with curved elements rather than straight lines).
- While you want similarities, see if you can also vary some elements. For example, maybe one fixture could have glass hurricane shades or brass accents.
- If you have multiple pendants hanging over a kitchen island, choose just one light fixture for the breakfast nook. Too many individual light fixtures ends up looking cluttered.

HOW HIGH SHOULD YOU HANG A BREAKFAST NOOK LIGHT?

Your lighting choice should hang at a height of 30" to 36" inches above your tabletop depending on the height of your ceiling. This keeps the fixture from being so low that it blocks your view of guests at the table or interferes with a centerpiece, yet hangs close enough to still shine light over the table.