



O CHRISTMAS TREE: DECORATING TREES FOR MAXIMUM IMPACT

Learn how you can decorate your display trees to get maximum impact and make merchandise fall off the tree and into shopping carts.

By Chris Tkachuck
and Shelli Lissick

It's almost that time of year again — time for Christmas trees and all the trimmings to come out and shine. But first you need to come up with amazing tree displays that will inspire your customers to shop until they drop. Fortunately, with a few simple tricks of the trade, some inexpensive tools and a little elbow grease, you can create a whole forest of eye-catching Christmas trees to help make your cash registers ring nonstop.

Selecting A Tree

The tree is like a canvas for ornaments, garlands, toppers and all of the other trimmings you choose to display. Think about the statement you want to make — is it whimsical, bold and bright, traditional or formal? Do you need a full-size or a tabletop tree? Allow the location and the statement

you want to make determine the size and style of the tree, because the tree provides impact and becomes the focal point wherever it is placed. Trees with longer needles and upswept branches look more informal; short needles and downswept branches look more formal.

There are many different types of artificial trees — from traditional to feather to upside-down trees — and even trees that can be hung from the ceiling. Feel free to branch out and use natural tree branches, too. They are easy to find and can make a big impact because they are unexpected and easy for customers to replicate at home.

When setting up a tree, remember to secure it in a stand or urn and anchor with additional wires if needed. Then shape each branch outward and upward, remaining parallel to the floor,

The most important thing to remember when choosing a color scheme for a tree is that it needs to make a bold statement. (Photos: Midwest of Cannon Falls)

and fluff needles lightly. If you are working with a natural tree, allow the tree to stand and settle for a day before decorating.

Lighting A Tree

When it comes to lighting trees, our mantra is: The more lights, the better! Lights give the tree depth and dimension, really set the mood and build major impact and drama. There are a few tricks to remember when lighting a tree:

- One set of 50 mini lights should cover about 1-ft. of the tree. The more lights you use, the more drama you create.
- Before placing lights on the tree, test them to make sure each strand is working.
- Follow instructions on light sets. Do not plug together different lengths or different brands.
- Start with the first bulb on the interior of the tree. Lightly twist the cord around each branch in and out.
- Conceal wires toward the interior of the tree when crossing over to the next branch.
- Work in levels and sections around the tree.
- Conceal and secure excess cords at the trunk of the tree.
- The icing on the tree? Novelty lights. Five 10-light sets cover a 7-ft. tree.

Ornamenting A Tree

The ornaments are what truly make the tree sing — and the registers ring. Keep the following tips in mind when trimming your trees.

Choose a theme or color. The best thing to do is choose a theme or color that will make a statement for each tree. Choose just one element (such as a color, shape, size or texture) to be dominant on each tree. Use one main color per tree as a base so everything else will pop when sitting against it. For example, decorate your tree with 1-3 shapes of ornaments (i.e., balls or drops) placed throughout the tree. Use ornaments that are all the same color and layer in other theme orna-

ments. The single color will unify the tree and create a blanket of color so everything else will stand out and look spectacular. Repetition or clustering of ornaments helps to establish your theme; groupings of three work well.

Ornament order. Hang large ornaments first and work your way down to the smallest. Distribute ornaments evenly throughout the tree. Ornaments should hang freely. Be sure to fill inside spaces, too, rather than hanging everything on the tips.

Attention to motion. To draw attention to a specific ornament, get it moving! Place ornaments that you want to draw attention to on ornamentors, which spin the



When choosing a themed tree, pick just one element to be the dominant part of the design.

By The Numbers: Guidelines For Tree Trimming

Tree Height (feet)	Number of Lights	Amount of Garland (feet)	Number of Ornaments
2	100-150	10	25-35
3	150-250	24	35-50
4	200-350	40	50-75
6	300-450	75	100-175
7	350-550	90	150-200
7½	400-650	100	175-275



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ornament around in a circle or move it up and down. Ornamotors can be easily attached and powered through the light string. Whichever motion you choose, it is sure to stand out, draw attention

and boost sales of the specific ornament in motion.

To make an impact, use 2-dozen ornamotors scattered throughout a 7-ft. tree. Be sure to use the same ornament on all of the ornamotors.

For every foot of tree, you will need approximately 40 ornaments. For a 7-ft. tree, you will need about 280 ornaments, give or take, depending on the size of the ornaments.



Tree lights give a tree dimension, set the mood and add a dramatic punch to the room.

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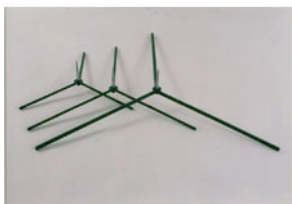
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Don't Forget The Garland

Garland is growing in popularity, and nowadays there are many different styles from which to choose. From tinsel to beads and feathers to novelty, you can find just about any garland to fit your specific color or theme.

For a unique and interesting effect with tinsel, bead or novelty garlands, alternate and mix garland using two or three different kinds.

For a classic swag, hang garland from tip to tip. Let the swag fall freely. The more uniform the swags, the more formal the look.

To create a spiral look, wire 4-6 strands of garland together at one end and attach this end to the top of your tree. Separate the strands and spiral each one down the tree.

To create streamers, start with 3-5 strands of garland or ribbon and place them at the top of the tree. Let each streamer fall freely to give a vertical symmetry to the tree.

Starting With The Basics

You will need a few basic tools to get started creating display trees.

Scissors

Wire cutters

Wire in several gauges

Electrical ties

A ladder

Extension cords

Ornament hooks in various sizes

A small curling iron (to straighten wrinkled material)

Anything you can think of for decorations.

step further and offer one or more “how to decorate a tree” workshops to give your customers the secrets to create their own fabulous tree(s) at home. 🌲

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Finishing Touches

Use a classic topper, oversized bow, star, burst of foliage or a cluster of ornaments to add impact to the top of the tree. Or you can get creative and make your own topper!

Use 1-3 tree skirts layered for a unique look around the base of your tree. Again, get creative and feel free to use quilts, rugs, burlap, urns, trunks, a big gift box or even a child's wagon. Experiment and find a unique style that works for your store and theme trees.

Picks and spires add impact and dimension to a tree. For an organic, natural look, you can also use twigs, branches and feathers. For a big, dramatic splash of color, incorporate oversized ball or drop ornaments in your trees.

Display Extras

If possible, allow customers to shop from the trees. If you do not have time to refresh trees to keep them from looking bare, place ornaments, garlands, toppers, etc., in baskets around each tree. Make ornaments easy for customers to reach and buy by placing the baskets on pedestals, little tables and/or chairs positioned around the tree.

Offer how-to sheets (with photos) that customers can take home to create the look of one or more trees in your store. Include a list of all the products you used to create your trees — it will help upsell even more trim. Take it a



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