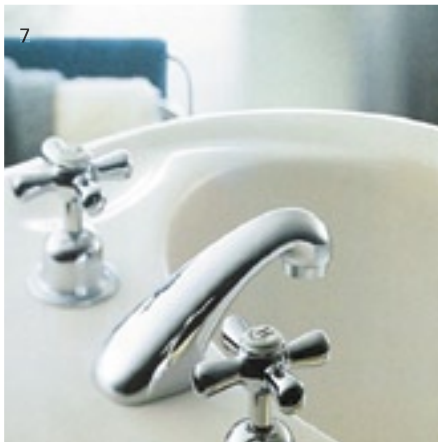


taps



1. Ideal Standard from Robertson Agencies
2. Grohe Eurodisc
3. Grohe Minta
4. Elementi from Robertson Agencies
5. Tower Tech from Milano Agencies
6. Methven Pioneer
7. Methven Belaire
8. Frame Extended Basin Mixer from Robertson Agencies

Resene Tapa 

Walk into any plumbing store, and you'll find a diverse variety of taps: bathroom taps, kitchen taps, classic curves, contemporary angles, mixers, single levers, cheap ones, expensive ones. So many, in fact, that it can be difficult to know where to begin.

However, choosing a tap boils down to style, practicality and budget. The key is to find your place in the matrix, says Chris Stanford of LG Carder.

What does your bathroom or kitchen look like, and will a traditional shape or a modern, minimalist tap suit best? Will the tap be a feature of the bench or is it in the background? Do you want to be able to nudge up the temperature of the water with your elbow? Do you want a pull-out spray for rinsing the lettuce? Answering these questions will help you find the perfect tap.

However, there's another essential aspect to consider before you head out to the plumbing shop. Is your water high or low pressure? If you don't know, check your hot water cylinder or system, or ask your plumber. If you have low water pressure, your choices will be limited, but fortunately firms such as Methven and Greens make a selection of taps that deliver great performance under low pressure.

Also important are the inner workings of a tap, which are often ceramic, offering durability, low maintenance and improved performance. Ceramic discs replace washers, eliminating dripping, while ceramic cartridges allow you to turn the tap off in as little as a quarter turn.

Chris says finding a good quality tap comes down to the manufacturer. The better the quality of the raw materials they use, the better the taps they produce. Many taps are made from brass and then plated in chrome to give them the popular silver finish. Good quality taps have a very limited amount of lead in the brass, which is better for your health. They also have a generous coating of chrome and use technology that ensures it adheres well to the brass.

"Some of the problems you will face with a cheap tap include chrome peeling off, and water dripping and leaking. It's worth investing in quality – ask your stockist to recommend some of the better brands," says Chris. "You should note, though, that the performance of your tap will be affected by the quality of workmanship when it's installed. Your plumber will have a huge impact on how well your tap works, so choose wisely." **H**

When choosing taps, ask about:

- Water pressure required
- Manufacturing materials
- Ergonomics
- Internal movement components
- Additional features

Visit www.lgcarder.co.nz to get started.

Find a Master Plumber close to you at www.masterplumbers.org.nz.