

Best and Brightest

Using electronic light and chroma meters as well as the discerning eyes of our expert and amateur testers, we compared seven compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs) to an equivalent 75-watt incandescent bulb.



Sylvania Double Life Soft White



N:Vision Soft White



Westinghouse Natural Light



Philips Marathon



MaxLite MicroMax



Sylvania Daylight Extra



Westinghouse Soft White



GE Soft White

	Sylvania Double Life Soft White	N:Vision Soft White	Westinghouse Natural Light	Philips Marathon	MaxLite MicroMax	Sylvania Daylight Extra	Westinghouse Soft White	GE Soft White
PRICE	\$1.10	\$5.97	\$6	\$3	\$4.50	\$5.75	\$6	\$5
BRIGHTNESS	Stated: 1055 lumens Observed: 975 lux	Stated: 1200 lumens Observed: 925 lux	Stated: 1200 lumens Observed: 840 lux	Stated: 1250 lumens Observed: 865 lux	Stated: 1200 lumens Observed: 900 lux	Stated: 1200 lumens Observed: 822 lux	Stated: 1200 lumens Observed: 830 lux	Stated: 1200 lumens Observed: 843 lux
WATTS	Stated: 75 Observed: 78.2	Stated: 19 Observed: 19.4	Stated: 20 Observed: 17.5	Stated: 20 Observed: 20.8	Stated: 20 Observed: 20.3	Stated: 19 Observed: 18.9	Stated: 20 Observed: 17.8	Stated: 20 Observed: 19.8
COLOR TEMPERATURE (° KELVIN)	Stated: 2850 Observed: 2736	Stated: 2700 Observed: 2845	Stated: 3500 Observed: 3433	Stated: 2700 Observed: 2680	Stated: 2700 Observed: 2738	Stated: 3500 Observed: 3370	Stated: 2700 Observed: 2709	Stated: 2700 Observed: 2693
COLOR	B +	A -	A	A -	A	A	A	A -
PERCEIVED BRIGHTNESS	B +	B +	A	B -	B -	A	B +	A
FACES	B	A	A -	A	A -	B	B +	B +
READING	C +	B +	B -	B +	B -	B -	C +	C -
OVERALL GRADE, COMMENTS	B: Remarkably, this Sylvania incandescent was the lowest-rated bulb. It appeared "much warmer" than the others, but yellow colors "appeared greenish."	A: One of the top bulbs for reading and illuminating faces, the best-in-test N:Vision was noticeably "slow to warm." Still, it was "nice, pleasing and good overall."	A- Despite its middling luminosity, the Westinghouse Natural Light bulb was ranked by our reviewers as one of the brightest, giving our model a "healthy" glow.	A- The Philips tied the N:Vision as the best bulb for illuminating faces. Participants found it "warm and cozy," but "slightly diffuse" and "not very bright."	A- The MaxLite excelled at rendering colors. It appeared to emit light reminiscent of the "sun at the beach," with "very good color vibrancy."	A- The Sylvania Daylight Extra tied the MaxLite in best color rendering. It was a "nice, ice white" though also potentially "too bright for a heavy reader."	B+: Westinghouse's soft white bulb was an average scorer overall. Its "warm" light appeared very low, and hurt one person's eyes while reading.	B+: The GE Soft White was also an average scorer, but had a low rating as a reading light. Its "yellow" light produced "accurate" color, but details were difficult to distinguish.

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