

12V vs 120V

Homeowners can consider 2 types of voltage systems while planning their outdoor lighting. Below is an easy-to-understand overview to help the homeowner make the best choice for their needs.

Low voltage systems, or 12v, are generally more flexible and suitable for most residential environments while line voltage or 120v systems are more suited to permanent commercial and institutional applications.

12V LOW VOLTAGE	120V LINE VOLTAGE
Flexibility when installing or re-locating; cable can be repositioned	Wire must be buried 18 inches and placed in a protective conduit; easy to install if area is pre-wired
Designed for wet locations and operates safely when exposed to moisture	All fixtures and connectors must be absolutely waterproof (shock hazard potential when wet)
Lamps are small allowing fixtures to be smaller and blend with the landscape	Lamps and fixtures are larger and less fixtures are required for a complete lighting plan
Lamps available in low watt type and many beam spreads; precise lighting effects can be achieved with low energy costs	Higher watt lamps and one or two beam spreads produce high light levels and can be wired into home's electrical supply
Can be plugged into existing outdoor receptacles; no need for an electrical contractor in most cases	Must always be installed by a licensed electrical contractor; local permits may be required
Transformer to convert electrical current from 120v to 12v required; voltage drop (dim lights) can occur if improperly installed and inadequately sized cable used	No transformer required; voltage drop not as critical



Expert lighting consultants are available in your area to further answer questions you may have about landscape lighting installation. Visit Hinkley Landscape Lighting online and use our showroom locator to locate a knowledgeable distributor in your area: www.hinkleylandscapelighting.com

Fixtures shown above: Ivy 1508 CB, page 16
 Fixtures shown on page 7: Harbor 1560 AR, page 15