

Ecoled downlights are combined with Ecoled's **Meg Flat 1W LEDs** under shelves for streamlined impact, costing around £1,200.



BUYER'S GUIDE TO...

# LED LIGHTING

*Stylish designs that also save energy mean the future is brighter than ever for LEDs*

WORDS • CHRIS HASLAM

**Y**ou might find a few dusty bulbs at the back of a hardware store, but since September, old-style incandescent bulbs are officially no longer available. The most obvious successors are compact fluorescent lamps, or CFL bulbs – the squiggly white ones that have gradually edged old-fashioned bulbs off the shelves. Though they do save on energy, CFL bulbs take a while to warm up, don't always look great, and can give out a cold, flat, blue light.

But, thankfully, lighting technology has moved on, and experts are predicting a more viable, long-term alternative lies with LED lights (see overleaf for the techie lowdown). As specialist designer Jake Dyson explains, 'LEDs are energy-efficient,

very compact and, unlike CFL bulbs, they do not contain any potentially harmful substances.'

Although initially written off as being too expensive and offering poor quality light, LEDs have changed significantly. While they are more pricey than CFL bulbs – expect to pay from £9 up to £30 for a single LED bulb – they consume very little energy and should last for decades, so will more than pay for themselves in just a few years. In addition, the quality of LED light has improved vastly: rather than just clinical spotlights, there is now an enticing range of colours and tones available.

So, given the advantages of LEDs, how do you introduce them into your home? In some instances, installation can be as simple as changing a light

bulb. 'Standard 40W, 60W and 100W bulbs can be replaced directly with LED bulbs, which come in similar shapes, sizes and light outputs, and are available with all fittings,' explains Doug Vears, technical director at Energenie. 'You can also buy decorative LED bulbs, such as golf-ball, flame and pear shapes, as well as dimmable spotlights.' Bear in mind that although LED bulbs will work in regular lamps, they won't function as efficiently as they would in those made specifically for LED bulbs.

If you're redecorating, consider integrating LED spots, strips or tiny bulbs in shelves, stairs, cupboards and drawers to illuminate a room or add decorative interest to a scheme. For a host of LED options suitable for every room, read on...

PHOTOGRAPHY SIMON MAXWELL PHOTOGRAPHY LEAD INTERIOR DESIGNER CASEY & FOX





**WHAT ARE LEDS?**

- LED stands for light emitting diode, and light is produced by electrons moving in a semiconductor. As there is no filament, they are longer lasting, contain no harmful substances and generate very little heat.
- They use a fraction of the energy of a traditional incandescent bulb – as much as 80 per cent less – and significantly less than CFLs.
- They come with energy ratings from A to G, with A being the most efficient.
- Unlike CFL bulbs, they reach their full power almost immediately.
- Bulbs last at least 30,000 to 50,000 hours (40,000 hours is 12.5 years), compared with 10,000 to 12,000 hours for the best CFL bulbs. Some designs are expected to last up to 25 years.
- Although initially more expensive, replacing an old-style 25W incandescent bulb with a 4W LED could potentially save you around £110 over five years.



Sian Baxter Lighting Design set **dimmable linear LEDs**, £35-40 per m, behind frosted-glass doors.

**BATHROOM**

- ✦ LEDs are ideal for tasks such as applying make-up, and illuminated mirrors are increasingly popular. 'Most light sources flow down from the ceiling and therefore cast shadows, whereas LED-lit mirrors illuminate the face more accurately,' explains Jennifer Whittaker at Better Bathrooms.
- ✦ For accent lighting, LED downlighters can highlight the back of a shower or illuminate niches. Strip LEDs can be used to great effect under vanity units or to highlight shower trays.

✦ Shower heads, cubicles and baths now come with built-in colour-changing LEDs, used for mood-enhancing chromatherapy.



**Darling New bath**, £2,650, Duravit, comes with optional built-in LEDs.

✦ Make sure you specify IP-rated LED bulbs for wet areas. IP44 are splash-proof, IP65 are shower-proof and IP68 are submersible.



Back-lit glass shelves and glass-fronted cabinet with **LED lighting in Cool Blue**, from £900, Neil Lerner.

**KITCHEN**

- ✦ 'LEDs come into their own in the kitchen, as both task and feature lighting,' says Adrian Stoneham at Stoneham Kitchens. 'They can easily be fitted under existing cupboards, or integrated into new units.' Use them as task lights under wall cabinets to illuminate a work surface, inside units to create a mood, or set into splashbacks for overall ambience.
- ✦ Another advantage of LEDs is that, unlike halogen lights, they won't overheat and add to the temperature of the room. This is especially welcome in areas prone to getting hot and steamy.



**Square LED plinth lights**, £39 each, enhance the Knox, Wren Kitchens.

✦ 'Cool white lighting complements contemporary, glossy kitchens perfectly,' says Michael Linsky at Sensio Lighting, 'while warm-hued LEDs highlight the grain and colour of timber.'



Livingetc **LOVES**

Best for statement **CSYS floor light**, price on application, Jake Dyson.

