



## Liteup Blocks – White Street Lamp Post USB Light (Summer 2014)



Liteup Blocks are a Hong Kong based enterprise specialising in... yes, light blocks. There are a number of companies around the globe filling in where LEGO do not easily provide – new technology LED-fitted bricks for lighting up models. Most have copied the only genuine LEGO item with a 2x4 clear brick carrying a light and battery. Generally they have produced a choice of colours and some have flashing and colour-changing effects. Liteup also make 2x3 and 2x4 bricks and 1x4, 1x6 and 1x8 plate down-lighters.

Liteup Blocks also decided to market in a different area – that of street furniture. Their new offering was a lamp post, powered by a USB connector running off a 5V supply. This was envisaged to be useful for a number of my building projects, but seemed most appropriate for some station platforms I'd built. Two colours of post were available – black or white – and two colours of light – bright white or amber. Of these, the white post and amber light was the closest match to the slightly faded and depressingly overcrowded cold and drizzly UK Home Counties suburban railway feel. Price was set at \$3, which worked out at around £1.85 each (including postage). It should be noted that just buying the genuine LEGO parts without the lighting on the internet would be at least half this amount. An order was placed for 10 lights, which duly arrived in about 10 days.

The lamp post was based on the older four-fluted LEGO part 2039. It looked and felt identical, and only the lack of markings on the underside of the base identified it as non-LEGO. The glass was based around the LEGO minifig head 3626 but had a completely open stud, presumably to aid heat dissipation. The small 2x2 radar dish also had a hole in the top just as the genuine part. The LED was fixed inside the lamp post, but the glass and dish were not stuck and were removable. The wire was about 15cm in length and came out of a small notch in the bottom of the base so it could be fixed on a flat plate. The large USB connector meant that it would not be possible to run the wire underneath a baseplate and would need some hiding in a typical street diorama. This was not too much of a problem for the station set-up I had intended.



***This is what you get – can't fault the description much. USB wire is about 15cm long. Light is very orange – more of a neon glow than amber.***

Testing of the light showed an orange colour similar to streetlight neon. The light was of medium brightness, but even this shone straight through the thin radar dish making it glow in low ambient light. This occurred with the Liteup dish or a genuine LEGO part. Solutions to this could include either spray-painting the underside of the dish or applying a thin layer of foil. Lighting has always been a problem for LEGO as the plastic does tend to let light through. The effect was found to be not that obvious in daylight, so would be OK for shows.

From previous experience with the varying build quality of Chinese electrical goods, a 5V 2A USB power supply was deliberately sourced from a UK manufacturer. Connection of multiple lamp posts through USB splitters showed that it could handle the 10 lights. The Liteup Blocks packaging did not state the power of the lights.

Summary: Effective product that fills a useful gap. Quality is very similar to LEGO and price is competitive.

Maybe you'll be brave enough to use a Chinese power supply.

I wasn't.

Scores	Street Lamp post
Quality*	90
Value	100
Fit*	100
Compatibility	100
Minifig*	N/A
Design	90
Instructions	N/A
<b>Total</b>	<b>96</b>