

# Flick of a switch

Ten ways to update your bathroom lighting in an instant

Words: **Sophie Baylis**



## 1 Add a splash of coloured lighting

Less is more, so stick to one colour when dabbling in coloured lighting, and always make sure it complements the rest of the space. Ask yourself, where would coloured lighting help to enhance the design of my bathroom and what is its purpose?

Concealed light sources make a feature of the shower niche in this Ripples bathroom (left), providing a soft wash of coloured light. Deana Ashby, meanwhile, has opted for the element of surprise in an otherwise all-white scheme with remote-controlled chromotherapy lighting, which makes a feature of the pebble gully that surrounds the Starck X infinity bathtub from Duravit (opposite page). A bespoke lighting solution by Ripples costs from £600. For a similar bathroom scheme by Deana Ashby, expect to spend in excess of £25,000.

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## 2 Think in layers

To ensure you have the best bathroom lighting at different times of day, it is essential to layer the lighting and control it on different circuits. The lighting in this stunning bathroom by Almas Shamsee of Maisha Design was designed to accentuate the best features of the bathroom. "We chose to use three circuits that could be combined depending on the mood," says Maisha. "The first was a grid of downlights needed for everyday tasks. We complemented these with two separate circuits for soft lighting – an LED wash on the bath wall and hidden LED backlight around the mirror cabinet. Both provide soft, relaxing lighting that can be used together with the downlights or on their own. Finally, we added another circuit of hidden LED lighting under the bath panel and the vanity unit on a sensor to provide soft night-time light." The light fittings in this bathroom cost around £960.

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[www.maishadesign.com](http://www.maishadesign.com)**





### Pick a pendant

A stunning light fitting never fails to transform an ordinary room into something extraordinary. Jonathan Adler's Meurice chandelier (above), £1125, is an excellent case in point, adding a sculptural glow to the freestanding Bette bathtub in this bathroom by Oleg Klodt Architecture & Design. It also has the effect of lowering an otherwise lofty ceiling.

"A chandelier can create a dramatic look, but it needs to match the décor of the space," recommends Sean Cochrane of Cochrane Design. "Make sure the pendant doesn't hang too low. You don't want it to interrupt your line of sight when walking into a room." A similar Cochrane Design bathroom project (as right) would cost £75,000.

"If the pendant is not hung over the bath or basin, there are no restrictions in terms of the product being IP rated (the level at which the fitting is sealed against dirt and moisture)," explains Sally Storey of John Cullen Lighting. "However, if it hangs over the bath and below 3m-high, it would need to be IP44-rated to comply with IEE Wiring Regulations."

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Photograph: Paul Craig/Cochrane Design



### A lesson in LED strips

Amos Goldreich Architecture draws attention to a vaulted ceiling using an LED strip that runs the perimeter of the room, directing light upwards to enhance the roof's structure (left). "The challenge here was whether this lighting solution would be enough to light the space at night," says Amos. "We tested various strengths of LED and placed them on a dimmer circuit, which allows you to control the intensity based on your mood and time of day." A starting price for a similar lighting scheme is £500.

Interior and architectural designer Shalini Misra paired LED downlighters with an LED strip that is hidden behind the edge of a cropped ceiling to create a gentle ambient light (below). LED strips cost from £5 to £10 for a linear metre, while a similar bathroom would be priced around £25,000. The beauty of LED strips is that they can be used in all manner of ways. A top tip is to lighten the look of a bulky bathroom storage unit by installing an LED strip underneath. This will create a magical floating effect.

**020 7272 6592 or [www.agarchitecture.net](http://www.agarchitecture.net)**  
**020 7604 2340 or [www.shalinimisra.com](http://www.shalinimisra.com)**



### Boost bathtimes

Make a feature of your freestanding bath by installing LED uplights around its base. This creates a floating effect and provides a gentle light to bathe by. Alternatively, if you have a built-in bath, recess a series of cool-to-the-touch LED uplights into the surround for added drama.

