Light Switch Replacement

If you're looking to update the switches in...

Written By: Bobby Le Nguyen

INTRODUCTION

If you're looking to update the switches in your home or just need to replace a faulty switch, this guide is here to help. Replacing a light switch might seem daunting at first, but with the right tools and a bit of guidance, it can be a simple and rewarding DIY project. In this guide, we'll walk you through the steps to safely and effectively replace a light switch. Whether you're a seasoned DIYer or a beginner, you'll be able to follow along and successfully complete this project.

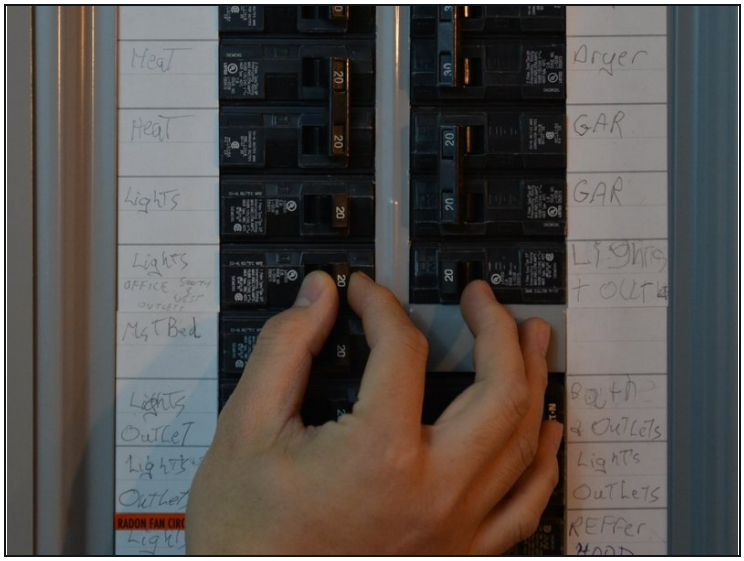
TOOLS:

Phillips Screwdriver (1)
Flat head Screwdriver (1)
Single-Pole Phase Tester (1)
Two-Pole Voltage Tester/Duspol (1)

PARTS:

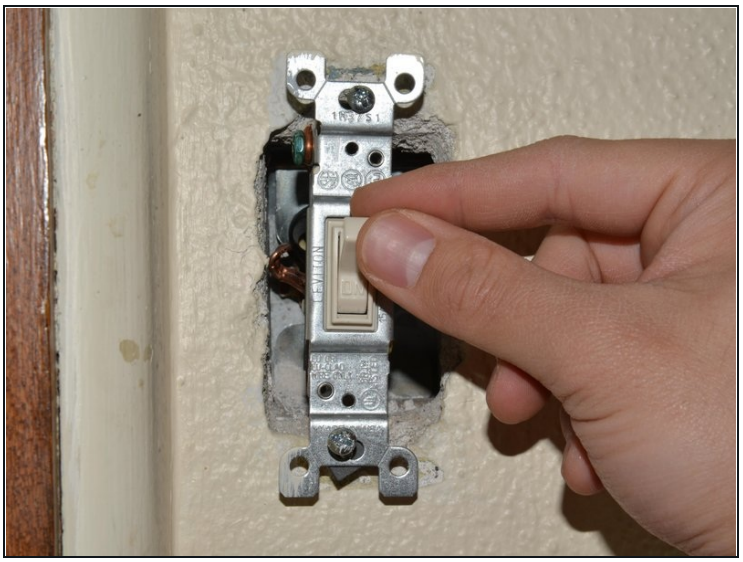
Light Switch (1)

Step 1 — Turn off power



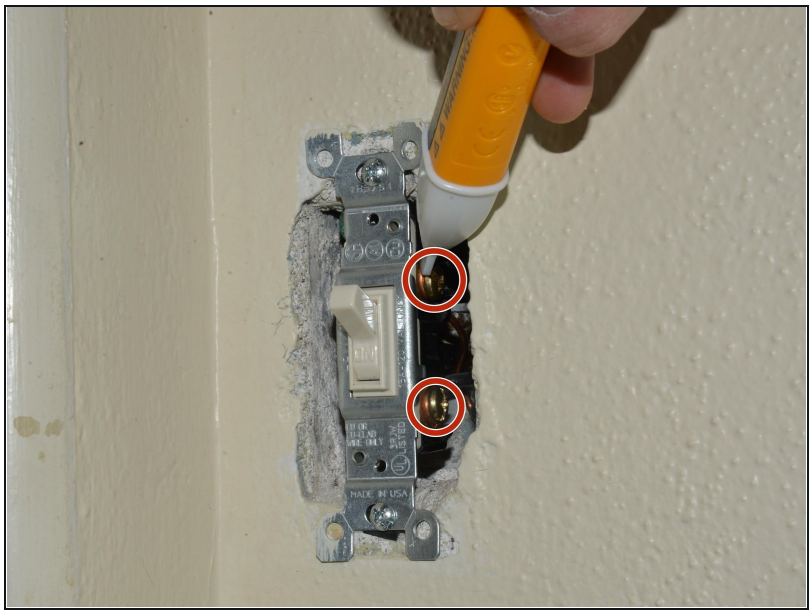
- Locate the breaker box in your house. This is typically either in the garage or the basement.
- Open the breaker box.
- Turn off the breaker that corresponds to the circuit of the switch that is to be replaced.

Step 2 — Remove the face plate



- Remove the face-plate from the light switch by unscrewing the two 7.9mm oval head slotted screws with the 3/16" slotted screwdriver until the plate comes away freely.
- Flip the light switch on and off to ensure no electricity is flowing through the switch.

