

Changing a Light Bulb

Safety

Before changing a light bulb in a light fixture, turn off the power to the light source. Changing a light bulb with the power on is a shock hazard. Wear safety glasses to prevent dust or small particles from getting in your eyes. Use a ladder to reach the fixture.

Make sure the ladder is locked and secure, and wear solid sole, non-slip shoes. Don't rush when climbing up and down—take your time. If you need help replacing the bulb, ask a friend or family member.

Using higher wattage light bulbs in lower wattage lamps can be hazardous. For example, inserting a 60-watt in a 40-watt lamp can make the light bulb overheat, causing the light socket and the wire insulation to melt, and this can result in a fire.

If you can't tell if the light is turned off, use a light-detecting device. This device will give an alerting sound indicating the light is on. The higher the sound, the higher the intensity of the light. Most color indicator devices have a light detector feature, too. There are also smartphone apps, such as Seeing AI, that can be used as light detectors.



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When replacing the bulb of a lamp, first turn off the lamp and unplug it. If you're replacing the bulbs of flashlights and other portable lighting, remove the batteries first, and then replace the bulb.

Some types of bulbs, like halogens, give off an intense amount of heat, so let the bulb cool before touching it.

Replacing Bulbs

Gently but firmly, turn the light bulb counter-clockwise. Or push the light bulb upward into the socket, gently twisting it counter-clockwise to remove it. You'll feel the bulb easing out of the socket.

Use your sense of touch when inserting the replacement bulb. With one hand, feel for the opening where the bulb will be inserted. With your other hand, align the replacement bulb with the opening. Then, gently but firmly, turn it clockwise until it locks into the socket. Turn on the power. If you have difficulty seeing light, use a light detector.

Dispose of the old bulb immediately. This way, you won't accidentally step on it, and it won't fall and break or shatter. Wrap the old light bulb in newspaper or plastic, like bubble wrap. Then throw it in the household trash bin. Fluorescent light bulbs contain a small amount of mercury, however, so recycle them if at all possible.