

## How New Taps Can Refresh Your Bathroom

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Even if your bathroom is clean, spacious and modern, it may lack that extra zing to make it perfect. You can enhance your old or new bathroom by adding the smallest of items: new taps! But what type of tap do you choose? Can you fit them yourself? The range of tap styles is huge. From minimalist to luxury, modern to traditional, classical to contemporary there are taps to suit your bathroom style. Don't take your taps for granted; there's a lot about them you probably aren't aware of.

### History at Your Fingertips

The humble tap has evolved a lot over the last few thousand years. The ancient Egyptians and Greeks were the first to invent simple valves. They diverted water from streams and rivers which was then used for drinking and farming. Water was now under control! The Romans took this idea further and piped water from wells and tanks into homes and public buildings. It wasn't until the late 1800s that the tap we are familiar with today was invented. The modern tap is a simple and very effective device. Inside the tap there is a valve or stopcock which stops or allows water to flow. Most taps have this design. The rest of the tap is just a means of directing water from your pipe. This means that designers have had a lot of fun creating ornate styles without affecting how the tap works.

### Types of Taps

Taps are made from a range of materials, some more practical than others. For a bathroom, it's best to choose a hard-wearing tap made from brass rather than plastic. They will stand up to more knocks and have a longer lifespan. The most recognisable tap to most of us is the traditional Victorian tap. It's elegant design fits in with most types and styles of bathroom. Lever taps are very popular with people who like a modern look. They are easier for small children and the elderly to use as turning them on places less stress on the joints. You can opt for traditional sink taps or mixer taps. The advantages of mixer taps is that they save energy and water and allow a constant flow of cold, warm and hot water.

### Washer or Ceramic Disc?

There are two ways the inside of a tap works, and both have pros and cons. Washer taps are the more traditional design and have a spindle, valve and washer. They are for use with both high and low pressure water systems, but washers will need replacing. The alternative is a tap that uses ceramic discs instead of a valve and washer. Upon pulling the lever two ceramic discs move apart and allow the water to flow. You'll never have to change a washer, they don't drip, are easy for the less able to turn on and off, and have a very long lifespan.

### Fitting and Changing Your Taps

Someone with basic plumbing skills can fit or change a tap. Ease of fitting depends on your type of connector: a flexible hose or a rigid pipe. A flexible hose is easier to work with as it bends into any shape or space but is not as hard-wearing as a pipe. You need to make sure your water supply is turned off before you start! Loosen the nut that connects the pipe or hose to the tap with a spanner or wrench. If the nuts won't budge and space allows, try cutting them with a hacksaw then prising them apart with a screwdriver. Remove the taps. Give the area around the taps a good clean. Check the connectors on the end of the hose or pipe for any damage and replace if need be. Give them a good clean with an old toothbrush. Replace the rubber or fibre washer in the pipe or hose connector. Connect the taps to the pipe or hose using a spanner or wrench. Turn the taps on full to flush out any debris. Turn off the water if you get any leaks and recheck the connectors and replace if any flaws are found. As always, if you are in any doubt about what to do, contact your local plumber.

If you want to bring your bathroom up to date or just fancy a change, shiny new taps are a quick, easy and cheap way to bring new life to your bathroom.

Harry Young is Internet Marketing Project Manager for Tapsnbaths, the online specialists in quality affordable bathroom products. To see our full product range, including [taps](#), [baths](#), and bathroom suites visit [TapsnBaths](#).

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