

Our Top Tips for Adding Exterior Lighting to Log Homes

Strategically placed lights can enhance your landscape's features and increase your home's safety and security.

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*Photo: Roger Wade, Home: **Town & Country Homes***

Even in the peak of summer when the days are much longer, there can be a sense of “losing the landscape” when night falls. After all, many log and timber homes are **built in areas** without street lamps or even rural dusk-to-dawn light poles.

While this lack of light pollution makes for a magical stargazing setting, creating evening ambiance around your property can showcase a **lush lawn or garden** in a whole new way. Plus, you can boost your safety in the process. Keep these seven key ideals in mind:

1. Be gentle.

Incorporate soft touches of light instead of harsh floodlights or an overabundance of lit areas. That means assessing the best features of your landscape and installing lighting that emphasizes those areas. Be strategic, and choose the plants that look best basked in light.

2. Harness the sun.

Solar-powered lights soak up the sun during the day and use that for power at night. They come in a wide range of options, from task lamps to pathway lighting. Set them in a sunny location so they stay lit longer.

3. Emulate nature.

There are plenty of choices that pick up on natural themes. You might choose a garland-style string of lights that mimic glowing fireflies or flowers, or drape fairy lights along a wall to resemble a waterfall.

4. Show your true colors.

Light affects the color of objects, and can convey coolness or warmth, depending on the bulb's color temperature (Kelvin). Ones that are cooler have a bluish tone and tend to make outside environments look overlit and artificial. A better option is a warm color, like very light orange, which replicates the soft glow of a campfire.

5. Illuminate for safe wandering.

Pathways around garden beds and other landscape features tend to be at a little uneven, making them possible tripping hazards at night. Use low-level lights along the sides, as well as by stairs, to minimize the risk of falls.

6. Secure the premises.

This is one instance where you're not going for a magical mood. Instead, you'll want strategically placed floodlights set off by motion. The best locations are around **driveways**, entrances and the property's perimeter.

7. Highlight your best features.

Architecturally speaking, log and timber frame buildings have a lot of fantastic elements to accentuate. Downlighting within the eaves of a roofline will create rich texture and a warm glow on a log wall. Spotlights angled toward a timber-framed truss will add an air of drama. Unlike your landscape, itself, which is often centered on an abundance of color and contrast, lighting your garden beds, pathways, patios and other hardscapes often benefits from a minimal, selective approach.

As you highlight your favorite areas, you just might find yourself ignoring the stars in the sky to enjoy the stellar spaces that surround your log or timber frame home.
