

Benefits of natural light in building

design

Daylight is a vital natural resource that has many advantages over artificial light and heating, the key one being that it is a completely free and unlimited natural resource.

There are a number of benefits to adding more daylight to any work or home environment.

Improved concentration and mood

Daylight is an essential natural asset that directly influences our brain functioning and mood. In schools, research demonstrates a clear positive correlation between classrooms with good natural light and improved student performance and attendance, while limited exposure to sunlight due to the shortening of days in winter has been linked to Seasonal Affective Disorder, or SAD, a condition marked by depressive symptoms, in certain countries.

Improved sales

In addition to improving concentration and productivity in the workplace, research into retail environments suggests that natural light may also boost sales because colours seem more vivid and true, making goods appear more attractive.

In summary

- **The benefits of using natural light in building design can be felt on a human, environmental and economic level.**
- **Benefits to humans include improved mood, concentration and healing.**
- **Benefits to the environment are primarily reduced carbon dioxide emissions due to diminished reliance on artificial heating and lighting.**
- **Benefits to the economy include improved workforce productivity and sales, and reduced expenditure on energy for heating and lighting.**

light



Better health

Studies in hospitals have proven that the recovery of patients is accelerated in areas where levels of natural light are increased.

Tax benefits

The Tax Laws Amendment Act (Act no 17 of 2009) of South Africa allows tax breaks on income tax for businesses who demonstrate energy efficiency savings, as compared against a baseline benchmark and measured by the National Energy Efficiency Agency. Please see the section "Using rooflights to save energy" for more information on how designing for improved natural light can improve energy efficiency.

Reduction in energy costs

Natural light helps reduce energy consumption by reducing both the amount of artificial light required and the energy required for heating during the winter months. Please see the section "Using rooflights to save energy" for more information.

A photograph of a dirt path winding through a dense forest. The path is covered in fallen leaves and leads into the distance. The trees are tall and thin, with green and yellowing leaves, suggesting an autumn setting. The lighting is soft and natural, filtering through the canopy.

natural light

Natural light:

the natural agent that stimulates sight and makes things visible :
the light of the sun