



# Which Compact Fluorescent Light Bulb is Right for you?

With increased talk about global warming and high energy consumption, consumers have started taking proactive steps to reduce their carbon footprint. One of the simplest and perhaps most inexpensive measures that an individual can invest in are compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs). Unlike a few years ago there are so many varieties of CFLs on the market it can be hard for a consumer to figure out which one will fit their specific needs. To assist with sorting through the different light bulbs, the Office of the People's Counsel has prepared: **The Compact Fluorescent Light Bulb Buying Guide.**

**1. CFLs measure brightness in lumens, not watts like Incandescent Bulbs.** In general, a CFL's wattage should be one-quarter of the incandescent bulb you are replacing, in order to provide the output of light you are use to. In general CFLs produce more light and incandescent bulbs produce more heat than light. The chart below was created by Environmental Defense to assist consumers with the conversion:

Incandescent Bulb	CFL	Lumens	Lifetime Savings	CO <sub>2</sub> Savings
30-40 watt	11 watt	>490	\$13-\$15	507-572 lbs.
60 watt	15watt	>900	\$20-\$25	806-884 lbs.
75 watt	20 watt	>1,200	\$25-\$30	988-1,079 lbs.
90-100 watt	23-29 watt	>1,750	\$35-\$40	1,391-1,456 lbs.
12 watt	30 watt	>2,600	\$40-\$65	2,199-2,197 lbs.
30/70/100 watt	11/18/23 watt 3-way		\$13-\$40	
50/100/150 watt	13/23/34 watt 3-way		\$15-\$65	

**2. Choose the correct Correlated Color Temperature (CCT) and Color Rendering Index (CRI).** A light bulb's CCT and CRI represent its ability to show colors realistically. CRI scales range from 0 to 100, for good CFL color quality you should look for a CRI of at least 80. The following CCT measurements reflects the color produced by the CFL:

- 2650-3000 K - warm white (yellowish white)
- 3200-4000 K - neutral
- Above 4000 K - bluish-white, also known as "daylight"

*\*\*Kelvin scale refers to absolute temperature\*\**

**3. Check the shape of the CFL and its ballast** (the part between the glass and the screw-in part of the bulb). Often times this part can be slightly larger on a CFL than an incandescent. It is important to look at your lamp shade and socket to ensure it can accommodate the CFL.

4. **CFLs come in a number of different shapes and types.** Ensure you get the bulb that best fits your needs. The following are a few examples of the types of CFLs on the market:



**3-Way/Dimming CFL**

**Use:** Three-way lamp, and ceiling fixtures

**Potential Savings:** \$83 or 1,182 lbs. CO<sub>2</sub>

*\*When using CFLs in dimmer-controlled fixtures, make sure they are specifically designed for that task.\**



**A-line CFL**

**Use:** Desk, Bedside, or Reading Lamps and Kitchen Fixtures

**Potential Savings:** \$45-\$56 or 516 to 871 lbs. CO<sub>2</sub>



**Reflectors/Floodlight CFL**

**Use:** Track Lighting, Recessed Fixtures, Outside Patio

**Potential Savings:** \$57, 798 lbs. CO<sub>2</sub>

5. **Check for the Energy Star Label**, in order to ensure you get the most energy-efficient CFL and truly maximize your savings.
6. **Proper handling of burned-out CFLs is important** because they contain a small amount of mercury and can pose potential hazard risks. If you must dispose of a CFL yourself, use disposable rubber gloves, wipe the area with a damp cloth (never use a vacuum cleaner) and place the bulb in two plastic sealed bags prior to placing them in outside trash receptacles.
- In the District of Columbia**, Eco-Green Living is implementing a collection program to accept CFLs for recycling. CFLs can now be taken to the store located at 1469 Church Street, NW on Monday-Saturday (hours: 11:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m.). For additional information, please call: (202) 234-7110. Also retailers such as IKEA recycle CFLs.