

COMPARE BEFORE YOU BUY



The Homeowner's Ultimate
Guide to Outdoor Lighting



FROM LIGHT UP COLUMBUS, CENTRAL OHIO'S PREMIER LIGHTING EXPERTS



If you're reading this, you're probably imagining your home at night: the trees lit from within, the front walk glowing, the house you love looking like it deserves to look after dark. Before you sign anything, I want you to know how to compare the companies you're considering. Including mine. Lighting is what we've done for 20 years, and the honest truth is that the difference between lighting done right and lighting done cheap shows up fast, usually in February. This guide gives you the questions, the numbers, and a worksheet to keep everyone honest. Use it well.

Chris Apfelstadt, Founder, Light Up Columbus and Christopher A. Lighting Design



GOOD LIGHTING IS NOT ABOUT BRIGHTNESS, IT'S ABOUT WHAT YOU CHOOSE TO REVEAL.



Beauty

Light and shadow, used deliberately, turn your architecture and landscape into the evening version of itself. The goal is a home that looks composed, not floodlit.



Safety and Security

Well-lit steps, paths, and entries prevent stumbles and deter unwanted visitors without turning your yard into a parking lot.



More Home

A lit patio, porch, or garden is usable hours longer, most of the year. You paid for the whole property. Lighting lets you live in it after sunset.



BEFORE



AFTER

THE FIVE KINDS OF OUTDOOR LIGHTING



Landscape Lighting

Permanent low-voltage lighting for trees, beds, paths, and facades. The foundation of everything else.



Permanent Roofline (Gemstone)

App-controlled LEDs tucked into your roofline. Holiday looks without ladders, any color, any night.



Holiday Lighting

Designed, installed, maintained, removed, and stored for you. Your weekends stay yours.



Event Lighting

One unforgettable night, done professionally.



Architectural Lighting

Entries, columns, towers, and structures, treated like the landmarks they are.

Most homeowners start with one and add over time. A good designer will tell you what to phase and what to wire for now, so you never pay twice.

WHAT IT COSTS, HONESTLY

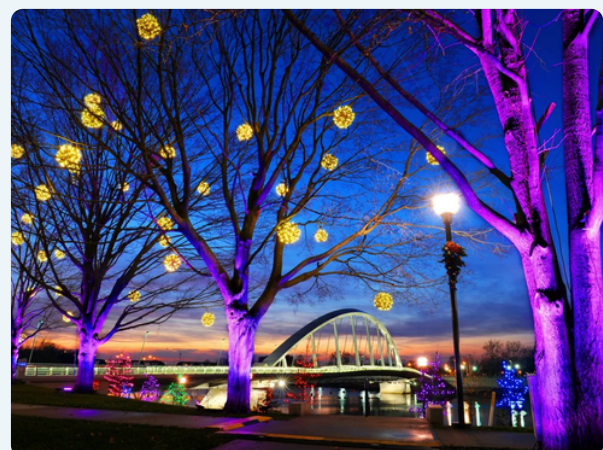


Experts recommend investing 1 to 3 percent of your home's value in outdoor lighting. On a \$700,000 home, that's \$7,000 to \$21,000, and we have clients who spend less and clients who spend much more.

What actually drives the number:

- ✓ Fixture count and quality (brass and quality LEDs cost more and outlast everything else)
- ✓ Design complexity (mature trees, stonework, water features reward expertise)
- ✓ Wiring conditions (long runs, hardscape crossings)
- ✓ What's being phased for later

Be suspicious of any quote that arrives before anyone has walked your property at all, and of prices that seem impossible. They usually are, and the difference is buried in fixture quality, wire connections, and what happens after installation.



THE 10 QUESTIONS TO ASK ANY LIGHTING COMPANY



1.

Will you walk my property before quoting?

A real design begins on site. A per-fixture price means nobody has thought about your home yet. And worse yet is measuring and creating mock-ups from Google Earth images.

2.

Who designs, and who installs?

Ask whether trained lighting installers, not subcontractors, will be in your yard.

3.

Do you come back after dark?

Lighting cannot be finished at noon. Aiming and adjusting at night is the difference between installed and designed.

4.

What fixtures do you use, and why?

Listen for materials and optics, not brand slogans. Then ask what the warranty covers, including labor.

5.

Is outdoor lighting all you do?

Crews that also hang gutters or wash windows treat lighting as an add-on, not a craft.



THE 10 QUESTIONS TO ASK ANY LIGHTING COMPANY



6.

How are connections made?

Wire nuts fail underground. Proper waterproof connections are invisible and boring, which is exactly the point.

7.

What happens when something breaks?

Ask about maintenance plans, spring tune-ups, and whether a human answers in winter.

8.

Can I see work like mine?

Photos are good. Addresses to drive past at night are better. Awards are best.

9.

Are you insured for this work?

Especially for anything involving your roof.

10.

Who owns the design?

If you part ways, you should know what stays.



THE COMPARISON WORKSHEET

Score each company 1 to 5 on every line. Bring this to every quote.

Walked the property before quoting

Outdoor lighting is all they do

Trained in-house installers

Returns after dark to aim and adjust

Fixture quality + written warranty

Waterproof connections, clean wiring

Maintenance program offered

Proof: photos, references, awards

Insured

Gut feel: listened more than they sold



Company A	Company B	Company C

If anyone scores a 50, hire them on the spot. If it's us, we'll bring the champagne.

WHAT WORKING WITH US LOOKS LIKE



Discover

We walk your property with you, capture photos and drone footage, and learn how you live outside.



Design

A fully customized proposal. Artistic, not prescriptive. No cookie-cutter packages.



Install

Exclusively outdoor lighting installers, constant training, meticulous wiring.



Maintain

Annual tune-ups, cleaned lenses, adjusted angles, and lights that look like opening night, every night.





Central Ohio's premier professional lighting experts, 20 years.
AOLP International Best in Show, two years running.
Featured in Masters of Landscape Lighting.

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