

# Homeowner's Cheat Sheet

12 Quick and Easy Tips to  
Brighten any Dark Room



**SOLATUBE®**

Rooms aren't built to be empty – but that's exactly what can happen if the room is too dark for you to enjoy it. Dark spaces not only feel dingy but confined and depressing and yet brightening a dark room, will make the same space feel completely different.

There's many ways to remedy the problem of a dark and gloomy room, some more effective than others.

For those of you wanting to get more out of your dark living spaces; we've put together this short guide that will help spark some ideas!

Obviously, the logical thing to do is maximise the amount of natural light that enters the room. Not only is this a better quality of light, but research also show that natural light has numerous health benefits. A drastic solution would be to replace your window with a larger one, but since almost nobody wants to go through all that trouble, you can also try to redirect the light.

## BENEFITS OF A WELL LIT ROOM

- The biggest benefit of a well lit room is that... it **gets used more!** It might be a corner area where you do your reading, be the kids play area, or even be a spare bedroom. There is nearly always an area of every house that is neglected due to poor lighting and visibility.
- **Reduce eyestrain** - Whether you're reading, watching tv, playing video games or knitting; if you're working in a dark area, you're causing strain and deterioration of your eyes.
- **Avoid headaches** - A common reported problem among those who spend a lot of time in poorly lit areas.
- **Prevent accidents** - The human eye cannot properly estimate the shape, proximity and the depth of spaces and objects without proper lighting. Bad lighting can cause accidents both at home and at work. Elderly people are particularly vulnerable in dark places.
- **Achieve Building Standards set by Australia's leading Designers and Architects** - Nearly every new building is now designed in a way that captures and harnesses the most daylight possible.
- Makes the room feel homely and **more inviting** for both your family and your guests.

Brightening a dark room may sound complicated in principal, but it's actually very simple. Better yet, it's not too expensive. Just follow these tips to brighten your dark room and change its ambiance completely.

For a quick checklist on ways you can *Brighten Your Dark Room Today*, see the next page!

## CHECKLIST

1. Use diffused lighting
2. Attend to your windows
3. Open blinds or curtains
4. Install a light fixture
5. Use mirrors
6. Glass, crystal and other reflective surfaces
7. Paint the room
8. Pick the right furniture
9. Use the right flooring
10. Add greenery
11. Adjoin two rooms
12. Install a Solatube Daylighting System

\*For more detail on each point, *please turn over*

## 1. Use diffused lighting

If you have a dark corner or a room where there's no ceiling fixture, use multiple lights pointed towards the ceiling and walls. This reflected light provides a soft, overhead glow, which minimises harsh shadows.

## 2. Attend to you windows

Wash your windows! Cleaner windows let in more light. For around \$20 per window, you can purchase frosted privacy film that attaches directly to your windows. It lets light through, but it's translucent quality makes it impossible to see in from the outside, so you can remove the blinds altogether. There are also other types of privacy window film that mimic stained, mirrored or textured glass.

## 3. Open blinds or curtains

Open blinds or curtains can take advantage of natural light. Choosing translucent curtains or blinds can provide light without the concerns of prying neighbours.

If you add curtains to your room hang them higher and wider than the window - extending the curtain rods past the window frame. That way, when your curtains are open, the full window will be exposed which will maximise the amount of natural light entering the room.

## 4. Install a light fixture

If you have money to invest, consider updating your light fixtures and bulbs. The most common bulbs used for interior lighting include incandescent, light-emitting diode (LED) and compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFL).

When selecting a light bulb to brighten a room, base your decision on its lumens, not wattage. Lumens measure the overall brightness, while wattage measures the amount of energy it uses.

More importantly, choose the right light for the right setting. There is white light and there's yellow light. For areas like the kitchen, you may use white light, but for areas where you want to relax and wind down you could use yellow light.

One potential solution for your home may be Solatube's LED Lighting Device. This is the first device in the world to integrate a daylighting system with an LED lighting system. [Click here to find out more about this product.](#)

## 5. Use mirrors

Mirrors trick the eye into thinking that a room is larger than it really is. They take a little light and magnify it ten-fold.

You can brighten a dark room by hanging a mirror opposite a light source, so as to reflect it. You can buy mirrors with French window trim, to create the impression that the mirror itself is a window.

Even a small window can be made to look bigger if you frame it with fence-style timber. Brighten your dark room by hanging a mirror opposite the seemingly enlarged window to reflect it. If you repeat the same trim around the mirror, it can give the appearance of a twin window.

## 6. Use glass, crystal or other reflective surfaces

Adding other reflective accessories is a great way to brighten up a room. Metallic furnishings or items with a glossy finish reflect more light than accessories with matte or flat finishes. Metallics are a big interior design trend. Add some gold or silver into your decor to brighten your room and add style.

Other good options are crystal photo frames, mirrored coasters and glass collectibles (in groups of three or five). You can use glass, mirrors and crystal in wall art and lighting fixtures, too. If you have the budget, glass-topped tables with beveled glass inserts or edges make your other furnishings look lighter, brighter, cleaner and richer.

## 7. Paint the room (using light colours)

A new paint job can brighten your walls, cover any dents and scratches and give you a great opportunity to use colour to your best advantage. The right wall paint can coordinate your room décor and showcase a special elements like a fireplace by incorporating two or more paint colours in a single room. Taking advantage of colour psychology in your choices can also help encourage a mellow, cheerful or energetic mood. Use colours like;

- Off-whites and creams
- Light blues
- Light purples

Avoid dark paint colours which absorb light and project a darker setting.

