When it comes to choosing lighting for your home or workplace, there are many factors to consider, such as brightness, energy efficiency, and colour temperature. However, one factor that is often overlooked is colour rendering index (CRI). In this blog post, we'll explore what CRI is, why it's important, and how you can use it to make informed decisions about your lighting choices.

What is CRI?

CRI is a measure of how well a light source is able to reveal the true colours of objects as compared to a natural light source, such as the sun. It is a scale from 0 to 100, with 100 being the best possible score. A light source with a CRI of 85 or higher is generally considered to be high quality, while anything below 80 is considered poor.

Why is CRI important?

There are many reasons why CRI is an important factor to consider when choosing lighting. First and foremost, lighting can have a significant impact on the way we perceive colours. If a light source has a low CRI, it may cause colours to appear dull, washed-out, or inaccurate. This can be particularly problematic in environments where accurate colour perception is important, such as art studios, retail spaces, or medical facilities.

In addition, lighting with a low CRI can make it more difficult to distinguish between colours, which can be a safety hazard in certain situations. For example, if you're working in a garage or workshop, it's important to be able to distinguish between different coloured wires, which can be difficult if the lighting has a low CRI.

Finally, lighting with a low CRI can also have a negative impact on our mood and wellbeing. Research has shown that exposure to natural light, which has a CRI of 100, can help regulate our circadian rhythms, improve our sleep quality, and boost our mood. While artificial lighting can never fully replicate the benefits of natural light, choosing lighting with a high CRI can help to create a more natural, comfortable environment.

How can you use CRI to make informed lighting choices?

When selecting lighting, it's important to pay attention to the CRI of the light source. This information can usually be found on the packaging or in the product specifications.

In general, it's a good idea to choose lighting with a CRI of 80 or higher, especially in environments where accurate colour perception is important. However, it's also important to consider other factors, such as colour temperature and brightness, as well as your personal preferences and needs.

In conclusion, CRI is an important factor to consider when choosing lighting for your home or workplace. By understanding what CRI is, why it's important, and how to use it to make informed lighting choices, you can create a comfortable, safe, and visually appealing environment that meets your needs and preferences.