

Christmas Lights Buying Guide



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it's in our nature

It's that time of year to start thinking about Christmas again, particularly if you're the one hosting Christmas dinner this year!

So, we've created a buying guide to bring together our Christmas lighting ideas and provide inspiration for adding some extra sparkle to your home and garden this Christmas.



Why stop at the Christmas tree? Indoor lights twisted around stairways, banisters, galleries and door frames create a beautiful glow, greeting you with a warm, festive feeling when you arrive home after a long day at work. Outdoor Christmas lights transform lifeless gardens and cheer up drab winter nights by adding a touch of magic and festive cheer.



Dobbies have a wide variety of quality lights to choose from. Our Christmas light collections include outdoor and indoor

lights, LED lights, coloured lights and fibre optics, all in a large variety of colours and effects to suit the style of your home and garden.

Create a plan

There are so many styles of Christmas lights available and planning, buying and installing them can be time consuming, so rather than being overwhelmed in the run up to Christmas, it's important to create some sort of plan for indoor and outdoor lighting.

Whether your idea of stylish festive lighting is a Christmas garden wonderland filled with lit sleighs and reindeer or a few modestly lit holy bushes in the front garden, jotting down a few notes and sketches about how you want your home and garden to look and the layout of your display will help bring your ideas to life.

So, first things first:

- **Choose a theme** to match the rest of your Christmas decorations and home décor
- **Create a schedule** which is realistic to the time you have to spend on your project and when you would like to launch your display
- **Create a diagram** which clearly notes every electrical outlet in and around your home. This will help you determine if you need to buy extra adaptors or not
- **Take photos** of your home and garden and sketch out your ideas directly onto the photos using the electrical diagram as a reference. This will help you decide on a style to suit your home and how realistic your ideas are

Choose a theme

Have you ever wondered how the neighbours manage to get their Christmas light displays so immaculately co-ordinated year after year?

Using a common colour or matching colours is the easiest, most effective way of creating a stylish theme for your Christmas light decoration.

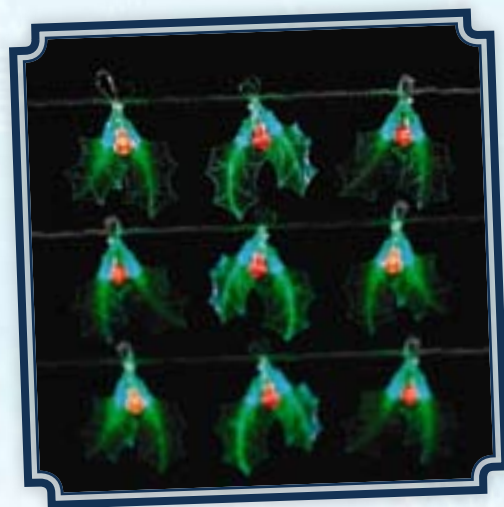
Different light effects (flickering, twinkling, chasing or static) are also a consideration. Whether you're after a dazzling extravaganza or a stylish glow, the way you use different lighting effects can mean the difference between a harmonious and a clashing light display.

For indoor lighting you can use a different colour to suit the décor of each room whereas the use of a single colour in the garden has a more striking effect. Here are some lighting theme ideas:

Warm whites

Using white lights, particularly outdoors creates a look of pure elegance.

For indoors try mixing white lights with gold antique-looking decorations to create a luminous, traditional look and feel. Use twinkling white net lighting in your garden over prominent bushes and trees for a classic Christmas style.



Icy blues

Mixing icy blues and sparkling silver decorations creates a wintry wonderland.

Static blue lights look dazzling when used outdoors; try wrapping them around architectural features such as pillars or walls combined with icicle lights. Introducing other colours however can ruin the magical winter-land effect created by blue lights.



Festive reds

Red lights are best used minimally with other matching colours such as rich purples, regal blues and gold for a luxurious, festive look.

Used indoors, flickering or static festive reds add splendour and warmth. Create a fun, extra-Christmassy style by matching red and green lights with Santa and reindeer figures.



Multicolour

Multicoloured lights are exuberant and cheerful, perfect if you're looking for something a bit different.

Mix and match your colours and light effects to create a vibrant, retro look and feel. Using multicoloured fairy lights indoors and outdoors is the easiest way to create this look... but it's easy to go overboard or clash!



Know your Christmas light styles

It's useful to know the types of Christmas lighting available and how they can be used. The style you choose may depend on the sort of home you live in.

For example, if you live in a Victorian townhouse then a traditional style of lighting can be used to emphasize architectural features. Or if you live in a flat something minimal and funky will make a statement on your balcony or window.

The lighting style that your neighbours go for may also be a consideration if you want to create a uniform effect for a row of terraces. Then again, why not stand out from the crowd and go for something a bit quirky and unusual?

Here's a list of a variety of different styles and uses:



Curtain lights

Curtain lights are made up of strands of lights suspended from a main wire.

They are versatile and can be used indoors and out. They can be used to frame doorways and windows to add a touch of festive style and character.

Fairy lights

A traditional Christmas must have!

Fairy lights are basically a string of lights; they are multi-purpose and can be used indoors and outdoors. Mixing and matching different colours and shapes on your tree creates a magical effect for children.



Net lights

Designed for outdoor use, net lights are perfect for draping over garden foliage such as trees and bushes to create an even coverage.

