

The Lady

15 FEBRUARY 2011

£1.80

*My father
The Lady's man
by Debo*

**FRANKIE
HOWERD'S
WIG**

*& the day
Peter Cook
got frisky*

Jojo Moyes

**WHY I
STOPPED
'TALKING
PROPER'**

**HOW TO
PAINT**

*Just add
water*

**DAISY
WAUGH**

*seduced by
Valentino*

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07

HOME HELP.

The experts are full of bright ideas when it comes to choosing the best lighting arrangements to suit your home, says **Hugh St Clair**

HAVE WRITTEN ABOUT beautiful kitchens and a stylish home office, but, to get the best out of them, good lighting is essential. A lighting arrangement fit for purpose plays an important part in interior design and there are now many experts who specialise in this field.

If you are doing close work, or need a strong light to read by, the best option is task lighting – strong beams that focus on a small area. Powerful 100-watt bulbs have been phased out as will all bayonet cap bulbs over the coming years in favour of LED or low-energy bulbs. The alternative is halogen lamps – these are better than traditional lamps with low-energy bulbs if you need to see exactly what you are doing. A company called Serious Readers specialises in slim and modern-looking extra bright table and floor lamps that are 10 times brighter than a 60-watt bulb. A directional halogen desk lamp to the side of the computer is the best way to light a home office. However, take care that overhead lighting in the room isn't reflected in the computer screen, or causes shadows, warns Lucy Martin, design director of John Cullen lighting and author of *The Lighting Bible*, a book that looks at the dos and don'ts of illumination in different rooms. To see where shadows fall, hold up a portable light on a long wire (the type that builders use). She also suggests wall-mounted uplights either side of your desk.

Kate Beard is a lighting designer who makes house calls to discuss your needs and will draw a lighting plan for electricians. She often finds that, in a couple, the husband prefers all-singing all-dancing



Above and below: John Cullen offers a range of LED and energy-efficient lights including stylish undercupboard lighting



effects whereas his wife might want simpler controls and more attractive table lamps. Diplomatic Kate is good at balancing those different requirements. One of her top tips for kitchen lighting is to put spotlights to shine at the edge of the work surface. Many people put spotlights in the middle of the ceiling, the light of which will be blocked by the cook who will be preparing food in their own shadow. These days, because our kitchens are for cooking, eating and relaxing in, she recommends installing a few lighting circuits so different areas can be turned off and on at will. For example, you might want to switch off the working-area lights and turn on a chandelier over the table at suppertime.

As for illuminating pretty china or glass on a shelf, designers light from behind with strips of LEDs. The bulbs are tiny and don't get hot like halogen. Lucy Martin says that if your work surface is under a cabinet, then fix LED lights under the cupboard to brighten it. But don't buy the cheaper ones because they give a blue rather than a sharp white light. ♦

SERIOUS READERS 01296-395400; www.seriousbrands.co.uk

KATE BEARD LIGHTING for appointments 020-8222 8638; www.katebeardlighting.com

JOHN CULLEN LIGHTING 020-7371 5400; www.johncullenlighting.co.uk

THE LIGHTING BIBLE by Lucy Martin is published by Apple Press, price £12.99

EMAIL YOUR DECORATING OR INTERIOR DESIGN ENQUIRIES to Hugh St Clair at homehelp@lady.co.uk

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