

# 50plus Handyman



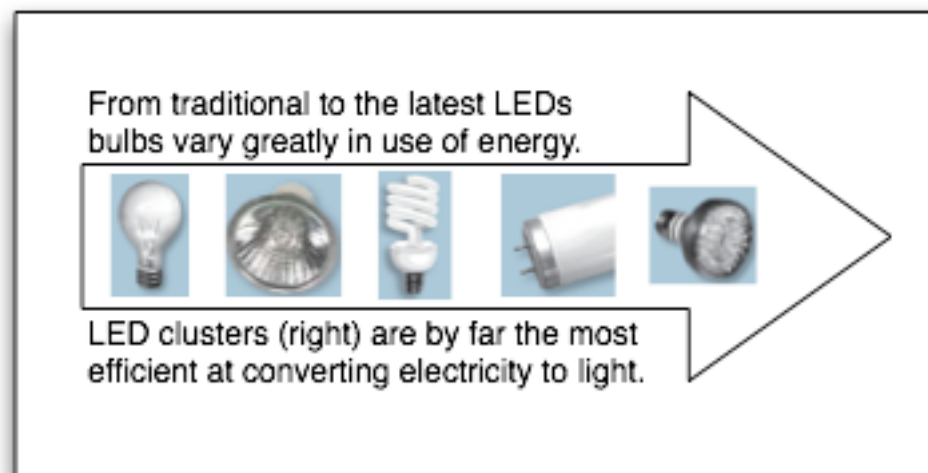
## Additional Lighting?

50plus Handyman's Roger Runswick looks at upgrading lighting

Expectations with regard to lighting have changed tremendously in recent years. Gone are the days of dim rooms and dark corners. We expect bright lights and well-illuminated rooms. So how does one upgrade lighting?

Do think in terms of using halogen or LED lights in addition to the 'normal' lighting, particularly in work areas such as kitchens. Don't just change out 'standard' ceiling roses (that the round fitting with the dangling wire) for halogen or recessed fittings. Halogen lights are very popular, look attractive and are good at providing illumination for specific areas but they are not good at providing general purpose or background lighting.

To minimise power bills (and be a green citizen) select energy efficient lighting. Domestic lighting comes in 5 types: incandescent, halogen, compact fluorescent, linear fluorescent and LED, varying from around 2% to 23% in terms of efficiency at converting electricity to useful light.



If you are thinking of a metallic light fitting and your house is pre 1970 check out the existing cabling or ask an electrician before purchasing. There are still a lot of older houses with no 'earth' cable on the lighting circuit. The way to find out is to turn off the power, unscrew a ceiling rose and look for a green or green/yellow sleeved wire (or in even older properties bare copper). If there isn't one and only black and reds (or blue and browns) then you cannot fit a light that is made of metal. If you are desperate for that particular fitting then an earth cable will need to be run to the lighting point; relatively easy in bedrooms of houses but not so simple downstairs or in flats.

If you are changing a fitting yourself do remember many 'feature' lights come with a simple connector for one cable and the typical ceiling rose is used as a junction box for 3 or more cables. If in doubt call an electrician to do the fitting. It's usually about an hour's work.

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