



10 Tips for Safer Christmas Lights!

May your days be merry and bright... I love Christmas lights, one of my favourite things about Christmas Time are all the lights, when we all come out to celebrate the 'Best Time of Year'; it's a great spectacle, but (uh oh... Bah Humbug!) could you putting your home at risk?



Christmas lights get bigger & brighter every year, unless you're the council - I remember the days when local villages & cities went to TOWN with Christmas! So whether you've decked the halls, corridors, walls or even the garden with Christmas lights – or simply gone for a more modest illumination around the tree – please do make sure it's all safe, don't be the next Clark Griswold... Whoa, what?! You don't know who Clark Griswold is...



Many people in the UK (I hear 42%, or something like that) care more about how well-lit their home is than how safe the lights and wiring are – putting their homes at risk of blackouts and even fires, according to the experts.

Here's how to stay safe and avoid putting your home and family at risk:

1. Try to avoid overusing extension sockets and adaptors. Do not plug multiple extensions into each other, as this could overload the plug.
2. Ensure there are no trailing wires or cords than could be a trip hazard – both outdoors and indoors.
3. Use outdoor lights that are certified safe for external use. If you are unsure, check the manufacturer's instructions. They should be IP65 Rated or keep the lights indoors.
4. Only switch them on when you're awake and at home. Leaving them on all day wastes energy (adding to your already high energy bill!) and puts your home at risk of short-circuiting and cutting out. A good idea would be to have them controlled:

- Photocell

- Timers
- Remote

There are some wireless sockets you can use to control the lights here – <https://www.toolstation.com/tp-link-tapo-p100-smart-plug/p59000> - By using these sockets you can control your lights from anywhere – even voice control!

5. Only use Christmas lights from reputable stores that have been certified with by the European Standards Symbol (represented by a CE) and the British Standards Kitemark. Never buy second-hand lights unless you've had them professionally checked.

6. Use LED lights that are battery powered. This type of fairy light can save energy, and many are just as bright as their mains-powered counterparts. They're also safer, and their bulbs are less likely to get hot. The only downside is you can't use them outside and eventually, maybe even over the Christmas Break you'll need to change the batteries.

7. You may think they're unsightly, but don't run the cables under the carpet or anywhere they could be damaged.

8. Leave the lights as they are. It may be tempting to rewire your lights to include 2, 3 or sometimes even 4 sets of lights on a single plug. However, this could cause a fire so should be avoided. Invest in a remote controlled mains socket so you're not constantly crawling under the tree to turn off the lights.

9. Keep obstructions or presents away from plug sockets so they don't overheat and make sure your smoke alarm is working in case there are any

fires. There will be a TEST button on the alarm – Test it NOW.

10. Consider dedicated outdoor plugs for your outdoor lighting. An electrician can install specialist outdoor plugs if you can't do this yourself – they need to be weather and waterproof. It will mean power is distributed more evenly, with less risk of fire and other electrical complications.



The best and most valuable tip I can give you this Christmas is.....

Smile and have a wonderful holiday with family and friends, the world has had a lot going on lately. Shut it all outside and have some quality time with loved ones.

