

# Your Holiday Light-Hanging Guide

It's just about time to think about hanging holiday lights on your house. Do you know how to hang them safely – and with style?

## What Kind of Lights Do You Want to Use?

Before we get to hanging your lights, you need to decide what kind of lights you want, the style of the lights, and how you want to hang them. There are several types of lights available. Whatever type you choose, make sure they are suitable for outdoor use.

Most of these have optional steady and flashing modes, along with auto-timers.



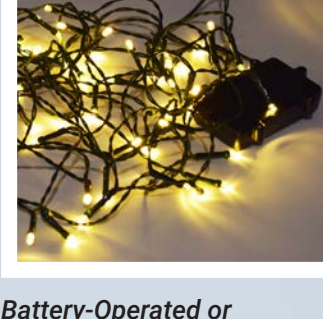
### Incandescent Lights

These are old-style Christmas lights. They are relatively inexpensive, but they use more energy and generate more heat than other lighting options. The reason many people love incandescents is the warm, nostalgic glow they give. LEDs just can't match it.



### LED Lights

Light-emitting diodes, or LED, lights cost more upfront, but use less energy than incandescents, so you can plug in more strands per outlet if using string lights. If you're choosing all white LED bulb lights, buy all of your lights at once – including backup bulbs. White LEDs tend towards either blue or yellow and buying all of your strands and replacement bulbs at once ensures yours will all have the same hue. LEDs are also available in programmable strips that can be customized to any color and flash pattern you desire.

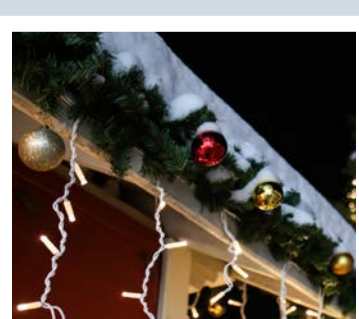


### Battery-Operated or Rechargeable Lights

These lights are easy to use outside because they are not dependent on outlets. They are a great option for hanging on trees, because you don't need to run extension cords.

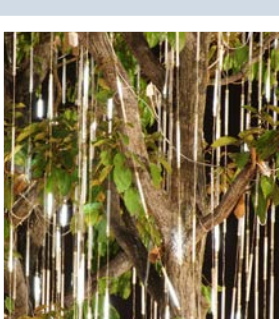
## What's Your Lighting Style?

Christmas lights of all kinds are available in a variety of styles. You can choose one style or mix and match to find the look you want for your house.



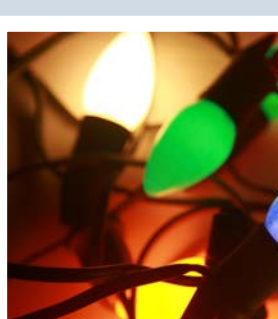
### Icicle Lights

These lights hang down at various lengths to mimic the look of icicles shimmering along your roofline. Make sure you avoid windows and doors – these can get caught easily and be pulled from their clips.



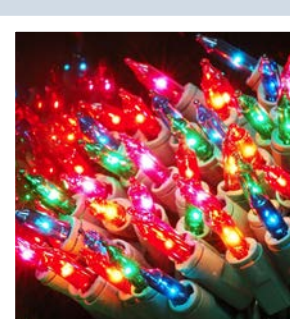
### Raindrop Lights

These lights are encased in tubes and mimic the look of dripping icicles, snowflakes, or raindrops falling. The tubes come in various shapes and sizes.



### Large Bulb Lights

Available in a variety of colors and textures, these lights evoke a feeling of days gone by. Large bulbs may be found in the shape of snowflakes, stars, and more.



### Mini String Lights

These are dimmer than their LED counterparts and may be better suited to your indoor tree than illuminating your home.



