



Continuing our practical series giving advice on lighting different areas of the home, REBECCA WEIR suggests pre-set

dimmer panels



Since the creation of the dimmer switch, lighting controls have come a long way. Basic pre-set control systems, suitable for individual rooms, usually take the form of a control plate set into the wall with four pre-set lighting settings, as well as 'raise', 'lower' and 'off' buttons. Each setting, called a 'scene', can be any combination of the lighting circuits set at a level from a warm glow to bright illumination. The scenes are programmed to enable different 'moods' to be created with lighting, depending on the function of the room at different times of the day. Systems offer smooth transitions between lighting scenes, and a fade speed ranging from instant to one hour. These control systems can be activated from the wall plate or by remote control. Apart from aesthetics, benefits include lower energy consumption and extended lamp (light bulb) life. The two pictures above of an open-plan kitchen-cum-dining room illustrate how, at the press of a button, you can alter the lighting levels to create a different ambience.

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Rako has designed a system utilizing **coded radio transmissions**, which allows push-button controls to be mounted anywhere in a house without the need for rewiring. The wireless, wall-mounted control panels provide four pre-set scenes, as well as enabling lights to be turned off. The system costs from £209. For further information, contact Rako Controls on 0870-043 3905



'Mode SceneStyle4' was designed in the UK to be practical, easy to install and stylish. The self-contained, four-circuit dimmer switches will fit into a double-gang wall box and use the existing wiring. An infrared remote handset is supplied with each unit to enable lighting to be controlled from within the room. It costs from £399.50. Call Mode Lighting on 01920-462121



Lutron's 'Grafik Eye' is available with three-, four- or six-zone dimming capability. It is compatible with most light sources, can recall up to 12 pre-set scenes and can additionally incorporate an electronic control for blinds. A four-circuit 'Grafik Eye' dimmer costs £615. For stockists, visit www.lutron.com

