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6 Best Light Therapy Lamps of 2024

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☒ Reviewed by [Victoria Sheridan](#)

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Light therapy lamps are most commonly used to treat seasonal affective disorder (SAD), a form of depression that typically occurs during winter months with less sunlight and improves during the spring.

Even if you don't have SAD, some turn to light therapy lamps to help with the winter blues, a milder mood shift that happens during the darker, colder months. Keep in mind: Not all light therapy lamps on the market pack the same punch. In this guide, we focus on the devices that offer ultraviolet (UV) filtration and deliver the recommended standard of at least 10,000 lux (a measure of light intensity at the eyes). We spoke to experts, including Norman E. Rosenthal, M.D., a psychiatrist and a clinical professor of psychiatry at Georgetown University Medical School, who, in 1984, became one of the first researchers to name and describe SAD, to help you find the best light therapy lamp for your needs.

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Best Overall

Carex Day-Light Classic Plus »



PROS:

✓ Large screen size

CONS:

✗ Might be too bulky for

- ✓

Relatively affordable compared to competitors
- ✓

Adjustable height and angle
- ✗

smaller spaces
- ✗

Tech-savvy users may want more advanced features

Buy From Carex

The Carex Day-Light Classic Plus stands out for its large lamp face (16 inches by 13 inches) that delivers the recommended 10,000 lux of light to those who sit 12 to 14 inches away from the device. (A device with a smaller lamp face would require you to sit closer.) Users can tilt the lamp to reduce glare and adjust its height so it shines down on them like natural sunlight.

This light therapy lamp is backed by experts and touted by both professional and customer reviews for its strength. At \$169.99 for full price, this device is relatively affordable compared to competing models and can be purchased for even less when it’s on sale. It’s available through Carex, as well as Amazon and Walmart, making it an accessible choice.

Specs:

List Price:	\$169.99
Screen Size:	11.5 in. x 8 in.
Distance for 10,000 Lux:	12 in.
Brightness Settings:	4

EXPAND LIST ▾

Buy From Carex »

Best Budget:

Carex Theralite Aura »



PROS:

- ✓ Budget-friendly
- ✓ Compact
- ✓ Can double as a task light

CONS:

- ✗ Users must sit closer to screen
- ✗ Not for severe symptoms

[Buy From Carex](#)

Though this unit is small and lightweight, it still emits the recommended 10,000 lux of light from up to 12 inches away. In addition to serving as a light therapy lamp, the Theralite Aura can also function as a task light that you can place on a desk. It has four brightness options, allowing you to choose the one that best suits the purpose you want it to fulfill.

At \$72.99, it's an affordable pick that you can get at popular retailers like Walmart and Amazon. It's worth noting that Carex, the brand that manufactures this device, says this model is best for those with moderate sunlight deprivation. The brand's Day-Light Classic Plus, on the other hand, is

meant for those with severe light deprivation. Thus, the Theralite is not intended to treat those with severe symptoms of SAD.

Specs:

List Price:	\$72.99
Screen Size:	11.5 in. x 8 in.
Distance for 10,000 Lux:	12 in.
Brightness Settings:	4

EXPAND LIST ▾

[Buy From Carex »](#)

Best Large

The SunBox Company SunSquare+ »



PROS:

- ✓ Allows for use during exercise
- ✓ Powerful
- ✓ Lifetime warranty

CONS:

- ✗ Pricey
- ✗ Obtrusive design

Buy From The SunBox Company

The SunSquare+ is a standalone floor lamp that allows users a broad range of motion. You can obtain the benefits of the unit from 27 inches away, which is much further than the proximity you need to be from most light therapy lamps. This means that you can use the Sunsquare+ while riding on an exercise bike or running or walking on a treadmill.

With large dimensions, the Sunsquare+ has a steep price tag to match, costing \$525 at full price. However, the SunBox Company offers customers a lifetime warranty on the product.