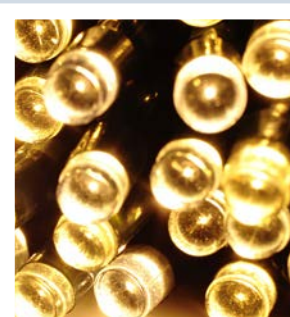
### Rope Lights

Rope lights are simple to use and can be placed on your house, in your landscaping, along walkways, and more. They are basically transparent plastic tubes with lights inside. There's no need to secure each bulb, the "rope" is flexible, and it's easier to make a straight line.



### RGB LED Strip Lights

Looking to really outdo the neighbors this year? RGB LED strips are your lights of choice. The strips contain red, green, and blue lights that can combine to create literally millions of colors. These are the lights you see programmed to flash and move along with Christmas carols. Because there is programming involved, you'll need a computer, WiFi, and an app to help you control the colors and patterns. The light strips, accessories, and hanging methods are also more complicated than string lights, but beginner videos are available online to help you determine the necessary power supply, amperage, controllers, and more. If you're looking for a way to level-up your holiday light display, these are worth the cost and effort.



### Wide-Angle Mini LED Lights

These bulbs have a conical lens that maximizes their light. The hues are the closest an LED gets to the warmth of incandescents, so if you're looking for a brighter option with that feeling, these are your best bet. These are the types of lights most often used in professional, commercial outdoor light displays.

## Designing Your Light Display

The next step is planning how you want to hang your lights. Are you looking for a simple outline of the basic angles of your home, going all-out with lights everywhere, or something in between?

It's important to plan your look ahead so you measure or estimate the amount of lights you'll need to create the look you want. Keep in mind the number of lights that can be plugged into each outlet safely while you make your plan.

### You may choose to do a simple highlight of your home's lines.



### Complement your landscaping to go with the lights on the house...



### Emphasize some focal points...



### Work with the architecture of your home...



## OR GO ALL-OUT!



### Holiday Light Don'ts

- **Don't** use nails or staples to attach anything to your shingles or gutters. Piercing them can lead to water leaks and damage to your home.
- **Don't** use staples or nails to attach lights to your gutters.
- **Never** attempt to hang lights when there is snow or ice on the ground or your roof.
- **Don't** hang your outside lights alone

### Holiday Light Dos

- **Do** use plastic clips that attach to gutters without piercing them.
- **Do** attach to the shingle drip edge if you don't have gutters.
- **Do** use clips that are simple hooks, clip to the line, or clip to the bulb, depending on the lights you use.
- **Do** use special roof peak clips if you are lighting the top of the roof.

## How to Hang Christmas Lights on Your Roof

You've decided on the type and style of lights and how you want to display them on your house. It's time to hang them up! The most difficult part is attaching the lights to the roof.

1. **Plug in the lights** you've purchased to check that they work **BEFORE** you hang them!
2. **Make sure** you know how many strings of lights your circuit can handle. If you aren't sure, ask an electrician for help determining the maximum wattage of your circuit. Plugging too many strings into one outlet can blow a fuse or cause fire safety issues.
3. **Gather what you need for the job**
  - Lights
  - Plastic light hooks or clips suitable for the type of lights you are using
  - Extra adhesive if using LED light strips
  - Exterior extension cords
  - Exterior tape (like Gorilla tape) to secure cords on the ground so nobody will trip on them
  - Ladder
4. **Before you get up on the ladder...**
  - Make sure you are wearing non-slip shoes
  - Place the first two or three clips on the light string to get you started
  - Make sure you're beginning with the correct cord end near enough to your extension cord and outlet
  - Have your helper available
5. **And when you're on the ladder...**
  - Attach clips to the gutter or drip edge
  - Make sure the light string is tight between clips for a clean looking line
  - Move the ladder often so you aren't stretching too far
  - Have your helper add clips to the lights so you can focus on hanging
  - If you prefer, you can use a light hanging pole to reach higher points or avoid a ladder altogether
6. **Secure any exposed cords**
  - Use Gorilla tape or another heavy-duty exterior tape to secure exposed extension cords to the driveway, sidewalk, or garage floor
7. **Enjoy your display!**

