

This will often be satisfactory but where the merchandise is most likely to be seen under different lighting, e.g. a coat is most likely to be seen under daylight, it is wise to use lighting that does not distort the colour of the merchandise relative to how the merchandise will be seen in use. For some retailers, there can be a temptation to choose a light source that enhances the appearance of the merchandise. An example is the notorious butcher's lamp, a lamp that exaggerates the redness of meat. This is a temptation that should be resisted. In other shops it will be important to choose a light source with colour rendering properties that give an appealing appearance to human skin, particularly in areas where an individual's appearance may be closely examined, e.g. fitting rooms. While the CIE general colour rendering index is a useful guide, the final choice of light source is best made by viewing the lit objects of interest.

12.4 Approaches to retail lighting

12.4.1 General lighting

General lighting in shops with a low budget or value for money profile is usually provided from a regular array of luminaires (Figure 12.1). These luminaires range from bare fluorescent lamp battens through recessed fluorescent louvres to pendant metal halide globes. The purpose of such general lighting is to produce a uniform illuminance over the relevant plane without causing glare.

In shops with quality or exclusive profiles, the architecture is more likely to be a feature of the store and the general lighting will need to be integrated with it. This may involve the use of recessed downlights, cove lighting or suspended uplights rather than a regular array (Figure 12.2). Regardless of the lighting approach used, the appearance of the luminaires needs to be consistent with the style of the shop.

12.4.2 Accent lighting

Accent lighting is designed to provide additional illuminance on some areas so as to emphasise specific items of merchandise and to provide a meaningful variation in brightness and shadow throughout the store. If well done, accent lighting can guide shoppers through the shop and draw their attention to merchandise. The best form of accent lighting depends on the area to be accented.

For large area wall displays, wall washing luminaires fitted with fluorescent lamps are used (Figure 12.3). For gondola displays, the lighting can be built into the gondolas (Figure 12.4). For small area accent lighting, aimable spotlights attached to power track should be used (Figure 12.5). Whatever the form of accent lighting, some flexibility is required. This is because the nature and aiming of accent lighting will depend on the merchandise to be accented. As the nature and layout of the merchandise changes, the accent lighting will need to change.



Figure 12.3
Luminaires providing
vertical illuminance