Specs:

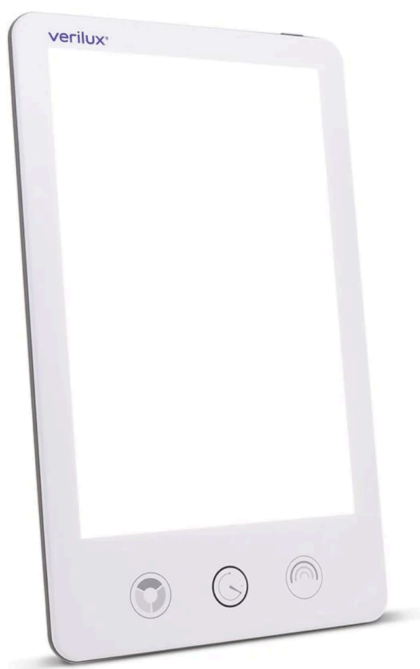
List Price:	\$525
Screen Size:	22 in. x 12 in.
Distance for 10,000 Lux:	27 in.
Brightness Settings:	2

EXPAND LIST ▾

Buy From The SunBox Company »

Best Portable

VeriLux HappyLight Luxe »



PROS:

- ✓ Lightweight and compact for travel
- ✓ Includes a timer and detachable stand
- ✓ Trendy design

CONS:

- ✗ Small screen size means limited range of motion for users
- ✗ Can't adjust height or tilt angle

[Buy From Amazon](#)

The HappyLight Luxe has the slim build of an electronic tablet, making it easy to tote around. It's available in three stylish colors: white, white marble, and champagne gold. Notably, it has a built-in timer, four brightness levels, and three color temperature options, all handy features for those seeking to personalize their light therapy experience.

Additionally, the HappyLight Luxe is reasonably priced at \$69.99. But, since this light box has smaller dimensions, users may have to sit closer to it in order to benefit from its 10,000 lux of light.

Specs:

List Price:	\$69.99
Screen Size:	11.73 in. x 7.48 in.
Distance for 10,000 Lux:	6-24 in.
Brightness Settings:	2

EXPAND LIST ▾

[Buy From Amazon »](#)

Best for Sleek Design

Northern Light Technologies Boxelite Desk La...



PROS:

CONS:

- ✔ Large light panel
- ✔ Seven-year warranty

✘ Lacks customizable features

Buy From Amazon

Despite its large size, the Northern Light Technologies Boxelite boasts a sleek design. It features just one button, making it easy to use. Additionally, it has a generous power cord length of eight feet and delivers the recommended 10,000 lux of light to individuals as far as 14 inches away. Reviewers say that this unit gives off a warm hue.

On the downside, you can't adjust the Boxelite's height, nor can you customize any other settings like the color temperature or brightness. It's also on the more expensive side at \$240, but it's backed by a seven-year warranty.

Specs:

List Price:	\$240
Screen Size:	12.25 in. x 15.25 in.
Distance for 10,000 Lux:	14 in.
Brightness Settings:	1

EXPAND LIST ▾

Buy From Amazon »

Best for Sturdiness

Alaskan Northern Lights Northstar »

**PROS:**

- ✓ Can mount horizontally or vertically to a wall
- ✓ Large enough for multiple people
- ✓ Seven-year warranty

CONS:

- ✗ Steep price tag
- ✗ Can't adjust brightness or warmth

[Buy From Amazon](#)

The Northstar's standout feature is its strong light output. It provides 10,000 lux of light to users as far away as 24 inches, making it a favorable option for those who want to keep a comfortable distance from their light box.

It can also be used by multiple people at the same time, and it comes with a glare filter. Rectangular in shape, you can position this device either vertically or horizontally and it has handles much like a briefcase.

It retails for \$447, a price tag that's heftier than most of the other light therapy lamps we've mentioned. But, its manufacturer, Alaskan Northern Lights, backs this product up with a seven-year warranty as long as you're the original purchaser.

Specs:

List Price:	\$334
Screen Size:	22 in. x 12 in.
Distance for 10,000 Lux:	24 in.
Brightness Settings:	1

EXPAND LIST ▾

[Buy From Amazon »](#)

The Bottom Line

When shopping for a light box to treat SAD or the milder winter blues, keep in mind that these devices aren’t regulated by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), so it’s important to review the specs carefully. Experts say that the most effective models filter out ultraviolet (UV) light and produce a brightness of 10,000 lux. Additionally, models with larger screens are best equipped to project the recommended 10,000 lux at a comfortable distance.

We chose the Carex Day-Light Classic Plus as our top recommendation because it’s backed by experts and features a large lamp face. It’s also relatively affordable, and users can adjust its height and angle.

Things To Consider When Buying Light Therapy Lamps

Light Intensity: [The National Institute of Mental Health](#) (NIMH) recommends using a lamp that provides at least 10,000 lux of light, which is comparable to a clear day outdoors. For reference, indoor lighting does not typically exceed 500 lux.

