

THE PROCESS OF REPLACING AN LED STRIP

Remove the Old Strip

You can typically pull the existing LED strip off with your hands. Doing so however will likely leave some 3M tape residue. We like to use an erasing wheel with variable speed drill to quickly remove that residue. If you don't have an erasing wheel and variable speed drill handy, you can use a plastic putty knife coupled with some solvent and/or rubbing alcohol. If you're putting a new LED strip in the same place, it's not as important to get all of the residue off.

Wiring in the new LED Strip

If you're replacing an existing LED strip, we suggest first making sure the new replacement LED strip is cut to the proper length. Once the LED strip is mounted, you will not be able to cut it. So dry mount and/or measure the strip to make sure it fits in the location you are going to mount it.

If replacing an existing strip, we like to use crimp-on butt connectors or crimp-on closed end cap connectors to make the power lead connection coming from the LED strip to the existing power lead coming from the LED controller or power source. Simply cut the power lead on both sides and then strip back each of the inner power lead wires. Depending upon the type of led lights you're replacing, you'll have 2 (single color), 4 (rgb), 5 (rgbw, rgba) or 6 (rgbww) conductors to work with. A pair of crimping pliers is helpful but you can also use vise grips or similar pliers that allows you to crush the crimp-on connector onto the wires. If you're in a hurry, you can also just twist the copper wires together vs using a crimp on connector. If you're going to twist them together, it's super important to make sure you seal up each connection such that none of the individual copper wires stick through the tape and touch the other wires. Another option is to solder the wires together although it's over-kill in our view. Make sure you match up the colors (e.g. black to black, red to red, etc.). When you're done making the connections, we like to use split-loom to cover the wires. Be sure to secure the end of the power lead where it meets the LED strip to the mounting surface using butyl and/or zip ties/zip tie mounts.

After you have the power lead connected to the LED strip, we strongly suggest testing the new led strip BEFORE moving on to the mounting step. If the LED strip doesn't light as it should, you'll need to double check your connections.

Preparing the Mounting Surface

It's important the mounting surface be thoroughly cleaned – free of grease and dirt. We suggest using rubbing alcohol to do this. Once the surface is cleaned, paint on the 3M Adhesion Primer where you're going to be mounting the new LED strip. You can use any clean rag to apply the primer. You don't need a lot of it. Just make sure the entire mounting surface is primed.

Mounting the New LED Strip

Assuming you've prepared the mounting surface using 3M Adhesion Primer and the LED strip is confirmed to be working properly, the process of mounting the LED strip is the easy part. We like to start at the point where the LED strip meets the power lead. First peel off the red backing tape from the LED strip and gently press the LED strip/power lead connection to the mounting location. No need to put a lot of pressure on it. If the surface is properly prepared with 3M adhesion primer, the LED strip will instantly bond to the mounting surface. From that point you can gently unroll the rest of the LED strip along the mounting surface; gently pressing the strip against the mounting surface along the way. When done, be sure to tie up any loose power lead cable so it doesn't hang or put stress on the led / power lead connection. You can do this using zip ties, zip tie mounts and/or butyl tape (or combination of all.) The goal is to make sure the power lead doesn't move or vibrate such that it stresses the point at which it connects to the LED strip.