



My Go-2-Guy Handyman Services

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What Light Is and What It Does

It is well known, that light has a huge impact on the colours we see. After all, Colour is just an objects ability to reflect or emit light. You've probably noticed this while looking at the hundred's of colour sample's at your local paint shop. In the store they look beautiful and when you get them home they look entirely different. The fact is color never stands alone, whether it be artificial light, natural light or even candle light, they all dramatically change the colours appearance.

Most professional colour experts consider sunlight to be the purest type of light there is and therefor provides the purest colour. But even natural sunlight is inconsistent. As the day progresses from sunrise to noon, afternoon and sunset, the light changes in intensity, creating changes in the appearance of color. Now take into account the direction the windows face in the room, and that adds another element to be considered. The charts below will explain.

Natural Lighting Chart

Direction of Natural Light	Visible Temperature of Light	Colour of Light	Duration of Natural Light
North	Cool	Bluish	All day
East	Warm	Yellow	Mornings
West	Warm	Orange-Red	Afternoon
South	Warm	Orange-Yellow	All day

Rules of the Northern Light

As you can see in the chart above, north-facing rooms are filled with cool blue light. This makes them a challenge to decorate. With the cooler light that comes from the north it can be quite difficult to create the open feeling so often requested in today's design esthetic. What do the pros suggest? There are two options.

Option one is "if you can't beat 'em join 'em" go dark. In small spaces with little natural light the best advice is to embrace nature and create a dramatic, cocooning, cozy, interior. Strong dark, yet muted colours are perfect for this, creating a sense of intimacy in a dark space.

Option two is "Come out swinging!" The blue light from the north tend to bring out the cool side of the colours, this means if you want to go light consider something with a yellow base. This will allow as much light to bounce around the room as possible while staying light and airy.

East Vs. West

It is important to consider when you use your east and west facing rooms, so that you can tailor your colour choice to the type of light you will most often experience while using it. Light in west-facing spaces is cooler in the morning then filled with an Orange-Red light in the afternoon, while east facing rooms are bright in the morning and cooler in the afternoon, because as you likely know already the sun rises in the east and sets in the west.

For both east and west facing rooms the rule is quite similar. With warm light being the common theme, cooler colours are more frequently used. Grey toned neutrals, Off whites, blues and greens are common choices in these spaces, as the light allows them to flourish, while also warming up the space. Mixing the cooler paints warm light creates a wonderful tranquility in the space.

Southern Charm

Southern facing rooms are a joy for decorators in the northern hemisphere as there is always an abundance of warm natural light flowing through the windows. This truly maximizes the colours that will look good in the space. Soft blues will create an ocean side feel, while red-based neutrals will give you a warmer feel. Thinking of going with a contemporary look a cool delicate grey may be what you want to look at. The options are truly endless and a south facing room, which make the only rule “there are no rules”

Artificial Lighting

Artificial lighting will also affect how colours appear in a room as different bulb types emit different hues of light. Incandescent and halogen bulbs emit a yellow light. This makes colours seem warmer. This is perfect if your scheme uses yellow-based colours but may counter the urban look created by greys like with their bluer undertones. LED lighting gives off a bluer light and is more suited to contemporary interiors. Choosing a bulb that emits white light will make colours appear as close to what they look like in the daylight as possible, so you will see the truest impression of the colour with white light.

Conclusion

In the end what's most important is that you like what you see, Take a sample home and test it on the walls. This will save you money and time. Don't be afraid to ask question either, if you are going to the Benjamin Moore, Sherwin Williams, or any shop that specializes in paint, they couldn't be happier to help. Many of people in the shops own them and have dedicated their lives to craft of painting.