**What gases are used in neon signs?**

[John Flavin](https://www.quora.com/profile/John-Flavin-1), Geochemistry (Imperial College) & Occupational applications

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Helium, neon, argon and krypton are used in decorative gas lighting, collectively called "neon" lights. Noble gases are used because they are inert. Argon added to light bulbs retards the oxidation of the tungsten filament. The gases used in lighting are known to give off distinctive colors when excited by an electric current. Different colors can be achieved by mixing gases or adding substances, like mercury, sodium, and various halides. The added components are vaporized during startup to become part of the gas mixture. 