Wall light and sconce *heights*, projection and control heights

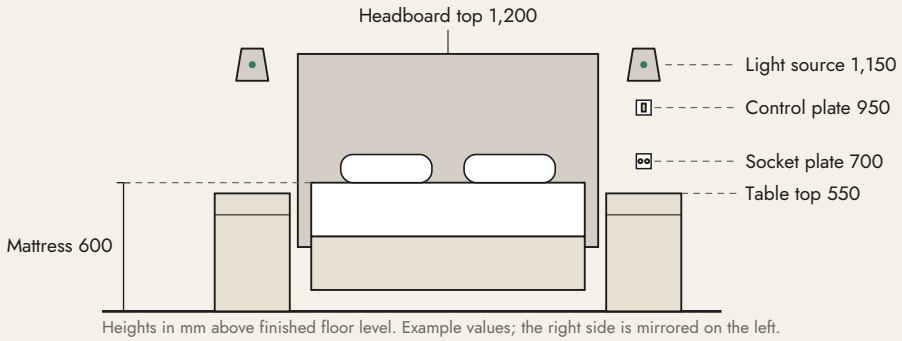
No standard sets a wall light height, and published rules of thumb disagree because they measure from different places. Fix the datum, test on a mock-up, and keep controls inside the Approved Document M ranges.

Compliance guidance. Control heights are quoted from Approved Document M volume 2 (2015 edition incorporating 2020 and 2024 amendments) and volume 1 (2015 edition incorporating 2016 amendments), both for England, read on 5 November 2026. Wall light heights are published conventions, not regulation. Check the current edition, your building control body and an accessibility consultant. This is guidance, not legal, electrical or accessibility advice, and the studio does not certify compliance.

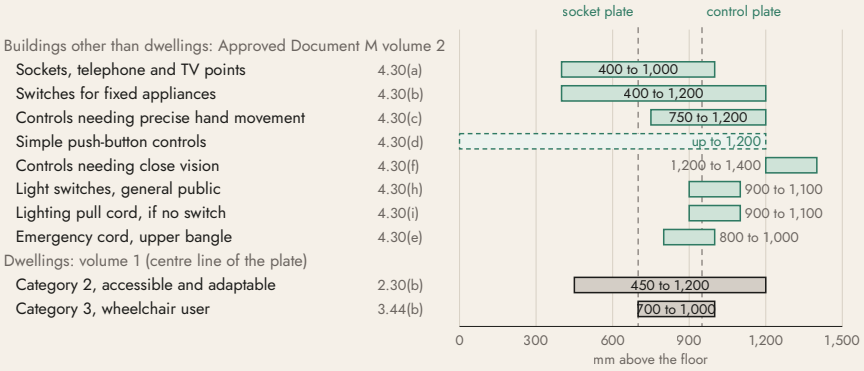
AT A GLANCE

Wall light	Measure from	Starting range, mm (practice)	Check before you fix it
Bedside reading light, adjustable	Top of the finished mattress, to the centre of the light source	250 to 460 above the mattress: about 850 to 1,060 above the floor on a 600 mattress	Sit up against the finished headboard and mark the wall. A guide that measures to the *bottom* of the fitting gives 760 to 900.
Ambient sconce beside a bed or sofa	Finished floor, to the centre	1,500 to 1,700	The 'eye level' rule is for glare control, not reading. Keep the lamp out of the line of sight.
Corridor or hall sconce	Finished floor, to the centre	1,500 to 1,700, one height all along. Spacing 1.8 to 2.4 m (UK guide), 2.4 to 3.0 m (US guides)	Door swings, glare, and how far it stands out (Approved Document M 3.14).
Mirror light, side-mounted	Finished floor, to the centre	About 1,500 to 1,800, near standing eye height. Above a mirror: 1,900 to 2,030 (one US guide)	One each side of the mirror. Zone and IP rating first.
Switches, sockets, controls beside it	Finished floor	Set by Approved Document M: see the controls section	Sockets 400 to 1,000; precise controls 750 to 1,200; public light switches 900 to 1,100 (volume 2).

Millimetres. Starting ranges are conventions from retailer and designer guides (several US, converted from inches); no standard sets them. Test each on a mock-up. Control heights are the only regulated figures.



Bedhead wall in elevation, mm above finished floor. Example values, not recommendations. Original drawing.



Approved Document M ranges (editions as in the notice), mm above the floor. Dashed: example plates.

SPECIFICATION WORDING

BEDSIDE WALL LIGHT

Wall light [type reference], one each side of the bed, centre of the light source [550] mm above the finished mattress top (mattress top [600] mm above finished floor level, so [1,150] mm). Projection from the finished wall face not more than [200] mm at full shade swing. Cable outlet at [ ] mm; backplate [ ] mm wide. Heights and datum confirmed on a mock-up with the real mattress and a seated person, and written on the shop drawing, before first fix.

SWITCHES AND SOCKETS AT THE BEDHEAD

Control plates at [950] mm and socket plates at [700] mm above finished floor level, to the centre of the plate, the whole plate inside the range of Approved Document M volume 2, paragraph 4.30 ([2015 edition incorporating 2020 and 2024 amendments]), accepted by [building control body / access consultant]. Front plates contrast with their background; no control needs both hands.

MIRROR LIGHT

Mirror light [type reference], one each side of the mirror, centre of the light [1,650] mm above finished floor level and [ ] mm from the mirror edge. IP rating [ ] for [zone], confirmed by [electrical designer] against BS 7671 section 701 as in force. Position tried on a paper template before first fix.

TERMS USED

IP rating

A two-digit code for how well an enclosure resists solid objects (first digit) and water (second digit).

Datum

The surface or point a measurement starts from, such as the finished floor or the top of the mattress. A height without a datum is ambiguous.

Finished floor level (FFL)

The height of the completed floor surface, including any carpet, rug allowance or underfloor build-up. Heights on a drawing are measured from it.

First fix

The stage when cables, boxes and fixing points go in before walls and joinery are closed up.

STANDARDS AND SOURCES

- Approved Document M (England): volume 2, 2015 edition incorporating 2020 and 2024 amendments; volume 1, 2015 edition incorporating 2016 amendments: read: vol 2 1.39, 3.14, 4.24 to 4.30, 4.34 (pp.23, 31, 43 to 45); vol 1 1.18, 2.30, 3.44 (pp.9, 22, 49 to 50).
- BS 8300-2:2018 and BS 7671 section 701: named only; not read, no figure quoted.
- Eye heights: NC State Ergonomics Center, ANSUR II tables: US adults, indicative.

Full guide: https://makebespoke.com/trade/technical/wall-lights-and-sconces-heights. Make Bespoke Studio coordinates manufacture through its partner workshops. Figures are guidance only and your specification governs; some may be superseded, so contact the studio to verify.