



Home Tips



• CHRISTIAN BUILDING INSPECTORS, INC., 3697 HABERSHAM LANE, DULUTH, GEORGIA 30096, 770-849-0920 • FEBRUARY 2017 •

Q & A

How To Choose LED Light Bulbs

Shopped for light bulbs lately? If you have, you may have noticed that most bulbs sold now are LED (light emitting diode) bulbs. Old-fashioned incandescents have all but vanished from store shelves, and the popularity of CFL (compact fluorescent light) bulbs is on the wane. That's because, although they're more energy efficient than incandescents, CFLs just can't compete with the energy efficiency and light quality of LED bulbs. And,



while you're lucky to get two to five years of life from a CFL bulb, LED bulbs can last 20 years or more. But trying to figure out which LED bulbs to buy can lead to a lot of head scratching. Here's what you need to know before you shop.

Read the Label

Most of the information you need to pick the right LED light bulb is right there on the packaging, but you won't find it on the front. Look for the Lighting Facts label on the back or side of the packaging, and pay particular attention to two terms: "Brightness" and "Light Appearance."

Lighting Facts Per Bulb	
Brightness	750 lumens
Estimated Yearly Energy Cost	\$1.26
Based on 3 hrs/day, 11¢/kWh Cost depends on rates and use	
Life	22.8 years
Based on 3 hrs/day	
Light Appearance	Warm ————— Cool
3000 K	
Energy Used	10.5 watts

Brightness: Forget Watts - Think Lumens

Gone are the days when the wattage on a light bulb package tells you how bright it is. When shopping for an LED bulb, look for the number of lumens directly across from "Brightness" on the Lighting Facts label. Wattage equivalents, usually on the front of the package, are only meant to get you in the ballpark. If you're replacing a 100-watt incandescent bulb, you'll want an LED that produces about 1,600 lumens. A replacement for a 40-watt incandescent bulb should produce about 450 lumens.

CHOOSE YOUR BRIGHTNESS

INCANDESCENT BULBS	LED EQUIVALENT
100 WATTS	1,600 LUMENS
75 WATTS	1,100 LUMENS
60 WATTS	800 LUMENS
40 WATTS	450 LUMENS

SOURCE: DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Light Appearance: Choose Warm or Cool to Suit Your Use

"Light Appearance" on the Lighting Facts label refers to color temperature, which is measured as Kelvin (K). For table lamps or living room light fixtures, choose a bulb of about 2,700 to 3,000 K to get a warm light similar to the light from older incandescent light bulbs. For task lighting in places like workshops and laundry rooms, pick a bulb of about 5,000 K for cooler, bluish light that looks more like natural daylight.



Enclosed Fixtures Need Special Bulbs

Some LED light bulbs can last for decades, but only if the heat they generate has a way to dissipate. If it can't, heat will damage the electronics inside the bulb and it will fail prematurely. If you need to buy a bulb for a fully enclosed fixture, read the packaging carefully to make sure it's approved for that use. Bulbs made for enclosed fixtures have a

more efficient thermal design and are manufactured using components that will withstand higher temperatures.



Choose Dimmers and Bulbs that are Compatible

Many LED bulbs are dimmable, but older dimmer switches were designed for use with incandescent bulbs and some won't work with LEDs. If you're unsure about your dimmer switch, visit light bulb manufacturer websites for lists of compatible dimmers.

Where Won't They Work

Don't ever put an LED bulb inside an oven; stick with old-fashioned incandescent "appliance bulbs" for that use. The heat from an oven will kill an LED bulb in short order. You can get LED appliance bulbs, but they're made for refrigerators and freezers and can be hard to find locally, so you may have to search for them online. An LED bulb in a fridge or freezer won't save you much money anyway because it's on for only a few seconds at a time (yes, they do actually turn off when you close the door).

LED bulbs can also interfere with remote controls that operate garage door openers. Many garage door opener manufacturers have lists of compatible LED bulbs on their website. If in doubt, choose vibration-resistant or "rough service" incandescent bulbs.

Options for Recessed Lights

You have a couple of options for retrofitting recessed "can" fixtures with LEDs. One is just to swap out your existing bulbs with LED bulbs. The other is to replace them with LED retrofit trim kits (\$12 to \$55). No need for separate bulbs with these kits; they're built in. Some kits can make older recessed cans airtight, preventing conditioned air in your house from escaping into the attic (if you can see open slots inside the can, it's not airtight).

Source www.familyhandyman.com September 2016

If you have a question, comment, or home tip, send it to us at rod@cbiga.com. We reserve the right to edit published questions for length.

Thought For The Month

WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME YOU GAVE
A 30 SECOND KISS?

A Tip Of The Hat To:

Joanna Singleton

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**** *Thank You* ****

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