FAQs: Compact Fluorescent Retrofit Kits

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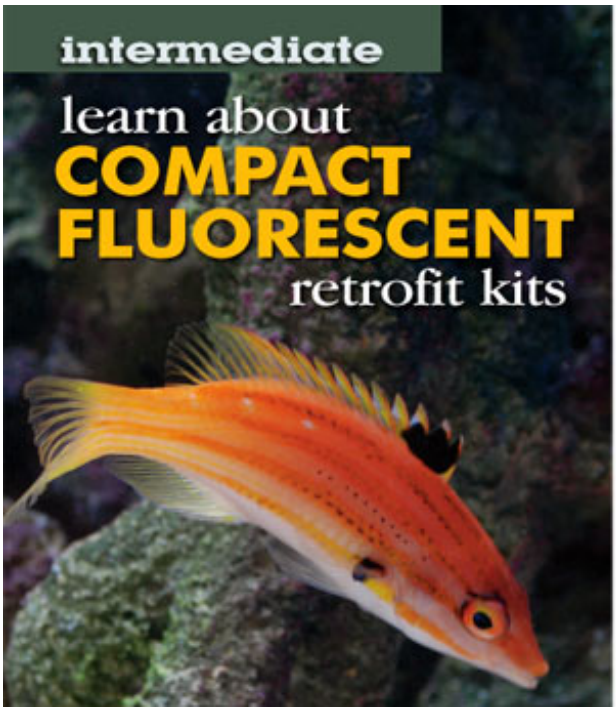

What are compact fluorescent retrofit kits and what is retrofitting?

What are retrofit kits used for?

Are retrofit kits easy to install?

Other than the retrofit kit itself, what else would I need when installing a custom canopy?

Do I need a glass top for my custom retrofit canopy?

What are compact fluorescent retrofit kits and what is retrofitting?

Compact fluorescent retrofit kits are an assembly of fundamental working parts of a compact fluorescent light fixture. The retrofit kit is usually comprised of endcaps with leads and a ballast assembly with power plugs - in some retrofit kits a reflector is also included. It is essentially a light fixture without its housing. Retrofitting is the installation or the fitting of these components to an existing aquarium light fixture or canopy.

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What are retrofit kits used for?

Retrofit kits are used to upgrade existing aquarium light fixtures and, in many cases, a cost-effective alternative to brand new light fixtures. Retrofit kits are also used for custom lighting systems or custom canopies when suitable off-the-shelf light fixtures may not be available.

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Are retrofit kits easy to install?

With advancements in technology and increased demand for higher light output systems, many manufacturers developed retrofit kits that are extremely easy to install, requiring no wiring. However, there are retrofit kits that require hard wiring and it is recommended that a licensed electrician do the installation of these kits.

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Other than the retrofit kit itself, what else would I need when installing a custom canopy?

Installing a cooling or ventilation fan is crucial in dispersing excess heat. Without proper ventilation, heat generated by the light fixture remains trapped - affecting the performance of the light fixture as well as increasing water temperature. Install the ventilation fan so it is pushing cool fresh air into the canopy. Consider installing a

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cooling fan on either end of the canopy where one fan is drawing in fresh air while the other fan is pulling out the heated humid air. The cross ventilation will reduce heat buildup.

If your retrofit kit does not include a reflector, it may not be a bad idea to install reflectors to help increase light efficiency. The highly polished surface of the reflectors minimizes light loss and redirects scattered light back into the aquarium. In many cases, light efficiency may be increased up to 50%.
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Do I need a glass top for my custom retrofit canopy?

The use of a glass top is recommended for all light fixtures, especially fixtures with exposed bulbs or without a protective lens or splashguard. Not only do glass canopies protect the light bulb and fixture from condensation and splashing, it prevents active fish from jumping out. Electrical components that come in contact with water/moisture can damage the unit or cause serious injury.
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