Sunlight, or direct rays from the sun, is strong in both temperature and color. When it is not diffused or blocked, sunlight causes glare and overheating. This is of special concern in classrooms and areas where workers perform critical tasks. Daylight, or diffuse natural light, is soft and cool, both in temperature and color. Daylighting creates a visually stimulating and productive environment for building occupants.

In order for direct sunlight to be useful, it should be diffused and reflected around the room. When designing residential, commercial or learning spaces, keep the following natural daylighting guidelines in mind:

- Provide windows to all occupied rooms
- Locate windows to enhance interior space
- Provide balanced lighting to avoid unnecessary glare
- Place windows to diffuse direct sunlight
- Use reflective surfaces to increase daylight distribution
- Reduce glare from low sun east and west facing windows
• Use translucent glazing to diffuse direct sunlight
• Consider installing shutters to block midday sun
• Use light pipes to direct bright diffused sunlight into dark areas
• Use landscape elements to block low direct sunlight
• Use light from the north to provide less variable, diffuse illumination