Take your cue from this long, narrow bathroom by Residence Interior Design, which puts the whirlpool tub centre stage by placing it in front of a large window with a view of London's skyline. The bath is then lit by a series of miniature LED uplighters for that magical spa-inspired quality. Including all fixtures, finishes, furniture and lighting, this bathroom was priced from around £50,000.

**01730 829566 or [www.residenceinteriordesign.com](http://www.residenceinteriordesign.com)**



### Carve out a niche

A niche in the shower or above the bath not only provides a practical place to stash toiletries, but if downlit from within it becomes a useful night-light for after-dark visits to the bathroom or gives a soft, atmospheric glow when soaking in the tub. Schemes by West One Bathrooms (left) start from around £15,000 and those from Cue & Co of London (right) start from £10,000.

**020 7731 4728 or [www.cueandco.com](http://www.cueandco.com)  
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### Lighting the shower

Avoid centring a light overhead in a shower enclosure. Instead, follow the example set by Anna Grace-Davidson of Anna Casa Interiors (right) and position ceiling-recessed LED downlights along the back of the enclosure to accentuate the beauty of the wall. This is also a great way to extend a small bathroom, drawing the eye to the brightest point. To ensure the enclosure is thoroughly lit, Anna also placed downlights either side of the showerhead, drawing attention towards the centre of the shower and away from the corners. A similar bathroom would cost from £6500.

Rachel Laxer Interiors has also opted for a symmetrical look. A pair of downlights flanks a Dornbracht showerhead in this fabulous master bathroom (opposite page, bottom right). A similar scheme will set you back from £20,000.

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### Backlight your basin

The bathroom basin is the heart of the bathroom, so you must ensure that it is effectively lit. There are various options available, from mirrors with integrated lighting – a good option for small bathrooms or cloakrooms – to backlighting the mirror with an LED strip. British company Well-lit has worked hard to create a low-energy LED range that gives a warm, ambient glow, much like the traditional halogen lamp, and is fully dimmable. Use its LED strip lights to backlight your mirror (as shown left). Prices for a 5m roll start from £42.99.

01484 609759 or  
<https://well-lit.co.uk>

### Basin basics

Good lighting at the bathroom mirror is best achieved by using a combination of light sources. Set a ceiling-recessed fixture in line with the edge of the vanity, so that the light hits the mirror and bounces back to your face. If you have a large mirror, consider installing two fixtures set symmetrically. Overhead lighting will result in shadows under your nose and chin so, to get rid of these, add a pair of IP44-rated pendants either side of the mirror.

In this collaborative project by Chelsea-based interior designer Juliette Byrne and John Cullen Lighting (right), the vanity unit was designed to ensure excellent task lighting around the mirror. Two IP44 Grissini pendants from John Cullen Lighting provide light from either side, whilst two low-glare Polespring LED downlights add sparkle to the basin. Expect to spend from £1000 on a similar lighting scheme.

NBB Design chose pretty pendants to hang either side of the mirror for dramatic effect (opposite page). Ceiling spotlights create additional brightness due to the lack of natural light in the room. The starting price for this bathroom is £4000.

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[www.johncullenlighting.co.uk](http://www.johncullenlighting.co.uk)  
 020 7349 7099 or  
[www.nbbdesign.com](http://www.nbbdesign.com)





### Natural glow

Natural light is the primary source of light throughout the day, so any way you can increase it will be beneficial. "Positioned correctly, reflective, polished or gloss tiles and shiny or mirrored materials can bounce natural light around and increase brightness and light in a room significantly," advises interior designer Deana Ashby. "Used in conjunction with white and light colour palettes, which naturally reflect the light, you can greatly increase the feeling of light and space in a room." A starting price for a similar bathroom scheme (as above) is £21,000.

Richard Voller Design found a clever way to introduce natural light to this otherwise dark bathroom (top right) by installing a sun pipe (available at Velux). Faced with a similar problem, Maurizio Pellizzoni installed a small skylight window in this loft apartment bathroom. "When a skylight is not possible, the best solution is to install natural-effect LED lighting around the perimeter of the room. This will create a softer and less direct glow whilst making the room brighter," advises Maurizio. A bathroom like this (right), including the marble, lighting and sanitaryware, starts from £60,000.

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