*Bonus tip:* Use paint with high gloss content which can reflect light across the room without absorbing it.

## 8. Pick the right furniture

Again, dark furnishings absorb more light than white accessories; reducing dark finishes is a key to brightening a dark room.

Go for light and smart furniture that doesn't take up much space. Avoid small pieces of furniture; instead, go for fewer large ones that will not cramp up the floor space and let light travel freely. Keep the floor clutter free.

Here are some things to consider when you're redesigning your furniture placement:

- Create groupings - groupings are smaller areas within a large space that preserve function and have definition, like a reading nook that's well-defined by the placement of a rug, wall art or a lamp.
- Respect flow - The way people move in and out of a space to other areas of your home is important. You want to leave paths around the furniture to let people enter and exit without having to move around footstools or tables.
- Play up a focal point - If you have a great view or a nice fireplace, make sure to take advantage of it. Arranging your seating so that family and visitors can see and appreciate the room's amenities, will make the space more fun and functional.

Hang some wall art or pictures. Go for light bright colours. Daylight landscape scenes can be especially nice of an ocean or sun scene. You would be surprised at how adding artwork can not only brighten the room, but also make it look larger. You are providing the eye with multiple focal points, which takes attention away from a room's smaller size.

## 9. Use the right flooring

Similar to the furniture choice, consider installing light coloured flooring in the room. Bamboo flooring or light coloured tiles flooring will assist to enliven the space. Alternatively, you may also place large light colour rugs on the floor. Both woven and printed rugs will work perfect. Just ensure they are done in light shades like yellow or beige. White would obviously brighten the room even more, but that's just asking for trouble in a room you expect people to actually spend time in.

## 10. Add greenery

Plants are important in home decor for so many reasons. They bring nature indoors with colour and texture and improve indoor air quality. They add life and colour to a dark room and are easily maintained.

Some to try include:

- A tall column of snake plant (*Sansevieria trifasciata*) will grow under most light conditions, screen an area you want to conceal and add height to a low ceiling.
- Pothos (*Epipremnum aureum*) is an almost indestructible vine that's available in a number of mottled and solid colour variations. It can trail along a window sill or meander around and through a tiny trellis.
- Chinese evergreen (*Aglaonema modestum*), English ivy (*Hedera helix*) and spider plant (*Chlorophytum comosum*) are all super hardy and attractive decorations to boot.

It is also widely believed that merely having plants around enhances our mood. A little green can go a long way in creating a cheerier and 'brighter' room.

## 11. Adjoin two rooms

Ok, so this one isn't as quick as the others... but if you're willing to spend some money, one option is to remove a wall between two adjoining rooms. Not only does it open up the home and allow light to spread around, it's also one of the hottest home remodeling trends of 2013.

Removing a wall is dangerous and could require a building permit, so make sure to consult a qualified contractor for any type of demolition work.

## 12. Install a Solatube Daylighting System

Whether you have a living room, family room or media room, this space is often the activity hub of a home. It's where people gather to socialise with friends, watch a favourite TV show, or curl up on the couch with a good book. A Solatube Daylighting System can enhance this active space by using natural daylight to brighten dark spots and bring new life to your room.

With Solatube Daylighting Systems, you can brighten any dark room — even those on the ground floor or in the basement!

While a new coat of paint, or a redesign of your living space, or the strategic use of mirrors, will brighten a dark space... none of these solutions compare to the results you'll see with a Solatube Daylighting System.

If you're looking for a holistic lighting solution that is quick, mess-free and affordable – give one of our local Premier Dealers a call today on 13 16 19.

**Phone 13 16 19**

## Case Study: Private Home

Building Type: Residential Location: Brisbane

The homeowners were committed to making energy efficiency a top priority and Solatube Daylighting Systems were a perfect product to help them meet their efficient goals. Their modern home built over three levels contained two dark spaces, which required consistent electric lighting during the daytime.

### Objective

The purpose of the project was to provide the homeowners with an aesthetically pleasing energy efficient natural daylighting solution, that would fulfill their needs and add beauty to their home.

### Solution

Solatube Daylighting Systems are extremely versatile allowing the products to be installed anywhere the homeowner needs extra light, for example bathrooms, kitchens and hallways.

Homeowners are not only impressed by the energy efficient aspect of daylighting, but also by the appeal of walking into a bright room flooded with natural light, yet without heat or glare.

Three Solatube Daylighting Systems were installed: two in the lounge and the other in the powder room.

These systems provide an increased flow of natural daylight into otherwise dark spaces, which delighted the homeowners.

### Products used

Brighten-up Series

- 2 x 290DS
- 1 x 160DS

### Testimonial

“Adding the Solatube Daylighting Systems to both the lounge and powder rooms have really brightened the appearance of these once dark areas. We are impressed.”



# BRIGHTEN ANY DARK ROOM EVEN IN TWO STOREY HOMES!

Great for:

Bathroom, Kitchen, Hallway, Entry, Stairs, Closet, Living and Family Rooms, Laundry Room, Bedroom,  
Dining Room, Garage, Home Office, Hobby Room, Games Rooms

## Before

## After



# SOLATUBE®

Brighten your dark spaces today, phone your local Solatube Premier Dealer on 13 16 19