

How to Buy a Table Lamp

Table lamps should satisfy lighting requirements as well as complement decor. Here are some ways to make sure your lamp measures up.

Instructions :

- Choose a lamp of an appropriate size.
- Consider the lamp's style.
- Take measurements to be sure the lamp will be tall enough to cast its light over your shoulder, especially from a chair-side table. The bottom of the shade should be about even with your cheekbone when you're sitting on the chair, and the light's beam should fall on the page if you're reading.
- Find out what the lamp's maximum wattage is. A reading lamp should offer 150 or more watts.
- Check that the bottom edge of the shade hides the lamp's bulb socket when the lamp is viewed from a few feet away. This will make the lamp more attractive as well as reduce the potential for glare.
- Examine the shade to see whether it suits your needs. A white or off-white fabric shade usually provides a translucent quality and high light output. A darker or opaque shade will limit the light output, which is suitable in entryways.
- Ask store personnel whether you can swap the shade to satisfy your functional needs.
- Make sure you can bring the lamp back for a full refund, especially if you find that it's too tall, too chunky, too bright or too dark.
- Take the lamp home and test it. If you are able to see the lamp's bulb when sitting down, adjust the shade to reduce glare.

Tips & Warnings :

- Sometimes you can switch to a different-sized lamp harp (the metal framework that supports the shade) to make a lamp more functional and attractive. A shorter harp may lower the edge of the shade enough to hide the lamp's bulb socket.
- Try to keep the bulb less than 36 inches away from the object being lit. A desk lamp should be only 15 inches away from the work surface.
- Remember that adjustable lighting is best for reading purposes. It also works well when people of various heights use the lamp for reading.