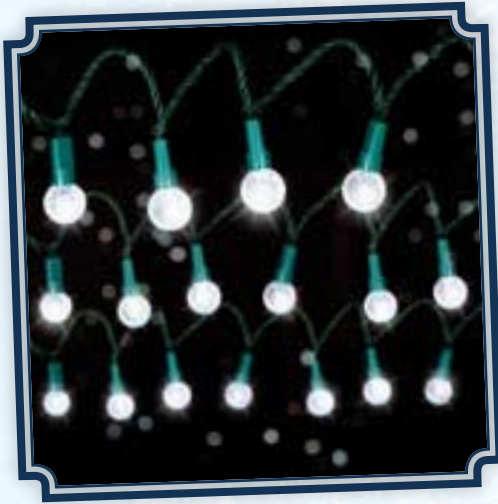
Unlike strings of lights, net lights are easier to set up without getting dangled up in the process.



Drape lights

Drape lights can be used both indoors and outdoors.

They can literally be draped across banisters, fireplaces and doors, creating an elegant look and feel.



Icicles

Icicle lights are better suited for outdoor use where you would probably find natural icicles.

They add a simple seasonal feel to the front garden and can be hung from roof edges, balconies and gates.



Rope lights

Rope lights are probably the easiest type of lights to use.

They are flexible and practical for outdoor use and can be twisted into stars or snowflake shapes or even transformed into a festive greeting. Try wrapping them around posts, pillars or trees without the need for fixtures.



Wreaths and Garlands

These are strands of lights twisted together to create a beautifully lit wreath.

Wrap around stairways and banisters and pillars and gates.



Candle lights

Some candle lights simulate the flickering of a natural flame and are used for indoor decoration, normally on the Christmas tree.

For a stand-alone feature you can add candle bridges on top of mantles and window sills.



Novelty lights

Everybody owns an old favourite set of novelty fairy lights that decorate the Christmas tree every year.

Novelty lights add a bit of fun to Christmas and love them or hate them, you'll probably not get away with missing them out of your Christmas decoration plans if you have kids. They come in all colours and sizes including snowflakes, snowmen, lanterns, Santas, stars and angels.



Fibre optics

Fibre optic lights are colourful and dazzling.

Fibre optic trees illuminate your home in an understated way; the tiny twinkling lights are mesmerising and magical.



Indoor

Indoor Christmas lights should be used to brighten up hallways and entrances so that you're greeted with a warm, festive feeling every time you come home.

Decorating and lighting up your doorway and banister gives a Christmassy welcome to your guests. Outline the door frame with white outdoor fairy lights entwined with holly or ivy and gold ribbon. Replicate this look inside the hall by wrapping around the banister.



Outdoor

Brighten up the entrance to your house by mixing and matching lights with garlands to decorate garden fences and patio railings.

Why not create an outdoor Christmas tree in the front garden with green and red net lighting or plenty of white twinkling outdoor fairy lights. Use plastic weather-resistant ribbons and decorations and add bird feeders or make garlands using slices of dried fruit to your tree to help attract the robins.

Alternatively blue twinkling lights over hedges and pillars and icicle lights hung up on the door frame gives a beautiful wintry atmosphere.



LED Christmas lights

LED (Light Emitting Diodes) lights produce stunning light and colour and can be used indoors and outdoors. They are extremely energy and cost efficient; they don't radiate heat but are extremely bright and are long-life so a single set will last for years and years. This makes LED lights the most efficient type of light for outdoor and indoor use:

- **Safe**

LED lights don't radiate heat and so are a safe option if you have children around as they never get hot to the touch and are safe around indoor furnishings.

- **Environmentally friendly**

The energy consumption of LED is much lower than conventional lights.

- **Cost efficient**

Because of their low energy consumption, running costs are greatly reduced.

- **Long bulb life**

LED bulbs can last up to 10 times longer than other bulbs. Because they are semi-conductors there is no filament to break!

- **Hassle-free**

LED bulbs don't need replacing so no bulb changing is required and because of their fuse bulb technology, if one bulb does fail then all the other bulbs will remain lit.

- **Connectable**

Most LED lights are connectable meaning that you can connect them to multiple light sets from the one plug.



Make use of old Christmas lights

Christmas will fly by before we know it. It's a shame to see Christmas decorations being boxed away to wait another year but your Santa figurines and holy wreaths would look a bit odd left on display.

There is no reason thought why you can't be creative and make the most of your Christmas lights after the festive season has passed.

Here are some ideas

Indoor and outdoor Christmas lights can be re-used all year round to brighten up and add charm to your home in the winter months or to create a romantic atmosphere in the garden during the summer evenings

Try using white fairy lights to brighten up dark alcoves or hallways and use coloured lights in the bedroom to frame beds and create a cosy atmosphere to suit the style of your room.



For a decorative feature on the fireplace small fairy lights look particularly fetching twisted round ornaments, synthetic flower bouquets or nailed to the frame of the mantle piece.

During the summer evenings nothing beats sitting out on the garden or patio with a glass of wine. Outdoor lights beautifully brighten up patios, decking and outdoor eating areas and can prolong a summer evening entertaining guests. Rope lights are easy to use and can be

wrapped around fencing or fairy lights can be carefully twisted around guttering or even wall panels used for climbing plants for a romantic atmosphere.

We all love the cheerful atmosphere lights bring to our home and garden, so why limit ourselves to just two or three weeks a year? Spending some time creating atmospherically lit spaces around the home and garden will not only take your mind of the fact that the festive season is over but you'll be glad you decided to invest some time and money on creating a beautiful Christmas light display this year.

