

## Making Simple Repairs: Light Fixtures<sup>1</sup>

---

Mary N. Harrison<sup>2</sup>

It's important to have adequate light in your home. The amount of light a bulb gives depends on the bulb's wattage. The higher a bulb's wattage, the more light it gives. For example a 100-watt bulb gives about twice the light of a 50-watt bulb.

The size bulb you are supposed to use is marked on most light fixtures and lamps. For example a fixture may say something like "use only 75 watt bulbs." You can use bulbs of lower wattage in that fixture but you should not use a bulb with more than 75 watts. Another fixture may have printing that says you can use a 100-watt bulb. Look on your light fixtures so you will know the size bulbs to use. Using bulbs with wattage higher than stated can damage the wiring of the light fixture.

Some apartments and homes have fluorescent lights, especially in the kitchen. When the fluorescent light begins to flicker it is time to replace the tube. Florescent lights last for years, much longer than regular incandescent bulbs. Although fluorescent tubes cost more than light bulbs, they save money and electricity. Fluorescents are now being made to replace some regular incandescent light bulbs. At this time they do not fit all lamps and are more expensive.

### Supplies Needed:

- Light bulbs (proper wattage)
- Globe (if broken)

### Overhead fixtures:

1. Always use a ladder or sturdy stepstool to reach an overhead fixture.
2. Check the printing on the light fixture for the wattage that may be used.
3. Fill every socket with a bulb. (As needed)
4. Never touch the inside of a socket. You could be electrocuted.
5. Always replace the globes.
6. You may wash and dry globes to provide more light.
7. Handle burned-out light bulbs carefully to prevent breakage and cutting yourself.

---

1. This document is FCS5234-10, one of a series of the Department of Family, Youth and Community Sciences, Florida Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Food and Agriculture Sciences, University of Florida. Publication: May 2002. Revised: December 2005. Please visit the EDIS Web site at <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu>.

2. Mary N. Harrison, professor, Department of Family, Youth and Community Sciences, Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida, Gainesville, 32611.