

## Image Generation / Product Photography

Categorize lighting styles by product type — matches lighting to product category for professional results.

Difficulty: Intermediate

Model: GPT-4 / Claude / Gemini

Use Case: Lighting Selection, Product Photography

Updated: May 2026

Why This Prompt Exists

Lighting makes or breaks product photography. The wrong lighting hides texture, creates unflattering shadows, or makes products look cheap — even if the product itself is high-end.

You get:

- jewelry with harsh shadows that hide details (needs soft, diffused light)
- glassware with no reflections (needs rim lighting to show shape)
- food that looks unappetizing (needs warm, directional light)
- apparel with flat, lifeless fabric (needs side lighting for texture)
- electronics with glare that obscures screens (needs polarized or diffused light)

But lighting styles have specific applications:

- softbox/studio: soft, even light — good for most products
- rim/backlight: light from behind — good for glass, liquids, silhouettes
- natural window light: soft, directional — good for lifestyle, organic products

- hard light: dramatic shadows — good for masculine, edgy brands
- product tent: diffused, shadowless — good for small, reflective items

Without classification, lighting choices are random.

This prompt matches lighting styles to product types.

The Prompt

Assume the role of a product photography lighting specialist.

Your task is to recommend lighting setups based on product type.

Generate:

## 1. LIGHTING STYLE CLASSIFICATION

Lighting Type	Description	Best For	Avoid For
Softbox/Studio	Soft, even, minimal shadows	Most products, apparel, cosmetics	Reflective metal, glass
Rim/Backlight	Light from behind, creates outline	Glassware, liquids, silhouettes	Matte products, textured items
Natural window	Soft directional light	Lifestyle, organic, food	Industrial, tech products
Hard light	Dramatic shadows, high contrast	Edgy brands, masculine products	Feminine, soft brands
Product tent	Fully diffused, shadowless	Jewelry, small reflective items	Large products, textured items
Three-point	Key, fill, rim lights	Professional studio look	

Quick, casual photography |

## 2. PRODUCT CATEGORY TO LIGHTING MAP

Product Category	Recommended Lighting	Rationale
Jewelry	Product tent + rim	Eliminates reflections, shows sparkle
Apparel	Softbox (45-degree angle)	Shows fabric texture without harsh shadows
Electronics	Softbox + polarized	Reduces glare on screens
Food	Natural window + reflector	Warm, appetizing, directional
Glassware	Rim/backlight on black	Shows shape, transparency
Shoes	Softbox + fill from below	Even lighting, shows sole
Furniture	Softbox + natural fill	Large items need broad, soft light
Cosmetics	Product tent + soft top light	Even, shadowless, clean

## 3. LIGHTING PROMPT TEMPLATES

**\*\*Softbox lighting:\*\***

`[Product description] photographed with professional softbox lighting, soft even light, minimal shadows, clean white background, product photography, high resolution`

**\*\*Rim lighting (glassware):\*\***

`[Product description] photographed with rim lighting from behind, dark background, light outlining the edges, dramatic, professional`

product photography`

**\*\*Natural window light:\*\***

`[Product description] photographed in natural window light, soft directional light, warm tones, lifestyle product photography`

**\*\*Product tent (jewelry):\*\***

`[Product description] photographed in a product light tent, fully diffused lighting, no reflections, clean white background, macro product photography`

#### 4. LIGHTING MODIFIERS

Modifier	Effect	When to Use
Softbox	Softens light, reduces shadows	Most products
Reflector	Bounces light, fills shadows	Apparel, food
Diffuser	Spreads light evenly	Reflective items
Grid	Focuses light, reduces spill	Dramatic shots
Polarizer	Reduces glare	Electronics, glass

#### 5. COMMON LIGHTING MISTAKES BY PRODUCT

Product	Common Mistake	Correct Approach
Jewelry	Harsh direct light	Soft diffused tent lighting
Glassware	Front lighting	Rim lighting from behind
Food	Flat, overhead light	Side light from window angle
Electronics	Glare on screen	Polarized or diffused light

| Apparel | Flat front light | 45-degree angle for texture |

## INPUTS:

Product type:

[E.G., "Silver necklace with gemstones"]

Product material(s):

[E.G., "Metal, glass, stone, fabric"]

Brand aesthetic:

[E.G., "Luxury, minimal, edgy, natural"]

Background preference:

[WHITE / BLACK / LIFESTYLE / CONTEXTUAL / COLORED]

## RULES:

- Reflective products (jewelry, glass, metal) need diffused or rim lighting
- Textured products (apparel, furniture) need directional light at an angle
- Flat products (cosmetics, electronics) need soft, even light to avoid glare
- Food needs warm, natural-looking light (cool light looks unappetizing)
- Rim lighting works best on dark backgrounds (creates contrast)
- Product tents eliminate reflections but flatten texture (trade-off)
- Test multiple lighting angles before finalizing (5 degrees changes everything)

## How To Use It

- Reflective products (jewelry, glass, metal) need diffused or rim lighting — direct light creates hotspots.
- Textured products (apparel, furniture) need directional light at an angle — flat light hides texture.
- Flat products (cosmetics, electronics) need soft, even light to avoid glare.
- Food needs warm, natural-looking light — cool light looks unappetizing.
- Rim lighting works best on dark backgrounds — the contrast shows the outline.
- Product tents eliminate reflections but flatten texture — trade-off between reflection control and detail.
- Test multiple lighting angles before finalizing — moving the light 5 degrees changes everything.

## Example Input

### **Product type:**

“Crystal whiskey decanter with cut glass pattern”

### **Product material(s):**

“Lead crystal glass, metal stopper”

### **Brand aesthetic:**

“Luxury, sophisticated, heritage”

### **Background preference:**

“BLACK”

## Why It Works

Most product photography uses one lighting setup for everything — resulting in jewelry that looks flat, glass that has no shape, and food that looks unappetizing.

This framework improves outcomes by forcing:

- lighting style classification (softbox, rim, natural, hard, tent, three-point)
- product-to-lighting mapping (which lighting for which product)
- prompt template generation (ready-to-use lighting descriptions)
- modifier identification (softbox, reflector, diffuser, grid, polarizer)
- mistake prevention (what commonly goes wrong)

**Failure modes this prevents:**

- Jewelry with harsh reflections (needs diffused tent lighting)
- Glassware with no visible shape (needs rim lighting)
- Food that looks cold and unappetizing (needs warm window light)
- Electronics with glare on screens (needs polarized or diffused light)

**This improves on:** Generic “professional lighting” prompts. Specific lighting setups produce category-appropriate results.

**Related to:** PP-02 (Angle) for camera positioning; PP-03 (Background) for environment matching.

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