



Opposite page: "In order to offer a luxury feel in this bathroom we opted for a book-matched look. This is where a single slab of marble is used and cut to retain the veins within the pattern of the stone," says designer Nico Yiannikou from Y2 Design Consultants. "We had one wall fitted with mirrored cabinets to give a continuous feel along the entire elevation. The lighting is subtle and soft and allows for ambient light when required." The cost of the bathroom was around £28,000.

SHINING BRIGHT

We shed light on how to illuminate your bathroom

Report: Sophie Baylis

Whatever the size of your bathroom, a combination of lighting will help you get the most out of your space. "After deciding where the main bathroom elements will be positioned, lighting should be the next decision. That way you can run all the cabling and bury it in the walls before tiling and decorating," explains John Fearon of Astro Lighting.

The next consideration is where to go for advice. If money is no object, head straight to a specialist lighting designer whose expert knowledge of the latest products and technologies will result in a bespoke scheme. If you are working to a stricter budget, begin by doing your own research. Lighting manufacturer Astro Lighting has included a downloadable bathroom lighting guide on its website. Retailers are another port of call, and if you Google the words 'bathroom lighting guide' you will see that all the big players have something to offer. A word of warning, however: some guides are more useful than others.

The next step is to go into a store. Reputable retailers like John Lewis will help you make the best choice of lighting for your home, but remember that when you purchase lighting from a retailer, there is the small matter of installation. Always consult a qualified electrician who will know the necessary rules and regulations. Source your own electrician or make use of the services offered by several of the major retailers. B&Q Homefit (www.diy.com) offers tradesmen at fixed prices (electrics and lighting starts from £69), while John Lewis will also provide a qualified electrician.

If you contract your own electrician, the usual common sense rules apply. Speak to friends and family who have had similar work done or find a tradesman operating to government-endorsed standards using the TrustMark website (www.trustmark.org.uk).

You don't necessarily want the same lighting scheme at all times of the day. "Getting ready for a busy day calls for different lighting requirements compared to a long evening soak," explains John Fearon of Astro Lighting. "To create two different scenes, it's worth planning for at least two wall switches, which can now be legally positioned inside the bathroom provided they are an appropriate distance from wet areas. Positioning the switch just outside the door might be simpler though."

Even small rooms with one lighting scheme can benefit from a dimmer switch. "Remember, however, that LEDs and fluorescent or compact fluorescent bulbs usually can't be dimmed," adds John. ▶

Right: A pair of Astro Lighting's Mashiko 600 lights, £170 each, illuminate Rosco Novocento's basin and chrome washstand, £1794. Other fixtures include Bette's Starlet double-ended bath, £992, Zucchetti's Bellagio four-hole bath tap, £1017, and Rosco Novocento's semi-back-to-wall WC, £551. All are available from Alternative Bathrooms.



To help you get to grips with lighting, KBB has broken down the bathroom into key areas and asked experts Paul Nulty of Paul Nulty Lighting Design and John Fearon of Astro Lighting for their recommendations in each.

Overhead lighting

It may be obvious, but overhead lighting is essential for providing overall illumination in a bathroom. "This is especially true in a small bathroom without a source of natural light, but don't overuse it as it can make a space feel overwhelming and washed out," says Paul.

"I would recommend using LED or fluorescent ceiling lights, which provide a warm colour. You want the light to be soft and flattering, but if you want to add a stylish element to your bathroom, I suggest choosing a ceiling fixture that incorporates colour or an interesting design, such as a chandelier. This is an easy, subtle way of adding personality to the space."

Skirting lighting

"Skirting level lighting is all about ambience," explains John. "Recessed LED marker lights at skirting height are great for providing a wash of light across the floor. One idea for mood and effect is to stop the bath panel just above the floor and place a strip of LEDs behind it to cast a gentle glow, which makes the bath appear to float."

Shower

"IP65 lighting (see Safety first, p49) is best for lighting inside the shower cubicle, while IP44 is sufficient for all other areas in the bathroom," John reveals. "Recessed downlights are ideal, and a typical 2 x 2m space will only need three or four. Place them near the edges of the room to create an attractive scalloped wash of light down the wall."

The shower is a great place to experiment with light in an alternative way. "Add light to your shower's water flow,"

suggests Paul. "With new technology, LED lighting can be integrated into the showerhead, allowing light to stream through the water for a glimmering effect."

Bath

It's important to think about how you use your bath before making a choice about lighting. "If the bath is purely functional, a downlight will be effective and appropriate, although consider the positioning carefully as you don't want to be staring up into a bright light as you relax in the bath," explains Paul. "If you want to make more of the bath area, I suggest using cove lighting, where the source of the light is integrated within a wall or ceiling recess. This is a popular approach and provides subtle, soft lighting and a dramatic effect."

Basin

The basin is to the bathroom what the desk is to the office, according to John. "It's the hub of operations and needs lighting to match. Avoid overhead lighting as the sole source of illumination, as it creates shadows, which are unhelpful for shaving or applying make-up."

He continues, "The choice is whether to go for a mirror with built-in lighting, which looks great, but means a fixed mirror size, or if you want to choose your own mirror size to fit the space, then place the lights vertically or horizontally beside it. You could even mount the lights directly on the mirror with Astro's surface-mounting kit."

