



Why Do Light Switches Go Bad?

Just like any other type of simple machine, light switches have several moving parts. Over time, they wear down. Connections can become loose and plastic parts may break. Someday, each of your light switches will need to be replaced.

Four Signs It's Time to Replace a Light Switch

When you've put a fresh light bulb in the fixture but the switch still doesn't turn it on, that's a clear sign that the light switch has died. Here are four more signs that a light switch has gone past its prime.

1. Finicky light fixture

We've all had that one light switch that just doesn't work right. Sometimes it turns on, sometimes it doesn't. Occasionally it flickers for a second before turning on. And putting in a new light bulb doesn't fix the flicker. If this is happening, the proper connections are not being made within the light switch and it's time for a new switch.

2. The switch sparks

On occasion, you may see a small spark when you flip the light switch off. This is called a load arc, which happens when the connections within the light switch are pulled away from one another. If, however, there is a *large* spark that makes an audible "snap," the light switch has gone bad. If this happens and you see smoke or scorch marks, it is *definitely* time to get a new light switch.

3. Noisy switch

When working properly, light switches don't make any noise. So, if you start to hear any clicking, buzzing, or popping coming from the switch, something within the switch is not working properly. It's time to replace that switch.

4. Switch is warm to the touch

When turning a dimmer switch off, you may notice that it feels a little warm to the touch after having been on for a while. This is normal. However, it is *not* normal for a standard toggle light switch to warm up. These light switches should always feel cool. If a switch feels warm, it's time for a new one.