

The winter holiday season is a great time for festive decorations as friends, families, and co-workers come together for cherished annual traditions.

- Following some important safety tips while decorating for the holidays is a great first step towards ensuring a happy occasion for everyone.

According to the NFPA, December is the peak month for home candle fires.

- Keep candles away from curtains, decorations, and anything else that might be flammable.
- Keep children and pets away from lit candles. Keep matches and lighters up high in a locked cabinet.
- Never use lit candles to decorate a Christmas tree.
- Blow out lit candles when you leave the room or go to bed.



Never place a candle holder, like a Hanukkah menorah or a Kwanzaa kinara, near or under any flammable materials like curtains, tapestries, or books.

If you choose to decorate with a freshly cut tree, it is important that it doesn't become too dry while inside the home.

- Choose a tree with fresh, green needles that do not fall off when touched.
- Before placing the tree in the stand, cut 2" from the base of the trunk.
- Add water to the tree stand. Be sure to add water daily.
- Get rid of the tree after Christmas or when it is dry.
- Dried-out trees are a fire danger and should not be left in the home or garage or placed outside against the home.

Do not stand on furniture or any other object that is not meant for climbing on when hanging your holiday decorations. Whether inside or outside, use the correct ladder for the task.

- Don't overreach. Keep your center of gravity, and your body, between the side rails. If you can't easily reach what you need, climb down and move the ladder for easier and safe access to the project area.

Some holiday lights and lighted decorations are only safe for indoor or outdoor use, not both, so make sure the lights you have are being used correctly.



- Replace any string of lights with worn or broken cords or loose bulb connections. Inspect power cords (every year!) to ensure there is no damage to the cord or insulation.
- Read manufacturer's instructions for the maximum number of light strands to connect safely. Do not overload electrical outlets with holiday lighting.
- Use clips, not nails, to hang lights so the cords do not get damaged.
- Outdoor extension cords, lights, and decorations should be plugged into outlets protected by ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs) or into portable outdoor GFCIs.
- Turn off all Christmas tree lights, light strings, and any other lighted decorations before leaving home or going to bed.

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