

Lighting Systems Selection Guide

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different lights for different aquariums

Bulb Type	Watts	Bulb Life	Kelvin Rating	Benefits	Limitations	Typical Use
<u>Incandescent</u>	7-25	2-4 months	Varies with color of bulb	Inexpensive; multiple colors	Narrow spectrum; lower light intensity; high heat	Small fish only; beginner's startup kits
<u>Standard Fluorescent</u>	15-40	6-18 months*	3,000°-20,000°K; actinic	Wide range of colors, sizes; aesthetic; efficient; cool; inexpensive	Not ideally suited for photosynthetic plants or invertebrates	Fresh or saltwater community aquarium or mini or micro reef with low light corals and plants
<u>T-5 HO Fluorescent</u>	24-54	16-24 months	6,000°-11,000°K; actinic	Longevity; high intensity; small size; cool running	Not ideally suited for aquariums more than 24" deep	Reef less than 24" deep; freshwater planted

<u>VHO Fluorescent</u>	75-165	4-18 months*	10,000°K; actinic	Large selection of sizes; longer bulb life than standard fluorescent	Higher heat - may require a chiller	Reefs less than 24" deep; freshwater planted
<u>Compact Fluorescent</u>	10-130	12-28 months	5,000°- 10,000°K; actinic	Longevity; high intensity; wide spectrum range; compact	May produce higher heat - may require a chiller	Reefs less than 24" deep; freshwater planted; marine aquariums
<u>Metal Halide</u>	70- 1000	6-18 months	4,000°- 20,000K°	Highest intensity; wide spectrum range	Higher heat - may require chiller; possible UV radiation	Reefs or freshwater aquariums more than 24" deep; photosynthetic corals and invertebrates
<u>LED Moon/ Lunar Light</u>	Approx 1 watt	N/A (Not a light, but a Light Emitting Diode)	N/A**	Low wattage; recreates nocturnal lighting conditions; great for viewing nocturnal inhabitants	Requires one unit per every 24" of aquarium length	Reef or freshwater aquariums

*Depending upon ballast type

**Blue light in the 455-470 nm range depending on model