1949

For Easier Studying- Improve Your Lighting

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Recommended Citation
Williams, Katherine (1949) "For Easier Studying- Improve Your Lighting," The Iowa Homemaker: Vol. 29 : No. 6 , Article 3.
Available at: http://lib.dr.iastate.edu/homemaker/vol29/iss6/3
For Easier Studying—

Improve Your Lighting

by Katherine Williams

If you’re having trouble concentrating on the books and notes before you, there is one important thing you can do about it. You can make sure you have a well-lighted study desk. Sometimes when you’re just too tired to study, that study fatigue is the result of poor light.

And you’ll find that good light will definitely save on your eyesight. One college student in three acquires glasses along with a degree.

Take a look at your study center. Does the lamp you have glare in your eyes with nothing but darkness surrounding you? Do you have to get right under your study lamp to see? If you do, then you also need improved general lighting in the room as well as at your desk.

For better light there are some simple tricks you can do with the study lamp you have. You don’t have to buy a new one.

First of all, use your dust cloth and keep the light bulb, diffusing bowl and lamp shade clean. It’s surprising the amount of light a little dirt can cut out. Check your light bulb. If the bulb is black on the inside because it is old, it’s cutting down on the amount of light. You’d better buy a new one. A 150-watt bulb will usually give you adequate light.

If you have a dark colored shade, replace it with a shade that will let more light through. Pastel and moderately luminous shades give more balanced light in your room. A small area of light, when the rest of the room is dark, causes glare and a dark shade emphasizes this glare. Because you want less contrast between light and dark in your room, turn on your overhead light when you are using your study lamp.

Goose-neck lamps and most bridge lamps give poor study light. The light from these is direct and glaring instead of soft and diffused as it should be.

Here’s how you can make that goose-neck do a good lighting job for you: Remove the dark metal shade. Twist the flexible neck of the lamp so that it stands straight. Place an inexpensive diffusing bowl—dime stores and hardware stores carry them—on the lamp and screw in a 100-watt bulb. Add an ordinary study lamp shade that fits the diffusing bowl and look at the difference in the light you get. The general appearance of the room is improved, too.

There is one more thing you can do to get still better light. Your lamp should be between 21 and 25 inches from the top of your desk. Obviously, the goose-neck lamp isn’t that tall. To raise it, put the base of the lamp on a block of wood, or one or two books will do temporarily. This will spread the light over a larger area so you won’t have to crouch right under the lamp.

Now tackle that bridge lamp if that’s what you have. This kind of lamp presents the same type of problems as the goose-neck. It sheds a small pool of light on a small area and the light is too direct. Adjust the bridge lamp so that the light socket points to the ceiling and screw in the bulb. Add a diffusing bowl and, if necessary, a new lamp shade.

Dark wall paper or paint absorbs much of the light. Glossy, shiny walls cause eye glare. To remedy either of these evils, place a light-colored tack board or bulletin board on the wall directly in front of your desk. The light color will reflect the light and give you more efficient lighting. If your desk faces a window, move it against the wall.

Here are two more ideas. Instead of putting your lamp to one side of the desk, bring it closer to you for better light. Place a blotter on your desk to keep the glare out of your eyes from the shiny desk top.

A goose-neck lamp can be converted to give easy-on-the-eyes light and it’s cheaper than a new pair of glasses.