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## ILLUMINANCE SELECTION

In 1979, the IESNA established an illuminance selection procedure, which was published in the 6th, 7th, and 8th editions of its *Lighting Handbook*. The philosophy of that procedure was to enable the lighting designer to select illuminances based on a knowledge of space and occupant characteristics as well as the task and worker characteristics.

The philosophy of that procedure has been embraced again in this edition, but the procedure has been modified and simplified to place visual performance and therefore illuminance selection more in balance with the other important lighting design criteria presented in this chapter and discussed throughout this edition of the *IESNA Lighting Handbook*. Specifically, the recommended illuminances provided in the Design Guide are based on the Society's judgment of best practice for "typical" applications. Every situation is unique so, naturally, typical conditions may not be appropriate for a specific application. As a professional, the lighting designer should have a better understanding of the particular space and the needs of the occupants and clients than what can be presented in a recommended illuminance value for a typical space.

### Illuminance Recommendations

In 1979, the IESNA established nine illuminance categories, "A," the lowest set of recommended illuminances, through "I," the highest set. Each of the nine categories had general descriptions of the visual task, irrespective of the application. Generally, the same approach has been employed in this edition of the *IESNA Lighting Handbook* to help lighting designers establish the best task illuminance. However, four important modifications have been adopted.

1. The recommended illuminances are no longer provided without reference to a specific application. Every application in the Design Guide has a specific recommended illuminance (horizontal, vertical, or both) representing best practice for a typical application.
2. The nine illuminance selection categories established earlier by the IESNA have been reduced to seven categories and organized into three sets of visual tasks (orientation and simple, common, and special). These groupings provide additional clarity to the category descriptions (Figure 10-9).
3. Additional precision has been given to the task descriptions in each category. In the previous three editions it was impossible for the lighting designer to unambiguously ascertain what constituted, for example, "low contrast" or "small size." Specific ranges of contrast and size have been established for this edition (Figures 10-10 and 10-11).
4. Recommended illuminances increase roughly logarithmically with increasing task difficulty by combined changes in task contrast and task size, as defined in Figure 10-10. These recommendations are guided by both the scientific literature and practical experience.



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