

## Re: Question about reversed-polarity in an AC outlet

*Source:* <http://sci.tech-archive.net/Archive/sci.electronics.misc/2005-02/0504.html>

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*From:* Sam Goldwasser ([sam\\_at\\_saul.cis.upenn.edu](mailto:sam_at_saul.cis.upenn.edu))

*Date:* 02/22/05

Date: 22 Feb 2005 17:05:00 -0500

"Bob Myers" <nospamplease@address.invalid> writes:

> *"Sam Goldwasser" <sam@saul.cis.upenn.edu> wrote in message*  
> *news:6w650klkwo.fsf@saul.cis.upenn.edu...*  
> > *John Miller <me@privacy.net> writes:*  
> >  
> > > *Sam Goldwasser wrote:*  
> > > > *From the point of view of user safety, it shouldn't matter.*  
> > > > *<and>*  
> > > > *There will be some differences like whether the shell or center of a*  
> > > > *light bulb socket is electrically live if the switch is off.*  
> > >  
> > > *Ummm...you don't see just the least bit of inconsistency in those two*  
> > > *comments?*  
> >  
> > *Pick all the nits you want but you aren't supposed put your fingers in*  
> > *the socket when changing a light bulb.*  
>  
> *True, but I'm afraid you're missing something here, Sam.*  
>  
> *It's not a matter of "putting your fingers in the socket"; when*  
> *unscrewing a bulb, there will be a time when the threaded side*  
> *of the bulb's base will be both (a) exposed and (b) still in*  
> *contact with the side of the socket. It would be a Really*  
> *Good Thing if the live side of the connection (which is*  
> *SUPPOSED to be at the contact to the bulb tip, not the*  
> *side) were disconnected before that happens, don't you think?*

I do agree that in a matter of diminishing returns, having the center hot rather than the outer shell is better, though you have to admit it would take some effort to reach *\*around\** the bulb to get at the base while changing the bulb. Oh, but I forgot, people ARE morons and have no idea that touching the base could be a bad thing. And, of course, should the bulb break, it's less likely that you would end up touching the center than the outer shell when removing it with a potato.

sci.electronics.misc: Re: Question about reversed-polarity in an AC outlet

Would you legislate that ALL lamps in the USA be required to be made and retrofitted to have polarized plugs way and have the LAMP POLICE do regular inspections to assure that?

How many lamps in your house have non-polarized plugs? :) How many times have you replaced the plug or cord without noting which side was which?

--- sam | Sci.Electronics.Repair FAQ Mirror: <http://repairfaq.ece.drexel.edu/Repair> | Main Table of Contents: <http://repairfaq.ece.drexel.edu/REPAIR/> +Lasers | Sam's Laser FAQ: <http://repairfaq.ece.drexel.edu/sam/lasersam.htm> | Mirror Sites: [http://repairfaq.ece.drexel.edu/REPAIR/F\\_mirror.html](http://repairfaq.ece.drexel.edu/REPAIR/F_mirror.html)

Note: These links are hopefully temporary until we can sort out the excessive traffic on Repairfaq.org.

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