

Energy Efficient Lighting



Due to the huge improvements in product performance energy efficient lighting has now become mainstream.

Older non energy efficient lighting is being phased out and 2016 saw the latest leg of the EU's light bulb phase-out, meaning the end for halogen spotlights. Next year, non-directional halogens will be phased out.

LEDs lead the way

So what's the best replacement for the older bulbs? In most cases the clear winner is the LED.

Compact Fluorescent Light bulbs, (CFLs) were the first energy efficient bulbs on the market. Although models are much better than they were 10 years ago, LEDs have developed much more quickly than expected and can generally offer the best efficiency, measured in lumens per Watt, offer greater flexibility and there is not much difference in price!

Halogens vs. LEDs: the facts

The potential long-term advantages of switching to LEDs are also considerable. With the current focus being on replacing halogens, here are some comparisons:

- Due to the superior all-round performance of LEDs a 50 Watt (W) halogen spotlight can be replaced with just a 5 Watt LED.
- A 5W LED light will cost you around 70p a year to run compared to £7 for a 50W halogen.
- The average running costs of an LED, equivalent to a 75W old bulb will be around £1.60 annually, compared to £7.31 for a halogen replacement.
- LEDs also last for up to 25 years, compared to around 2 years for halogens. This means that over the lifetime of a bulb, the on-going cost savings really will add up.

- LED spotlights now only cost around £5. LEDs in the classic lamp shape, for non-directional use, still cost a bit more than halogens, but you can now get good-quality bulbs for £6-10 that will pay for themselves within 2 years.

Fit for purpose

These days there are few limits to where you can use LEDs to replace halogens, CFLs and incandescent bulbs. You can get LEDs for all types of spotlights, lamps and integrated light fittings.

There are LED replacements for both the traditional bayonet bulbs and the Edison screw fittings. Fittings with two pins (GU10, usually for mains voltage spots and GU5.3 for operating at low voltages) are also very common, particularly for spotlights.

There is increasingly much greater compatibility with dimmers across all types of low energy lighting including LEDs. It's worth checking compatibility, however, with the kind of dimmer you've got.

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