

As winter draws in and the days get shorter, now seems as good a time as ever to throw some light on the many options available to illuminate your outdoor space. Mirroring the use of lighting techniques in our interior living space, effective lighting is no longer purely a practical function for the outdoor room but is now viewed as an integral element of the overall garden design.



An example of uplighting



Tripping the Light Fantastic



An example of downlighting



Let there be light!

Tripping the Light Fantastic

An example of downlighting



An example of uplighting



Lighting can be used to control which features are highlighted in the garden, drawing attention to key focal points and amplifying their impact. Just as we may vary the lighting in different rooms in our house, so too can we adapt the lighting effects in the various "rooms" within our outdoor space, to create a unique ambience for each section of the garden. Since the average garden occupies a larger space than most interior rooms, the magic of creative lighting can often achieve even more dramatic results.

Practical lighting

There will be areas within the garden where you need to project more light for practical reasons. Practical lighting needs can be divided into the following categories:

- **amenity lighting:** this is where lighting is introduced for safety and practical purposes, so you may for example install a light on a drive to help move shopping or children from the car to the house
- **task lighting:** when you have a particular task you regularly undertake, task lighting makes it possible to carry out that specific job, examples would be cooking on a barbeque or fetching objects from an outbuilding
- **access lighting:** simply allows safe access around the garden by lighting up paths, steps, doors and water
- **security lighting:** you may want to consider installing security lighting as a deterrent to opportunist burglars

Creative lighting

Ever set foot in a garden and immediately felt a certain ambience? Clever lighting will most certainly have had a major role to play in helping to encourage the desired atmosphere and will have been used to subtly enhance the planting, garden features and architecture, injecting a real sense of drama.

Lighting effects

There's a whole host of lighting methods which can be employed in the garden to achieve a range of different effects.

Some of the most popular lighting applications to be found in the garden are:

- **downlighting:** light is directed in a downward direction from a structure to provide a pool of light on a surface or feature below.

Tripping the Light Fantastic

An example of crosslighting



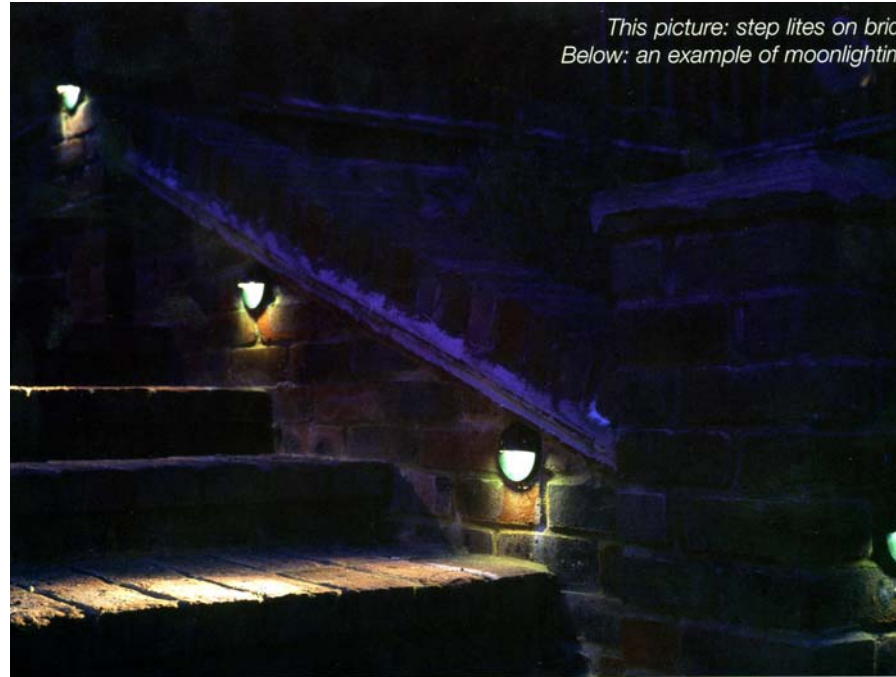
An example of shadowing



Used to provide lighting to fulfil safety and security functions as well as for general appearance

- **uplighting:** light is thrown upwards from the ground (or a wall, structure, branch or from lights beneath the surface of the water). Uplighting can be used to achieve a variety of effects including accent lighting, washing and grazing
- **grazing:** also referred to as "texturing" light is placed at an acute angle from a position near the surface of a feature to cast a strong shadow to emphasise its texture / colour. Mainly used to light up stone or brick walls
- **washing:** this is when an even coverage of light is used to illuminate a wall. Washing helps to define a space and creates an intimate atmosphere
- **crosslighting:** light is placed to the side of the subject matter so that the light travels across it. This is frequently used when lighting from the side will emphasise texture and form more effectively than lighting from the front, for example when illuminating a light coloured statue or an urn which would be flattened by frontal lighting

*This picture: step lites on brick
Below: an example of moonlighting*



- **accent lighting:** an intense beam of light is focused on a subject to make it stand out (various positional techniques can be used ie uplighting, downlighting or cross lighting). Accent lighting emphasises individual plants, focal points or other features
- **spot lighting:** quite often this is the same as accent lighting but the light is placed at some distance from the subject to be lit
- **moonlighting:** this is when trees are used as a lighting platform to create a dappled lighting effect on specific garden features and areas below. In smaller gardens and balconies / roof gardens, a moonlighting effect can be achieved by placing spot lights on walls or structures above climbers or planted urns, using the foliage to create a shadow on the ground below
- **shadowing:** by placing a spotlight in front of a plant or small tree the light can be shone through the foliage to project a shadow onto the wall behind. Shadowing is usually directed at a vertical surface but can also be used for paving by using wall mounted spotlights to cast shadows of climbing or containerised plants
- **spreadlighting:** low level lights are used to provide a glare-free, usually circular pool of light for a path, step, patio or area of low planting. The drawback of this type of lighting is that to be effective, the lights themselves have to be visible.



In the next issue, we'll be putting lighting products and their various applications under the spot light.

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