



## [Ambleside Christmas Lights](#)

### [Willow Lantern Making Instructions in 10 easy steps](#)

**Making time about 2 hours**

**Drying time about 4 hours**

If this your first time of making a Willow Lantern or time is short, try a simple shape eg Pyramid, Square or Traditional one.

If feeling creative, give full vent to your imagination with different shapes, more intricate designs or making recognisable objects which always particularly delight the onlookers.



1. Make the framework, using sharp secateurs to cut the canes  
Joints are butted or slightly overlapped and wrapped with masking tape.  
Use sufficient cane to make a sturdy framework and trim back excess cane on joints.  
Provide sufficient support for the wet tissue paper to stick to by infilling large gaps with thinner cane.
2. To achieve curved shapes, soak the cane in water for 2 hours (in a bath or by wrapping in old towels), remove and allow to mellow for a further hour to enable the inner parts of the cane to become fully pliable before use. Wipe dry or the masking tape will not stick.
3. Securely affix a string of Outdoor Battery-Operated LED fairy lights (not supplied), or multiple electric tealights to the canes, hanging within the lantern (one electric tealight alone would not make the lantern bright enough)
4. Hold up the lantern to check its balance and fasten on the wire hanging loop in the most appropriate place. Reinforce the fixing with duct tape.
5. **Dilute the PVA glue with water to approximately single cream consistency.**
6. Fold the special wet strength white tissue paper in half, then half again and cut along folds to create smaller more manageable pieces 30cm square, 30cm x 15cm, & 15cm square. Do this before you start glueing as wet, sticky hands make manipulating dry tissue paper difficult.

7. Work on a smooth and washable surface – a plastic tray or kitchen work top.  
Warning - Wear appropriate clothing as the covering process can get messy and dried PVA is difficult to remove from clothing and surfaces.  
Sponge the tissue on one side only with diluted PVA.  
Place the paper glue side down onto your lantern frame.  
Cover all sides, **including the bottom**, making sealed seams on the joints.  
Try not to overlap the paper more than is necessary as the fewer the layers of paper the brighter your lantern will shine.  
Leave an access doorway gap about 15cm x 10cm, enough to get your hand inside to turn the battery lights on.  
If you forget this, it can be done afterwards with a sharp knife when your lantern is dry.
8. **Coloured tissue is not wet strength**, do not sponge glue onto it directly.  
If decorating your lantern with coloured tissue, cut out required shapes from the dry tissue, lightly sponge glue onto the outside of the lantern in required positions and lay the dry coloured shapes into the glued area, pressing on. Once lantern is dry, paint over shapes with the diluted PVA.  
Otherwise customise your lantern with paint, pens, wool, foil, glitter, and/or streamers, but note that anything that is not translucent will appear as black in silhouette when the lantern is lit.
9. Hang up your Lantern to dry. The paper tightens as it dries and your lantern becomes strong, surprisingly sturdy and waterproof in rain.
10. Make a door flap to cover the lighting gap - Paste a piece of tissue, slightly larger than the doorway, and roll in a small piece of willow on one side to serve as a weight. Peg up to dry. When lantern and door are dry, paste along the top of the door cover and apply over top edge of gap. Edge with the cane goes at the bottom to weight the flap down.

**BE PROUD!**

**IMPORTANT - Ambleside Community Christmas Lights no longer promotes the use of real candles and there will be no marshalls present to light any candles – Please use LED battery lights**

For Lantern making queries -  
07739597350

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