



Astro Guides

Bathroom lighting



Bathrooms are the most private of spaces, of which we demand a great deal. They are expected to be highly functional whilst being able to transform instantly into a serene, luxurious sanctuary.

Often materials and modern technology dictate our style decisions and bathroom design is no exception. Astro takes great care to design products that not only look great but enhance interior schemes. From effective task lighting for shower and vanity areas, to more ambient style pieces to subtly illuminate a bath, our contemporary luminaires have been created to complement this intimate zone, whilst performing the most crucial function of correctly illuminating the space for its use.

Planning

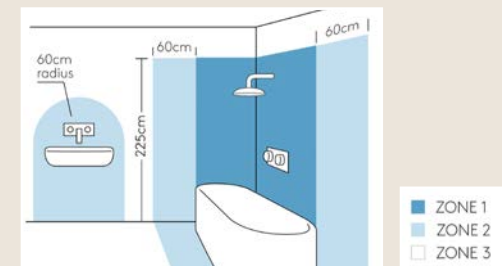
After deciding where the basin, toilet, bath and shower are to be positioned, lighting should be next on the list. That way you can run all the cabling and bury it in the walls before you start tiling and decorating. Even small rooms with one lighting scene will benefit from a dimmer switch. This inexpensive measure ensures night time trips to the loo or early morning starts are only as bright as you want them to be. Lights that can be dimmed include mains or low-voltage halogen, or any “standard” filament-type bulbs. LEDs, fluorescent or compact-fluorescent bulbs usually can’t (this includes most illuminated mirrors).

Consider the Space

This will determine how many lighting ‘scenes’ you need to create. A small cloakroom may need just one lighting scene, whereas a larger room with a bath enables you to have at least two: “bright” for speedy stops, and “soft and low” for slow, relaxing soaks. To create the different scenes, plan on at least two wall switches. These can now be legally positioned inside the bathroom as long as they are an appropriate distance from wet areas, but the simplest and most popular solution is to position the switches outside adjacent to the door.

Understand regulations

IP44 (sometimes written as IP X4) simply means that the light fitting is “splash-proof”, and therefore will withstand the typical level of moisture found in a domestic bathroom. Astro offers the largest range of IP44 rated products in Europe. Regulations allow IP44 rated lights to be used anywhere in a bathroom, apart from inside the bath itself. A higher level of protection is IP65 which is “jet-proof”. Astro considers this rating to be safer for lighting within a shower cubicle.

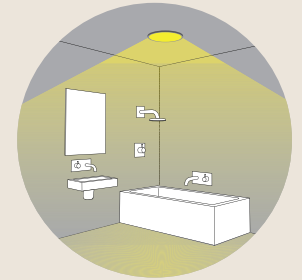


General lighting



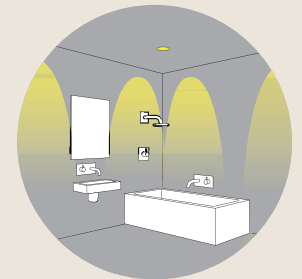
Ceiling lights

A ceiling light in the centre of the room is an easy solution for illuminating the entire space but may not be so effective for creating any level of mood or interest.



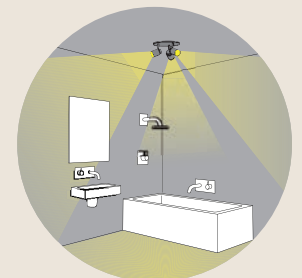
Downlights

An alternative to one central ceiling light is recessed downlights. You may only need three or four for a typical size 2x2m bathroom. Position them close to the edges of the room in order to get an attractive scalloped wash down the wall. This approach provides very good general lighting but with a gentler, more sophisticated ambiance.



Spot lights

If budgets are tight and you want to keep to a central ceiling solution then you could consider using surface-mounted spotlights. A triple spotlight can be individually directed onto three different points in the room to provide pools of light where you need it and creates a more interesting lighting scene.



Task lighting



The basin mirror in the bathroom is the equivalent of the desk in the office. It's the hub of operations, where most of the 'work' takes place. There are several options, but most effective is a solution that illuminates both sides of the face to ensure an even, flattering glow with no shadows. You can achieve this with either an illuminated mirror or wall lights positioned either side of the mirror.

Illuminated Mirrors

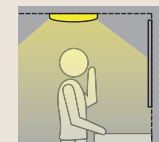
Every basin needs a mirror, so illuminated mirrors provide a simple two-in-one solution. Some also incorporate shaver sockets. Choose from mirrors with integrated horizontal or vertical lighting.

Wall lights

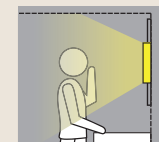
Follow a typical hotel bathroom design by fitting IP44-rated wall lights either side of a mirror, or mounting directly onto the mirror surface using Astro's mirror mounting kit. Not only does this give a very sophisticated 5-star look, but it enables you to fit a mirror that has been cut to exactly the size that best fits the space. Available from budget to luxury prices, they offer a competitive alternative to the illuminated mirror option. Make sure that you have no lighting directly over your head at the basin, as this will create unflattering shadows. Wall lights mounted either side of the mirror, or using an illuminated mirror will create a more even spread of light on the face.

For close work

A magnifying mirror is an invaluable aid for shaving, applying make-up and other personal grooming. Choose from a separate illuminated mirror which can be freely positioned as it incorporates all-round lighting or a non-lit model that can be attached to the main bathroom mirror for a two-in-one solution. Either way, a bit like air-conditioning in the car, once you have it, you'll never go back.



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Mood lighting



This is where you can have fun and be creative. In the very least you can dim the lights to provide a softer atmosphere, but you can enhance the night time lighting scene significantly with a few extra strategically positioned lights.

LED lights

If you are building-in niches for display or storage, fit LED downlights to really bring it to life. Small wall-mounted LED lights can be used to illuminate designated spots in the bathroom and provide light up and down the wall. These can offer good alternative general illumination at night time, when more powerful lamps would be too strong.

Recessed LEDs at skirting height are great for providing a wash of light across the floor. One bright idea is to continue the bath panel down to just above the floor and position a strip of LEDs behind it to cast a gentle glow out from behind the panel and make the bath appear to float.



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