

Lighting Your Windows in a Greener Way

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Design - Take Stock of What You've Got

The great thing about the Light Trail is the variety and imagination that goes into each display.

When you start to plan out your display it really helps to gather together things that you have around the house that you could use, then form the basis of your design around these items. This will mean you don't have to spend money on turning your vision into reality, you can repurpose, reuse and recycle rather than buy something new and save a trip to the shops, or a delivery van making the journey to you.

You can use anything from empty cardboard boxes and packing material (we've all been getting more parcels delivered), old toys, long forgotten craft materials or Christmas decorations nabbed from that box in the attic - or the tree, if like me, you've put it up early. I had a mass of different papers that I've saved from packages over the years.



Design - Natural Supplies

You can also raid the great outdoors! It may be winter but there are a lot of evergreen bushes and you might even find some holly, just don't take too much from one spot or damage the plant. You could also use pinecone, conkers and fallen leaves.

Creating Your Display – Plan to Recycle and Reuse

While putting your display up, think about the waste that will be created when you take it back down and how this can be minimised. I found that my paper tape wouldn't stick to the window (I think it might have been the cold) so I switched to Blu-tac as I should be able to gather it back up to re-use when I take it down. I'll also be able to save most of the paper I used for another project or present wrapping.

If you are using paint to add some colour, think about using it sparingly or just in certain sections. If there is a lot of paint on cardboard or paper it's best not to put it in the recycling as it can contaminate the whole batch that it is added to. Our cardboard is sent to the East of England for

recycling and contaminated batches are then sent back, so that's a lot of miles to sadly end up in landfill.

Paint pens are also great if you have them, or plan to invest for future projects, as they you can create your designs without generating any waste and be used time and time again.



Creating Your Display – It Doesn't Have to be Perfect

Don't worry if things don't quite end up how you planned or something is a little off. I promise, no-one going around the trail enjoying the lovely festive atmosphere is going to mind.

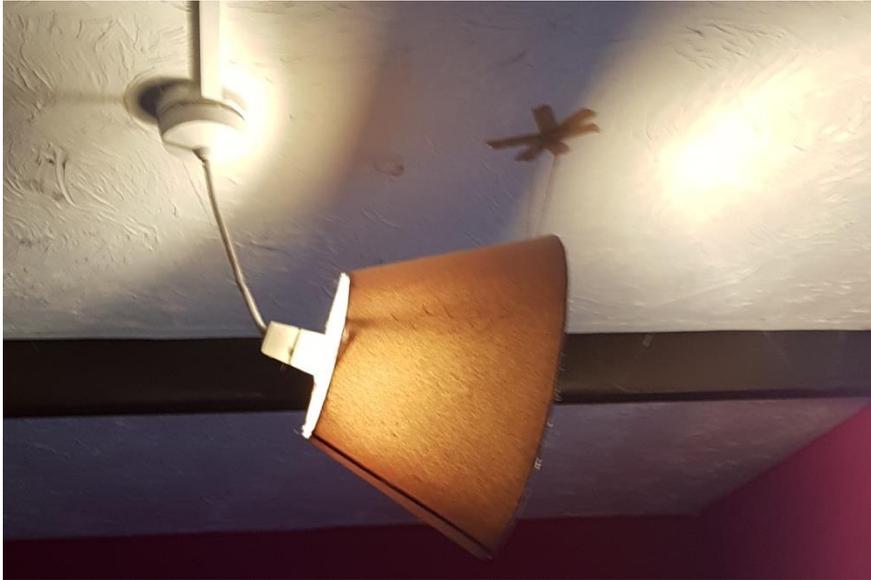
The more you re-do things, trying to make it perfect, the more stress and waste you are creating. Not to mention that a lot of the time you often end up wishing you stuck with the original!

I used some lovely tissue paper I had squirreled away but it wasn't quite big enough to cover the whole window so I've got a couple of gaps at that bottom of mine.



Lights – What's Already On?

The most eco-friendly way to light up your window is by using a light that would normally be on anyway. This way you are not using any additional electricity than usual. We've used a bit of string and paper tape to point our light a bit more towards to the window for maximum affect, while still lighting the room for general use, albeit with a softer glow.



Lights – Don't Burn all Night

If you are using fairy lights, the good news is that the now common LED lights are far better than their traditional counterparts; incandescent lights, as they use 80% less energy. You can also find solar powered lights that should soak up enough rays in the day to light up your display until 8:30.

If you are using a light in the room that isn't usually on or additional plug in lights, set an alarm on your phone to remind you to turn them off at 8:30 so they are not on any longer than needed.



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