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## Simple but useful

50plus director Roger Runswick investigates some simple but useful convenience items for your home just a little outside the DIY category.

### The remote water switch



Finding the stop cock when you have a leak often results in either a call to an emergency plumber or a good deal of less than lady like language. And older people often can't turn a stop cock. A remote water switch is the answer. This provides an 'on-off' switch for your water very similar to a light switch. It enables water for the entire house or perhaps just an outside tap or annex to be turned off at literally the flick of a easy to reach switch - so no more hard to turn out of reach stop cocks to access. The standard stop cock is retained. Installed price circa £98 assuming your stop cock works and is accessible!

### The PIR bathroom light



PIR bathroom lights get round the (particularly teen) 'you haven't turned the light in the bathroom/loo' off syndrome, a particular annoyance if there's an extractor fan on the same circuit droning on and on. Internal PIRs typically use a ceiling detector, which can often be installed near the light itself. The standard light switch or pull cord is retained or replaced with a neon indicator ('just to remind you not to use it dear'). Installed price circa £87. Modern PIRs work with both incandescent and fluorescent (energy saving) bulbs. PIRs can also be used in hallways and other locations. Most include dusk/dawn and time on settings.

### The programmable central heating thermostat



Modern technology has enabled the humble central heating thermostat to be replaced with a programmable unit allowing automatic temperature changes by time of day. So if you need to wake up in the morn and have a warm house, switch to background heating during the day and have a warm house to come back a programmable thermostat is the answer. Installed price for a model that replaces your existing thermostat from around £95 installed. Wireless models allowing a thermostat to be easily re-sighted or a portable controller used from around £200 installed.

*Roger Runswick is a director of 50plus and a member of the Institute of Engineering technology. He can be contacted at [roger.runswick@the50plus.co.uk](mailto:roger.runswick@the50plus.co.uk). Prices as of June 2010.*