

Re: Red, Green, Black, and White Wires

Source: <http://sci.tech-archive.net/Archive/sci.electronics.repair/2008-02/msg01137.html>

- *From:* "James Sweet" <jamessweet@xxxxxxxxxxx>
 - *Date:* Tue, 19 Feb 2008 23:27:37 GMT
-

My reservation about color-taping was not directed at professionals, but at the odd homeowner 15 or 20 years down the line. The practice is apparently more common than I imagined, and—red or black—would flag itself to a pro.

The most common place you see this is in switch legs where power is supplied directly to the ceiling box where the light fixture is mounted and then a separate drop goes from that to the switch. In that case both wires in that drop are technically hot, so the white one gets taped black and connects to the light fixture.

The ones that get me are those houses where someone used whatever color wire they had on hand for whatever, I see that in cars a lot of times too. Always verify, and never underestimate the crazy things that some previous person may have done. When I bought my house, all the switches downstairs were on the neutral side which caused me to get bit pretty good once. Yes, I should have shut off the breaker.