

## Around the House

### Electrical Article #13 – Incandescent & Compact Fluorescent Bulbs

#### **Headline**

Quick, who invented the light bulb? Thomas Edison, you say? A very popular answer, to be sure. But not the right one!

#### **Subhead**

Can you name the most energy-efficient light bulb? The answer might just surprise you, as will the amount of money you can save by getting rid of your incandescent bulbs!

#### **Text**

The amount of light given off by a light bulb is measured in **lumens**. One lumen is the equivalent of the light given off by one candle. A watt, on the other hand, is the amount of electricity a light bulb uses to produce light.

That's an important distinction, because **a new 13-watt compact fluorescent light bulb produces as much light (or, as many lumens) as a traditional 60-watt incandescent bulb**. As much light, and yet it uses *only one-quarter* of the electrical energy!

And now that we have your attention...

### **Incandescents: The usual suspects.**

Thomas Edison, while credited with the invention of the incandescent light bulb, was actually beaten to the punch by **Sir Joseph Wilson Swan**, an English physicist and electrician. Swan produced his **first experimental light bulb in 1860** using carbonized paper as a filament. Unfortunately, he didn't achieve complete incandescence, so he turned his attention to other pursuits.

More to the point, **90% percent of the energy produced by incandescent bulbs is heat**, not light...and that makes them highly inefficient light sources.

While regular incandescent bulbs usually last between 750 to 1,000 hours before burning out, some long-life bulbs last up to 2,500 hours, but are even less energy efficient than traditional incandescent bulbs.

### **Next Up: Compact Fluorescent Bulbs.**

In the mid-1980's, compact fluorescent light bulbs were introduced as an alternative to both traditional fluorescents and incandescent models.

**Compact fluorescents run far more quietly than traditional fluorescent bulbs, and can be screwed into incandescent light sockets.** Best of all, **they run on a quarter of the energy used by incandescent bulbs, and last ten times longer.** Some models even work with dimmer switches. Definitely worth a try, don't you think?

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Plus, 3 coupons you can use now.