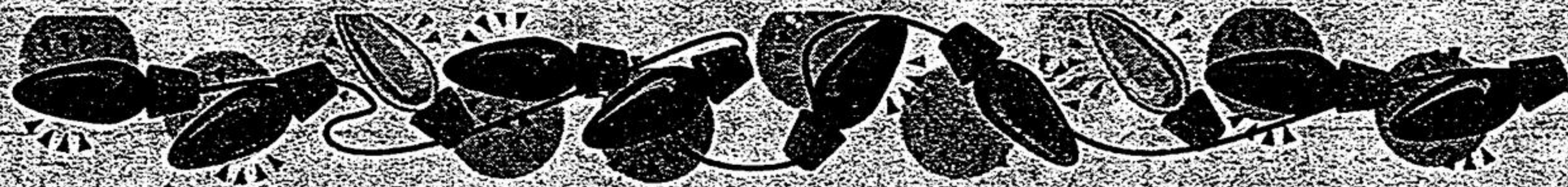


Use a sketch when designing the exterior of your home



From page 9

• Have fun with bulbs. For a cheerful, light-hearted look, use strings of multicolored bulbs with colors appearing in a random order. For a more planned approach, organize bulbs in repeated series of colors: red, green, blue, orange...red, green, blue, orange, etc. For interest, vary the size and/or shape of the bulb from one area to another. For example, place all large

round bulbs on the house and all miniatures on shrubbery. Twinkling lights add another dimension of excitement, whether timed to blink together or randomly across different areas.

• Take measurements. Take rough measurements of the areas you will decorate and the distance to electrical outlets. A simple way to measure a tree for lights that will spiral around it in 1-foot

rows is to multiply the circumference of the base times the height of the tree. A 10-foot tall tree with a 5-foot circumference would require 50 feet of lights.

• Go to the store to explore your options. Write down specifications and installation details for your favorite design concepts. For energy savings and easy bulb replacement, take a look at the new LED lights. Most major stores

carry the new LED colors and designs. While you're shopping, also consider plastic clips and other mounting hardware that makes installation easier.

• Have fun! Match what you like to your sketch, emphasizing your focal point the most. "Think of your holiday decorations as an illuminated garden that you improve and build on year after year," suggests Birdsong.

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