

Installing a dimmer switch:

By replacing your simple on-off light switch with a dimmer can make the lighting in your home more adaptable to your needs. In order to upgrade your home, buy a *single-pole* dimmer if your circuits have an outlet controlled from one single location, and a *three-way* dimmer if it's an outlet controlled from two switch locations. When buying your dimmer, take note that the total maximum wattage allowed for all the light fixtures controlled by one dimmer can't exceed the maximum wattage rating on the dimmer. For example, if you have 8 lights, each rated for a maximum 100W lamp, you will need at least a 800W dimmer. Likewise, low-voltage lighting requires a low-voltage control. Once you know the right capacity, its time to choose from the various types of controls including push-on/push-off, rotate-on/rotate-off, knob, slide, touch-activated, toggle switch with slide, etc.

**** Dimmers cannot control most fluorescent lights. ****

Checklist:

- Standard Screwdriver
- Wire Cutter/stripper
- Neon circuit tester
- Wire connectors
- Tape (if necessary)
- Switch Cover (if necessary)
- Dimmer (See above for specifications)

How to install a dimmer switch:

One: First, turn off the power.

- Shut off the circuit breaker or remove the fuse for the circuit that feeds the switch and outlet at the main electric panel in your home.



As a precautionary measure, place a piece of tape over the door or the breaker to remind others in your home to leave the breaker off while you're installing the dimmer.

Two: Remove switch.

- Using a standard screwdriver, remove the screws that secure the switch plate and switch and take the switch out of the box.
- Make sure the power has been shut off by touching one probe of your neon circuit tester to one of the terminal screws and the other to the metal outlet box, a white neutral wire, or a green (or bare) ground wire.
- Keep doing this, moving the probe to the other switch terminal.

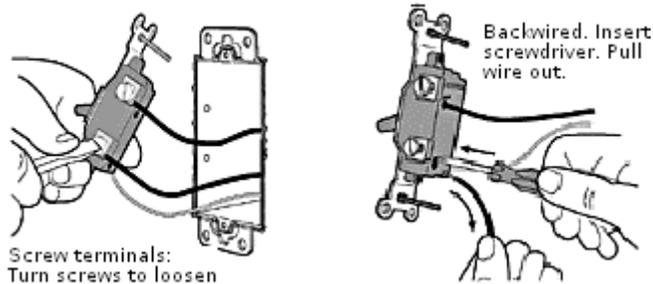


It's illegal and hazardous to overcrowd a switch box. The gauges of the wires, the number of devices, the size of the box, and several other factors determine how many

wires are allowed. If you're unsure of the safety of your switch box, consult a licensed electrician or electrical inspector.

Three: Disconnect wires.

- ❑ If you have a *Single Pole Switch*
 - ❑ Disconnect both black wires and the green/bare ground wire.
 - ❑ Loosen the terminal screws, or insert a small screwdriver into the rectangular hole adjacent to the wire. What you do depends upon what kind of switch you have. Refer to graphics below.



- ❑ If you have a *Three-way Switch*
 - ❑ One of the wires is connected under a different colored screw, or could be plugged into a hole in the rear of the switch labeled “Common.”
 - ❑ Tag this wire with a piece of tape.

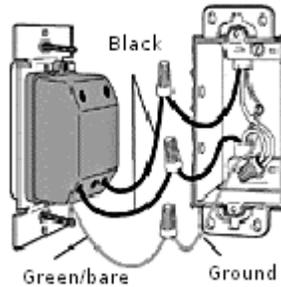
Four: Prepare the wires.

- ❑ Cut off the exposed portion of each wire, and use your wire stripper to remove the right amount of insulation.
- ❑ This varies according to wire gauge. (You remove 3/8 inch for 14 gauge and 1/2 inch for 10 to 12 gauge.)
- ❑ The switch wires should already be stripped, but if they're not prepare them the same way.

Five: Wire the dimmer.

- ❑ For a single pole circuit:
 - ❑ If there is a green ground wire on the switch, connect it to the green or bare wire from the outlet box.
 - ❑ Connect one of the dimmer wires to each of the wires you removed from the switch.

- ❑ Twist on the wire connectors until they're tight and no bare wire is exposed at the base of the connectors.



- ❑ *For a three-way circuit:*
 - ❑ If there is a green ground wire on the switch, connect it to the green or bare wire on the outlet.
 - ❑ Connect the black dimmer wire to the wire you taped in step 3.
 - ❑ Connect each of the red dimmer wires to one of the wires taken from the old switch.

Six: Secure the switch.

- ❑ Gently bend the wires, if needed, to install the switch in the outlet box.
- ❑ Secure the switch to the box with the provided two screws.
- ❑ Adjust the switch so it is plumb, meaning straight up and down and centered in the box before tightening the screws all the way.

Seven: Cover and test.

- ❑ Install the switch cover, and turn on the power to test the how your new dimmer works.
 - ❑ Depending on the differences between your new dimmer and the old switch, you may have to replace the switch cover with one that suits the new dimmer.

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