

**Skill Level: INTERMEDIATE** Give these projects a try if you're a confident DIYer with a good working knowledge of a variety of tools. They can take a day or more to complete. If you can build a birdhouse or install a ceiling fan, your skill level is probably appropriate.

### ✓ MATERIALS

- Dimmer Switch
- Screwdriver
- Circuit Tester
- Wire Strippers
- Wire Connectors
- Electrical Tape

Dimmer switches can add the perfect mood to any room, and reduce your energy bills at the same time. Dimmers are available in many styles and offer features like delayed fade-to-off, LED indicator lights and remote control. They're inexpensive and installation can take only a few minutes.

### WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT DIMMER SWITCHES

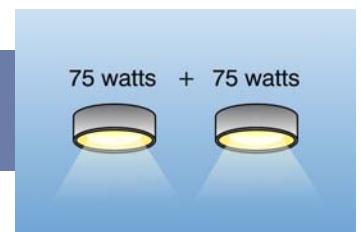
**Before installing a dimmer switch you'll need to determine a few things to ensure that your new dimmer works properly.**

#### 01 Determine the type of light that will be connected to the dimmer.

- Incandescent
  - These lights contain filaments that give off light when heated by electricity.
- Fluorescent
  - These lights contain a gas that gives off light when charged by electricity.
  - They require a special dimming ballast.
- Electronic Low-Voltage
  - These are small bulbs that are commonly used for decorative and track lighting.
  - Use an electronic low-voltage dimmer with these lights.
- Compact Fluorescent Lights (CFLs)
  - CFLs use about 2/3 less power than incandescent bulbs and last longer.
  - If you intend to use CFLs with your dimmer, make sure that the CFLs are specified for use with dimmer switches.

#### 02 Determine the total wattage.

- Add up the wattage of all the lights per group to determine which dimmer size is right for your application.



#### IMPORTANT

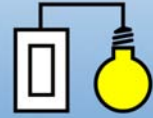
Before you begin this project, read the manufacturer's instructions. And follow all local building codes. If you're not comfortable working with electricity, call a licensed electrician.

### WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT DIMMER SWITCHES (cont.)

#### 03 Determine the number of dimmer locations.

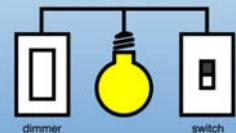
- If your light is controlled by a single switch, use a single pole dimmer

Single-Pole Dimmer



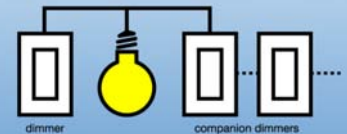
- If your light is controlled by two different switches, use a 3-way dimmer plus a 3-way switch.

Three-Way Dimmer



- Or if you want dimming control from two or more switches, use multi-location dimmers.

Multi-Location Dimmers



### REMOVE THE OLD SWITCH

01 Turn off power to the light switch at the main electrical breaker-box.

02 Remove the faceplate.

03 Check the switch with a circuit tester to ensure that the power is off.

04 Once you have determined that the power is off, remove the switch from the wall.

05 Disconnect the wires from the switch.

- Make note of where the wires were connected to the old switch.



### INSTALL THE NEW DIMMER SWITCH

**01 Determine how much insulation you need to strip from the wires, following the manufacturer's instructions**

- Usually, it's between 3/8" and 5/8". Just trim the insulation with a pair of wire strippers.

**02 Before installing the new dimmer, make note of which side is the top, and which side is the bottom.**

**03 Connect the wires from the house to the dimmer.**

- If your dimmer switch has lead wires connect them to the house wires with wire connectors, then wrap them with electrical tape.

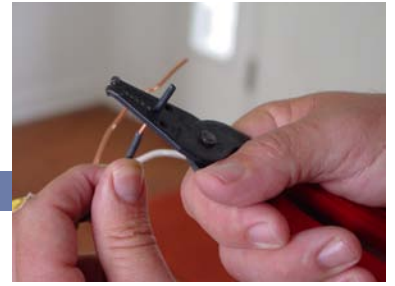
**04 Connect the ground wire to the ground connection in the box.**

**05 Tuck the wires into the box and attach the dimmer to the box with the mounting screws.**

**06 Add the faceplate.**

**07 Turn on the power to the switch and test the light.**

- If the switch doesn't work, turn off the power and check the connections.



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