

## Safety tips

Lighting the exterior of your home can be fun and festive, but it also can be dangerous. Broken lights can cause cuts, frayed cords can cause shocks and faulty lights can cause fires. Falls while hanging lights send thousands of Americans to hospitals each year. Here are some tips from [www.yourepair.com](http://www.yourepair.com) and [www.cableorganizer.com](http://www.cableorganizer.com) for avoiding some of the most common lighting dangers.

- › Use devices approved for outside use by Underwriters Laboratories (UL). A green holographic UL mark means the lights are only approved for indoor use; a red one indicates the product is safe for indoor and outdoor use.
- › Use a ground-fault interrupt outlet that can be turned off from inside the house.
- › Never wrap lighting around metal objects.
- › Inspect all lights new or old before you use them. If cords and plugs are damaged, discard the lights.
- › When replacing a burned-out bulb, make sure the new bulb's wattage rating matches that of the light strand. Unmatched wattages can cause the light string to overheat, creating a fire risk.
- › When working with a ladder, be extra careful in wet conditions and have someone watching you in case you fall.
- › Use low-voltage lights or solar lights to save money and improve safety.
- › Always unplug lights before changing bulbs, replacing fuses or making other repairs.
- › Be careful not to overload extension cords.
- › Every so often, check Christmas light wires to make sure they're not warm to the touch.
- › Always turn off all Christmas lights and decorations before going to bed or leaving the house.

— **Heather Warlick**, Staff Writer

SOURCES: [WWW.YOUREPAIR.COM](http://WWW.YOUREPAIR.COM) AND [WWW.CABLEORGANIZER.COM](http://WWW.CABLEORGANIZER.COM)

