



Introduction

Garden lighting plays an important role in both the appearance and usability of your outdoor space.

Done properly, it highlights key features, improves safety, and allows the space to be used effectively after dark. Poorly planned lighting can result in uneven coverage, visible fittings, or installations that do not perform reliably over time.

This guide explains the main lighting options available and what should be considered before installation.

Why Garden Lighting Matters

Garden lighting is not just decorative - it serves several practical purposes:

- Improves visibility for steps, paths, and level changes
- Enhances key features such as planting, walls, and seating areas
- Extends the usable time of your outdoor space
- Creates a more consistent and finished overall appearance

When designed correctly, lighting becomes part of the overall garden layout rather than something added later.

Types of Garden Lighting

There are a range of lighting options available depending on the layout and finish of the space.

These can be grouped into several key categories (outlined below), with a wide variety of designs, colours, and styles available within each.

We can provide guidance on suitable options where required, but final selection is typically based on your own preferences and the overall look you want to achieve.

Most well-designed gardens use a combination of these lighting types rather than relying on a single fitting style.

LED Strip Lighting (Integrated & Feature Lighting)

LED strip lighting is widely used to create continuous, low-level lighting integrated within garden features.

Rather than highlighting individual points, it provides a consistent line of light that can define edges, levels, and key elements within the space.

Best suited for:

- Under step overhangs
- Within wall ledges and seating areas
- Along retaining walls or raised borders
- Integrated into decking or built structures



This type of lighting is typically installed as part of the construction process, as it requires careful positioning and integration to achieve a clean and durable finish.

Recessed & Built-In Lighting

Recessed lighting is installed directly into hard landscaping elements such as steps, walls, and paved areas.

It provides subtle, low-level illumination that improves visibility while maintaining a clean, unobtrusive finish.

Best suited for:

- Steps and level changes
- Pathways and walkways
- Patio edges and transitions
- Low-level feature lighting within structures



These fittings are usually installed during construction, allowing them to be properly integrated into the finished surfaces.

Spike Lights (Planting & Feature Lighting)

Spike lights are commonly used to illuminate planting, trees, and garden features.

They are adjustable and can be repositioned if planting or layouts change over time.

They can also be adjusted to control beam direction and intensity, making them ideal for feature highlighting.

Best suited for:

- Highlighting trees and shrubs
- Creating depth within planting areas
- Feature lighting within borders

They offer flexibility and are often used to complement other lighting within the garden.



Surface-Mounted Wall Lights

Mounted directly onto walls, fences, or structures.

Best suited for:

- General area lighting
- Lighting near doors or seating areas
- Supplementing lower-level lighting



These are often used alongside lower-level lighting to provide a balanced and practical lighting scheme.

Post Lights (Low-Level Bollard Lighting)

Post lights are used to provide general area lighting and define pathways, driveways, and open spaces within a garden.

We typically install low-level post lights (bollard style), which provide practical illumination without overpowering the surrounding space.

Best suited for:

- Pathways and walkways
- Driveways and access routes
- Open lawn or planting areas
- Defining boundaries and garden layout

Lower height fittings are generally preferred, as they provide a more controlled spread of light without creating excessive brightness or glare.



Lighting Design Considerations

The effectiveness of garden lighting depends on how it is planned and installed.

Key factors include:

- Positioning: Lights should be placed to highlight features without causing glare
- Cable routes: Should be planned early to avoid disruption later
- Integration: Lighting should be installed during landscaping where possible
- Durability: All fittings must be suitable for outdoor use
- Maintenance access: Consider how fittings can be accessed in future

Lighting is most effective when considered as part of the overall garden design - not added once the project is complete.

Working with Landscaping Projects

Lighting is most effective when considered as part of the overall garden design not added once the project is complete.

- Installing cables before patios or decking are laid
- Positioning lighting within walls or steps during construction

- Allowing for future access where required

Electrical work is typically coordinated alongside landscapers, rather than carried out independently.

Early coordination helps avoid disruption, reduces rework, and ensures a cleaner overall finish.

Common Mistakes

Common issues we see include:

- Lighting added after landscaping is complete
- Poor positioning resulting in glare or uneven coverage
- Insufficient planning of cable routes
- Using unsuitable fittings for outdoor conditions
- Over-lighting or inconsistent layouts

These issues often result in installations that may look good initially but do not perform reliably over time.

Our Approach

We approach garden lighting as part of the overall installation - not as a separate add-on.

This includes:

- Assessing how the space will be used
- Planning lighting positions alongside the layout
- Selecting suitable fittings based on the environment
- Installing systems that are safe, compliant, and designed to perform reliably over time

Where required, we can advise on lighting options and work alongside your landscaping plans to ensure everything is installed correctly from the start.

Summary

Garden lighting plays a key role in how an outdoor space looks and functions.

By selecting the right types of lighting and ensuring it is properly planned and installed, you can achieve a result that is both practical and visually consistent.

Taking the time to get this right at the planning stage will help avoid common issues and ensure the installation performs reliably over time.