Best for impact **PS2012 pendant**, £115, Ikea.



Best for a bare bulb **Crystal bulbs**, £109 each, Lee Broom.



Best for retro **Anglepoise**, £200, John Lewis.



Best for a design classic **Arco**, £1,550, Flos.



Best for outdoors **Beam Two wall light**, £60, Heal's.



**8 OF THE BEST LED LIGHTS**



DesignSHOPPING



An **Oslo spotlight**, £106, is combined with a tiny **Cama reading light**, £290; both John Cullen Lighting.

**BEDROOM**

✦ The directional nature of LED light makes it ideal for angled bedside reading lamps, while spotlights are perfect for illuminating decorative items on shelves. It's also possible to use multiple bulbs or modify a light with deflectors to create a wider beam for use as ambient room lighting.

✦ Wall-mounted LED designs are especially suited to the bedroom and can be used to wash a wall in light, which creates a stylish, boutique-hotel feel.

✦ Furniture manufacturers are also embracing LED technology in the form of illuminated drawers, and



Osram's **Cuby**, £19.99, Amazon, adds star quality to a wardrobe.

interior lights for cupboards, which give a high-end look and create the feel of a walk-in wardrobe without the need for vast amounts of space. Ask an electrician about adding LEDs to an existing wardrobe or drawers.



Discreet, adjustable **LED downlights** provide a great tool for lighting art. From £75 each, Light IQ.

**LIVING ROOM**

✦ From the theatrical to the practical, LED lighting can transform the mood of your living areas at the flick of a switch. Designer lamps such as the timeless Flos Arcò have now been brought up to date with LED fittings. For maximum flexibility, combine freestanding lamps with subtle downlights and discreet accents, such as LED strips on bookshelves, to create a warm ambience.

✦ 'In the past, the light from LEDs was very cool, but now warmer whites are available, and are perfect for replacing low-voltage step lights and uplights,' says Sally Storey at John Cullen Lighting. 'Remember



**Contour LED**, £146 per m, John Cullen Lighting, backlights shelving

that, unlike incandescent bulbs, LEDs don't give off a "warmer" or softer light when dimmed. Instead, to create mood, try using a variety of subtly coloured LEDs in various forms, from table lamps to spotlights.'

**SOURCE BOOK**

**LIGHTING DESIGN**

- Association of Lighting Designers [ald.org.uk](http://ald.org.uk)
- John Cullen Lighting [johncullenlighting.co.uk](http://johncullenlighting.co.uk)
- Light IQ [lightiq.com](http://lightiq.com)
- Sian Baxter Lighting Design [sianbaxterlighting.com](http://sianbaxterlighting.com)

**SUPPLIERS/DESIGNERS**

- Ace Lamps [deslamps.co.uk](http://deslamps.co.uk)
- Amazon [amazon.co.uk](http://amazon.co.uk)
- Astro Lighting [astrolighting.co.uk](http://astrolighting.co.uk)
- Chaplins [chaplins.co.uk](http://chaplins.co.uk)
- Ecoled [ecoledlight.co.uk](http://ecoledlight.co.uk)
- Energenie [energenie4u.co.uk](http://energenie4u.co.uk)
- Flos [flos.com](http://flos.com)
- Heal's [heals.co.uk](http://heals.co.uk)
- Ikea [ikea.com](http://ikea.com)
- Jake Dyson [jakedyson.com](http://jakedyson.com)
- John Lewis [johnlewis.com](http://johnlewis.com)
- Lee Broom [leebroom.com](http://leebroom.com)

**KITCHEN/BATHROOM LIGHTING**

- Better Bathrooms [betterbathrooms.com](http://betterbathrooms.com)
- Duravit [duravit.com](http://duravit.com)
- Neil Lerner [neillerner.com](http://neillerner.com)
- Stoneham Kitchens [stoneham-kitchens.co.uk](http://stoneham-kitchens.co.uk)
- Wren Kitchens [wrenkitchens.com](http://wrenkitchens.com)



Bulb options: this **halogen replacement** (above), £13.50, Energenie, is dimmable, while the **Toshiba Flamme** (right), £13, Amazon, lasts up to 10 years.

Best for directional  
**Switched**, £85, Fosso at  
Astro Lighting.



Best for portable  
**Falling in Love Sphere**, £265, Chaplins.

**HOW TO CHOOSE THE RIGHT WATTAGE**

✦ LEDs are more efficient than all old-style bulbs, so you don't need to choose such a high wattage. NB: All bulbs are now classified in lumens (lm) instead of watts (W), but

until we're all thinking in lumens, as a rough guide multiply the number of watts of an old-style incandescent bulb by 10 to get the approximate number of lumen you'll need.

LED	CFL	Halogen	Incandescent	Approx lumen range
7W	9-13W	35-40W	40W	380-450lm
9-10W	13-15W	45-50W	60W	500-800lm
12W	18-23W	60W	75W	1,100lm
15W	25-30W	70W	100W	1,500lm