Ultraviolet Protection: It's important to find a device that filters UV light, as too much exposure to it can be harmful to the eyes and skin. Look for lamps that feature a screen to block out UV light.

Lamp Panel Size: When it comes to light boxes, bigger tends to be better. "It's easier to do light therapy comfortably with a larger light because you don't have to be as close to it and it's not like a spotlight in the eye," says Richard S. Schwartz, M.D., a psychiatrist at McLean Hospital in Belmont, Mass. and an associate professor of psychiatry at Harvard Medical School. The Center for Environmental Therapeutics (CET) urges shoppers to consider light boxes with screen sizes of at least 200 square inches (for example, 12 inches by 17 inches).

Devices with larger screens give you the flexibility to position the lamp further away from your face and use it for less time. With smaller light panels, you'd have to place the lamp closer and use it for a longer time to obtain the same benefits. "With smaller screens, even small head movements will reduce the 10,000 lux dose," says Michael Terman, Ph.D., president of the [CET](#).

However, those who travel or live in a small space may prefer a more compact device. Some may also opt to use two smaller lamps instead of one larger model.

Extra Features: Beyond just an on-off switch, some light therapy lamps have high-tech features like smart capabilities and wireless charging. There are also lamps on the market that come with built-in alarms and timers. More basic settings may include options to customize the brightness level, warmth, and the height and angle of the lamp. Consider which features may be a priority for you and which ones you can skip.

Returns: Check the return policy of the device. It's common for light therapy lamp manufacturers to accept returns up to several weeks or months from your purchase. "Most people with SAD who are going to respond to light therapy do so within a few weeks," Dr. Rosenthal writes in his book [Defeating SAD \(Seasonal Affective Disorder\): A Guide to Health and Happiness Through All Seasons](#). If you're not noticing results after this period, see if you can return the lamp.

The Best Ways To Find Deals on Light Therapy Lamps

While it's a niche category, there are several stores to check out if you're looking for a good deal on a light therapy lamp. We found several good deals on [Carex](#), which we featured in this list, with discounts of up to \$20 off. You can also find a large number of discounts on [Amazon](#), some of which you can get by clicking a coupon checkbox below the price on the product pages of select light therapy lamps. [Target](#) also offers a variety of these products, with a 5% discount available to RedCard holders. Just note that Target mixes these offers with normal lamps and that not all models are sold in stores. Other stores that offer competitive discounts are [Best Buy](#) and [Walmart](#).

How We Chose the Best Light Therapy Lamps

At U.S. News 360 Reviews, our editor consulted with numerous experts, including [Norman E. Rosenthal, M.D.](#), clinical professor of psychiatry at [Georgetown University Medical School](#), [Michael Terman, Ph.D.](#), the president of the Center for Environmental Therapeutics (CET), [Richard Schwartz, M.D.](#), a psychiatrist at McClean Hospital and an associate professor of psychiatry at Harvard Medical School, and [Eric C. Alcera, M.D.](#), Associate Physician-in-Chief at Hackensack Meridian Behavioral Health. All of the Best Light Therapy Lamps we chose offer UV protection and have a light intensity of 10,000 lux, the clinical criterion for effective light therapy lamps.

WHY SHOULD YOU TRUST US?

At 360 Reviews, our contributors and editors have years of experience researching, testing, and reviewing products. [Marlo Jappen Porto](#), the author of this piece, is an editor for U.S. News 360 Reviews, focusing on home goods. Prior to joining the team, she was a researcher at NBCUniversal, where she gathered compelling and relevant archival content for live broadcasts. In addition, she has spent years working as an editor and community journalist.

FAQs

Are light therapy lamps effective at treating SAD?

+

Can I benefit from light therapy lamps if I don't have SAD?

+

How do light therapy lamps work?

+

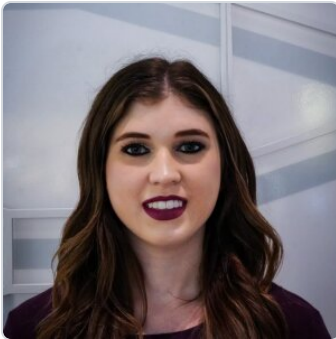
How do you use a light therapy lamp?

+

Are light therapy lamps safe?

+

About Our Team



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Marlo Jappen Porto is a former editor for U.S. News 360 Reviews, focusing on home goods. Prior to joining the team, she was a researcher at NBCUniversal, where she gathered compelling and relevant archival content for live broadcasts. In addition, she has spent years working as an editor and community journalist.

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