Lighting Terms Glossary Reptiles

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There is a wealth of jargon used throughout the reptile world. This is especially true when discussing reptile lighting. Learning this vocabulary allows you to better understand articles and what veterinarians, reptile hobbyists and other reptile owners are saying. The following list of terms, while in no way comprehensive, contains some of the terms used to discuss reptile lighting.

Basking lamp

A light used to create localized heat that mimics the heat and light of the sun.

Black light

Black light bulbs or BL fluorescent tubes used for nocturnal viewing and to maintain nighttime temperatures.

Fluorescent light

A light that supplies low intensity visible light, a uniform UVB gradient over a certain area, and a small amount of heat.

Full spectrum light

A light that produces UVA light, UVB light, the full spectrum of visible light, and infrared heat.

Halogen bulb

An advanced version of an incandescent bulb that produces more visible light and a small amount of UVA light.

Incandescent light

Light that emits heat, no UVB light, and only a little UVA light.

Infrared light

A light used at night to provide a heat source for nocturnal reptiles and allow nocturnal viewing without disturbing natural behaviors.

Mercury vapor bulb

A light that supplies UV light, high visual light, and infrared heat.

Nocturnal lighting

Light used for nocturnal viewing of reptiles that produces very little visual light and some heat.

Photoperiod

The number of hours of light in a 24 hour period.

UV light

Radiation energy in the form of invisible light waves ranging from 300 to 400 nanometers (nm).

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UVA light

UV light ranging from 320 to 400 nm that affects reptile perception and behavior.

UVB light

UV light ranging from 290 nm to 320 nm that regulates the synthesis of Vitamin D3 in a reptile's skin.

UVC light

UV light ranging from 180 to 280 nm that is harmful to all living organisms.

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