

What Is a Transformer and Why Do I Need It?



Most households run on 120 volt power. This is perfect for interior lighting that utilizes high voltage lighting. Landscape lighting, however, is typically supplied in lower voltage (12 Volts) spread out through several different lights. A transformer can convert the 120v electrical currently supplied from your house down to the 12v needed for each low voltage landscape lighting fixtures in your lawn!

Why Is Landscape Lighting Supplied in Low Voltage?

The benefit to having low voltage landscape lighting is two fold. First, they consume far less electricity than a “hard wire” 120v fixture. Secondly, low voltage items do not pose an electrical hazard. Hardwire 120v outdoor lights must have wires buried 2 feet underground and installed by a licensed electrician. Low voltage can be installed by a homeowner or a contractor.

How Do I Know What Transformer To Purchase?

Purchasing the correct transformer will require some simple math. First you must find the fixtures you want and then how many you want in your yard. Each fixture uses a certain number of watts, while each transformer can only support a maximum number of watts. Therefore, you must determine the total wattage all of your fixtures consume and be sure your transformer can sustain it. Transformers always tell you the total wattage they support.



Example

I want six 18w path lights for my yard.

$$18\text{w} (\# \text{ of watts per fixture}) \times 6 (\# \text{ of lights needed}) = 108\text{w} (\text{minimum watts the transformer must support})$$

What Are Other Features in a Transformer?

Transformers will also come with a variety of other accessories to make your outdoor lighting easier. Below are some additional features you can find on a transformer.

- Timers – allow you to manually set the time you want your lights turned on or off
- Photocell – has sensors to turn lights on at dusk and off at dawn. This saves you from having to reset the timer during the changing of the seasons.

Thanks for reading! Use PromoCode *Transformer10* to save 10% off your Transformer!