Paul recommends using high-quality light sources such as LEDs with warm tones; the warmer the colour temperature, the better the skin will look. "In addition to mirror lighting, downlights above the basin are popular to add a little bit of sparkle to taps," he says. "However, beware of using too much downlighting as it can make the area feel too bright and can cast heavy shadows on the face." KBB



Above: The owners of this home asked Matteo Bianchi to create a hotel feel using a luxurious palette of warm charcoal, gold and bronze. Small recessed IP-rated spotlights in the niches draw attention to the beautiful tiling. The total cost of this bathroom was around £5200.



BATHROOM LIGHTING

Above: This bathroom was transformed by lowering the ceiling in the centre of the room and using LED lighting under the new dropped ceiling. Spotlighting and wall lights on either side of the mirror provide mood lighting. The total cost was around £30,000 from Kia Designs.



Above: Spotlights in interchangeable colours were located around the shower area to give this bathroom by Matteo Bianchi a whimsical feel. An LED light was installed in the shower niche to provide a warm light. The total cost of this bathroom was around £4500.



Above: In a small bathroom it's important to have a focal point and this illuminated basin provides just that," says Irina Townsend of Keir Townsend. "Warm LED lighting is used to backlight the recycled glass surfaces of the sink." Priced around £5400.

Right: Lighting is a great way to bring individuality to your bathroom. "Look out for original ship's lights, which were built to withstand harsh weather conditions and are usually IP rated, so safe for use in bathrooms," suggests Peter Bowles of Davey Lighting. "Quality materials such as copper or bronze can look very dramatic in the form of a central pendant light." Pictured is Davey Lighting's Quad pendant, £699.

Far right: A series of Belid Lux LED flush bathroom lights, £100 each, illuminate this spectacular bathroom. Flexible LED lights strips, £35 each, are fitted behind the mirror, offering a bright light for shaving and applying make-up. Lights are available from John Lewis.



Case study



Designer: Paul Nulty of Paul Nulty Lighting Design.

The client: A couple that downsized from a countryside home to a detached house.

Location: Hampstead, London.

The brief: Although the couple were downsizing, they did not want to sacrifice a feeling of generous space. The clients wanted a home for both entertaining and relaxing, complete with a lighting scheme that would open up the space and make it multifunctional.

Cost: Price on application.

"We were appointed when refurbishment of the property began in March 2012," recalls Paul. "We fulfilled the clients' brief through a mixture of ambient, accent and feature lighting all delivered within a conservative budget. The main goal was to create a bright interior with design practicality, mobility, longevity and maintainability."

"The design comprises a number of layers that can be independently dimmed. The balancing of the layers relative to each other provides the variation in composition."

"Ambient lighting is provided by a feature pendant and the high-level recessed uplights on the wall. Mirror lighting provides great functional light onto the face whilst low-level lighting provides accent and feature lighting. The low-level lighting balances with the high-level lighting to draw the eye into the space, creating a sense of intimacy."





Left: A series of spotlights cast a warm glow on the Bardiglio grey marble top of this vanity unit by Cue & Co. The sink, taps and towel holder are all from Perrin & Rowe. The price for the vanity unit, including brassware and accessories, is £3540.



Above: "We lowered the ceiling leaving a slot for the curved mosaic wall," explains Lucia Caballero of Caballero Design. "With LEDs illuminating the slit between the wall and the false ceiling, the wall appears to go on forever. Keeping peripheral fixtures such as the cantilevered basin unit and bench seat in the shower very simple allows the marble and mosaics to shine." The total cost of this bathroom was approximately £50,000.

Safety first

The close proximity of electricity to water in the bathroom makes safety an important issue, says Paul Nulty of Paul Nulty Lighting Design.

"Current UK electrical regulations separate the bathroom space into a series of zones (0 to 2, radiating outwards from the location of water) and specify electrical rules to achieve a safer bathroom environment.

"Anything within a wet area such as a bath or basin (zone 0) must be immersion-proof (IP67). Anything immediately next to the wet area to a height of 2.25 metres (zone 1) must be at least IP44 and fitted with an RCD (residual current device). Zone 2, meanwhile, covers the area within a 60cm radius of the perimeter of the bath to a height of 2.25 metres, and 60cm radius from a tap. This zone must have an IP rating of at least IP44."

Take three... Illuminated mirrors



Above: Affinity illuminated bathroom mirror, £399, from John Lewis.



Above: Mastella's Dress LED surround mirror, £576, from Alternative Bathrooms.



Right: Imola illuminated mirror, £323, from Astro Lighting.



Left: This ensuite bathroom in a modern development in London's Docklands is very small, measuring just 2.8 x 2m, with no windows. The niche above the bath is fitted with mini recessed lights that are connected to the demister behind the LED make-up mirror. This bathroom by At Home Interiors was priced around £24,000 including building work.

SourceBook

ALTERNATIVE BATHROOMS 020 3375 9002 or www.alternativebathrooms.com
 ASTRO LIGHTING 01279 427001 or www.astrolighting.co.uk
 AT HOME INTERIORS 01223 812551 or www.athome-interiors.com
 CABALLERO DESIGN 020 7152 6038 or www.caballero.uk.com
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NEXT MONTH

KBB's essential guide to shower trays and enclosures.