

ROOM TO IMPROVE

Tim McKeough

Q What can I use for bedside lighting instead of table lamps?



ERIC LAIGNEL

A. Pendant lights or wall-mounted sconces work as well as lamps and, depending on the choice of fixtures, can make a powerful visual statement.

One Manhattan interior designer, Ghislaine Viñas, regularly flanks beds with pendants or sconces for a functional reason: to clear off the bedside tables. "If you only have a small bedside table and there's a lamp on top of it, it leaves very little room for the realities of life — books, watches, earrings," Ms. Viñas said.

Hanging fixtures are also a good way to add a sculptural element to the room, she said. "Around a bed, everything is at a level 24 to 30 inches high, so you add another dimension by having something coming down from the ceiling."

Ms. Viñas said light fixtures were her "accessory of choice" for dressing up rooms. In the bedroom of one Manhattan apartment, she hung Liquid Raindrop pendant lamps, above, by Next Design (starting at about \$200; 800-420-4137 or nova68.com). For another apartment, she chose Shoot sconces designed by Jeremy Cole, which hang like giant porcelain pine cones from steel posts (starting at \$2,795; 917-237-0123 or propertyfurniture.com).

Pendants from Niche Modern, a Beacon, N.Y., company that specializes in hand-blown glass shades, offer a quieter, more elegant look. "A lot of our pendants have been used as bedside lights in hotels," said the designer, Jeremy Pyles. His company's effervescent glass, which is filled with air bubbles, is "halfway between clear glass and frosted glass," Mr. Pyles said. "The bubbles diffuse the light and sparkle and shimmer." The fixtures come in four shapes (from \$425; 212-777-2101 or nichemodern.com).

These fixtures are usually hard-wired, which means an electrician must install electrical boxes in the ceiling or wall. Switches should be placed on both sides of the bed just above the tables, so the lights can be operated independently.

Plug-in sconces are another option. In the bedroom of a beach house in Montauk, N.Y., Ms. Vi-

ñas used George Nelson's Bubble Cigar Wall Sconces (\$325, from 866-428-9289 or ylighting.com). The sconces' cords run down the wall from a wooden bracket and plug into an outlet; they are switched on and off with a pull chain.

A wall-mounted, plug-in swing-arm lamp like Artemide's Tolomeo Classic wall lamp is a good choice for those whose primary concern is having light to read by (\$277 at ylighting.com). It can be pulled down to illuminate a book, or pushed out of the way for sleep.

A sconce provides more ambient light, and a pendant or swing-arm lamp casts targeted lighting. The best choice for your bedroom, Mr. Pyles said, "really depends on the environment, and what you want to accomplish."

Questions about décor may be sent by e-mail to room@nytimes.com. Unpublished questions cannot be answered individually.

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Corrections

An article last Thursday about Reeve Lindbergh, a daughter of the aviator Charles Lindbergh, described speeches he gave during World War II incorrectly. The speeches, made after the war broke out in Europe but before the United States had joined it, were anti-interventionist, not pro-Nazi.

An answer in the Garden Q.&A. column last Thursday about vegetable gardening contained an inaccurate description of the best place to plant one. The column should have said, "Except in cool summer areas, a spot with sunny mornings and shady afternoons will usually be more vegetable friendly than one that is shady until noon and sunny for the rest of the day."