

Compact Fluorescent and Cold Cathode Dimmable Lamps



Why do my dimmable CFL lamps flicker at times?

Due to the low power consumption of a dimmable CFL (especially at low levels) they are more susceptible to natural power line variations which can be caused by appliance loads, air conditioners, copiers, and alike devices during their normal on/off cycle operation.

What happens if the lamps are dimmed below 20%?

The use of CFL lamps at a permanent 20% light level or lower affects the filament material used to warm the lamp prior to the high voltage ignition of the fluorescent. The filament material will burn at a high rate during this type of operation causing the lamp life hours to significantly drop in comparison to the rated hours voiding the warranty.

Why won't my new dimmable CFL lamps dim?

There could be several reasons for the lamps not dimming; an incompatible dimmer switch, faulty dimmer switch, incandescent lamps left on the dimming circuit, use of lamps of different shapes and/or wattages on the dimming circuit and potentially an insufficient burn-in period for the CFL lamp.

Is there an initial burn-in period for all your dimmable CFLs?

An initial burn-in period of 100 hours is highly recommended for better performance when dimming the lamps over their life span.

Why do my CFL lamps glow pink at startup sometimes?

The pink glow is from the lack of free mercury in the CFL since it is all absorbed into the amalgam. The amalgam material is used in CFLs to achieve the best lumen output at high operating temperatures and it requires time to warm up during the start up period. The CFLs also have starting amalgam to effectively shorten the pink/dark period to 15 seconds or less. After 100 hours of CFL use the pink/dark time will be minimized.

Do dimmable lamps dim exactly like incandescent lamps?

No - Dimmable lamps have slightly different dimming characteristics due to the electronics of a CFL vs. an incandescent filament

- 1) They will dim down to 20% of light output vs. zero for incandescent.
- 2) Electronic components do not respond in the same manner as a heated incandescent filament therefore there will be a difference in visual operational characteristics.

Do dimmable lamps work on ordinary incandescent dimmers?

Yes - Dimmable lamps are designed to work with regular 600 watt rotary or slide incandescent dimmers that are currently available in the market and were manufactured after 1995.

How can I tell if a dimmer is not compatible with a dimmable lamp?

Generally speaking, digital, programmable electronic or remote control dimmers are not compatible. Additionally, high wattage dimmers are typically incompatible because of different voltage regulation and manufacturing tolerances. Illuminated (glow-in-the-dark) dimmers are usually incompatible with dimmable CFLs.

Can STANDARD recommend a compatible dimmer?

Although STANDARD is not at liberty to recommend one manufacturer or brand over another, basic lab testing and real-world experience has shown that 600 Watt max, mid-grade, non-illuminated analog slide dimmers function well.

Does the performance of dimmable lamps rely on the quality of a dimmer?

Yes - Consideration must be given to the age and quality of a dimmer if it is to be used with a dimmable lamp. Because of the recent push to save energy, newer dimmers are more likely to be CFL compatible. Older dimmers are not as capable of withstanding voltage spikes, which, if used, would ultimately damage the circuitry in the dimmable lamp.

Can 1000 watt or larger commercial grade dimmers be used with a dimmable CFL lamp?

No - Most commercial grade dimmers are manufactured to be used with incandescent lamps which have a large resistive load when energized. Since CFLs do not have this characteristic there is not enough current going back to the dimmer for it to work correctly.

How do you properly use dimmable lamps?

- 1) Turning on: Insure light level is set to max then turn it on, then dim down to desired level
- 2) Turning off: Can be turned off at any light level

Will it damage the lamps if they are turned on at too low a level and they don't come on?

No - Simply move the dimming level up till the lamps turn on then dim down to desired level."

Can dimmable lamps be used in trilight lamp sockets?

No - Dimmable lamps will not perform like a trilight lamp in a trilight socket. STANDARD offers a trilight non dimmable lamp. Please visit our web for more details.

Can dimmable lamps be used with a touch lamp?

No - Touch lamps are actually controlled by a trilight switch, so the same rules as the trilight switch apply in this case.

How many dimmable lamps can be used on the same dimmer?

To compensate for "inrush current" (timed in milliseconds, the initial flow of electrical current that is needed to start the CFL), we recommend dividing the dimmer's rated wattage in half and then using that wattage number to outfit the fixture. For example:

600 watt Dimmer ÷ 2 = 300 watts
14 W Dimmable CFL: 300 ÷ 14 = 21 lamps
16 W Dimmable CFL: 300 ÷ 16 = 18 lamps
20 W Dimmable CFL: 300 ÷ 20 = 15 lamps
23 W Dimmable CFL: 300 ÷ 23 = 13 lamps

NOTE: Since every dimmer is manufactured differently there may be some variance in these numbers.
The above examples are a rough estimate only.