

# IR LIGHTING EXPLAINED

“IR illumination is best thought of as a torch beam built into cameras rather than a floodlight.”



IR LEDs when built into CCTV cameras can give illumination in areas with no other light source. However it's really important to understand that the actual output power of the built in IR LEDs is very low, typically 3-10 watts. If you think of how bright a 10w bulb is, you will quickly come to the conclusion "not very". This is why cameras with built in IR LEDs will not actually illuminate a very big area at all. The IR illuminators built into these cameras are best thought of as "invisible torch lights" just like a medium powered hand held torch. So what you could see with a torch, you would more or less get with these IR cameras.

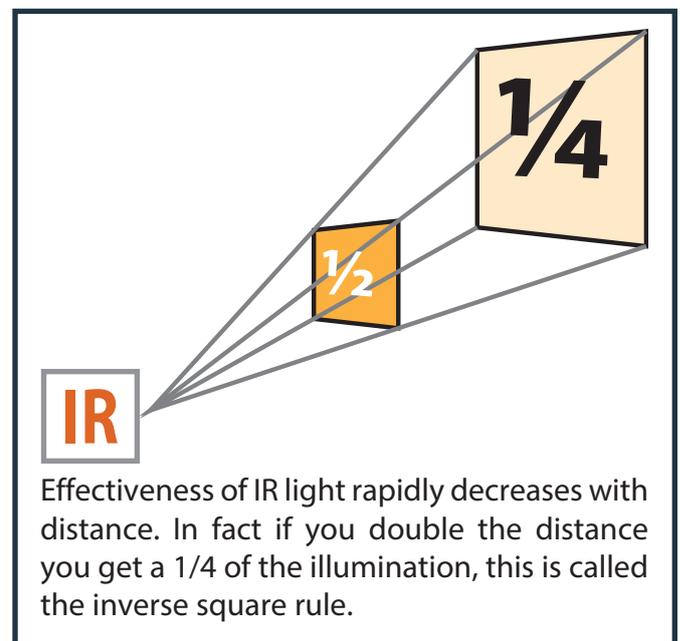
Like a torch, the IR light is very directional more of a spot light than a floodlight. Of course some IR cameras are more powerful than others but few, if any, can offer any genuine useable "floodlighting" of any kind.

Because the built in IR illumination is very much a torch light, users of such cameras will often describe people's faces being "bleached out" just like shining a torch at someone's face close up! This can be a



real problem with cameras with built in IR lights. If this reflection is a problem and you get "bleached out" faces then the camera is generally too close to the subject it's looking at or the IR illuminator is too powerful for the location it's used in such as an entrance porch.

When you need extra illumination you can use IR lights. By using these as a light source for a CCTV camera we can get the most out of CCTV surveillance. Our FireFly IR lamp has a dual cluster design so you don't need to sacrifice the length of illumination to the wide angle of light. See opposite for more information.



## Please Note

These "Technical Tips" help sheets aim to answer commonly asked questions in a concise and informative manner - they are for advice & guidance only and do not replace any of the manuals or other literature supplied with our products.

Last edited:  
02/04/2014