Step 3 — Determine voltage absence



- Use a Duspol or any other Voltmeter to test if there is voltage at the contacts.

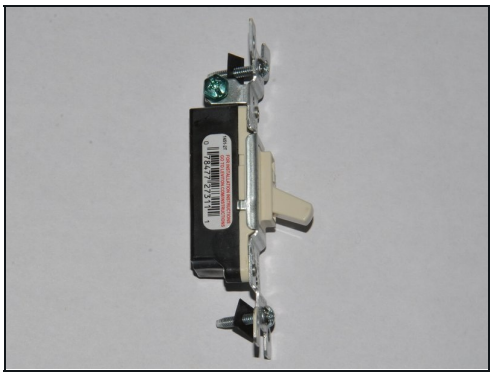
ⓘ You can also use a single pole phase tester, but that's not the proper way to do it.

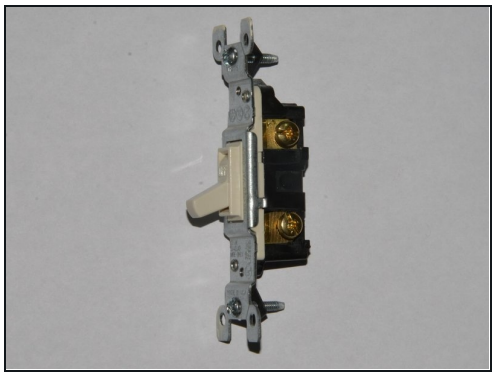
⚠ Do not work on live circuits if you are not an experienced professional.

Step 4 — Unscrew the light switch

- Remove the light switch from the housing by unscrewing the 25.4mm flat head Phillips screws at the top and bottom of the switch, using a Phillips #1 screwdriver.
- Gently pull the light switch out of the housing.

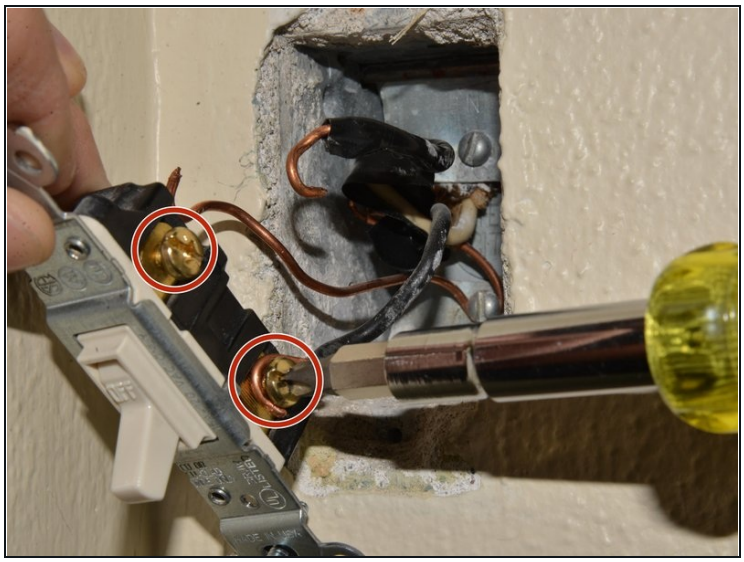
Step 5 — Compare the switches





- Pull the old switch out from the box far enough that its connections can be clearly seen.
- Confirm that the new switch has all the same contacts (screws) as the old switch, with matching colors.

Step 6 — Disconnect the switch

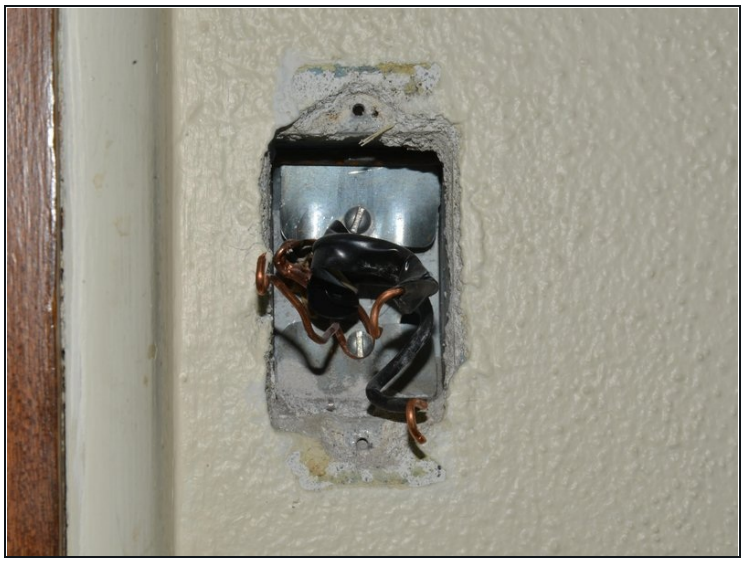


- Take note of the existing wiring since the new switch will need to be wired in exactly the same configuration.

ⓘ There are different ways of wiring switches and your wires may differ from those depicted in number and color. However, if your new switch matches your old switch, simply reconnecting the wires as they were connected to the old switch will ensure proper function.

- Unscrew the screws on both sides of the the light switch until the wires may be unhooked. If necessary, these screws may be fully removed to prevent the straightening of the wire loops.

Step 7 — Install the new switch



- Unhook the wires from the screws.

⚠ These wires will be stiff, do not unbend and straighten out the wires.

- Begin connecting the wires to the new switch according to the wiring configuration of the original switch.
- Push the switch into the housing and begin reassembling.

To reassemble your device, follow these instructions in reverse order.