



Off grid 12v led lighting

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First up (unsurprisingly) are solar lights, and these can take two different forms: self-contained solar lights and lights that use a solar-charged battery to power the lights. In the course of our off-grid years, we've used both.

Self-contained solar powered lights are the easiest of these two options, and also are the most affordable. Basically you can buy individual lights that each have their own built-in solar charger and small battery. You can buy as many or as few as you need to light your space. Because it is one of the cheaper options, this is what we first started with when we went off-grid. Specifically, we had a handful of MPOWERD camping lanterns:

AND: We've never tried these, but it looks like if you want to do LED string lights, but don't want to invest in a solar panel and battery, there is a self-contained string light option:

We've also used battery powered lanterns, though mainly for outdoor lighting. Like all the other options, there are cheap models and more expensive models. In our experience, the more affordable lanterns work just fine.

Indoor oil lanterns are old-school, and quite aesthetically pleasing. Personally I wouldn't use kerosene lamps in a small enclosed space because of the smell, but we do follow someone on Instagram who lives in a van and safely uses paraffin oil for their lamps.

If you have an off grid cabin and can mount lights on the walls, you could opt for propane lights, which are common in some off-grid homes we've seen here in Vermont. It does require running lines to deliver the propane, so it just depends on your preferences and longer-term goals. Relying on propane wouldn't be my first choice, but maybe it's your most realistic option if you don't get good sun exposure, or have long dark winters, or need enough light that batteries would be too expensive to constantly replace.

All of the above options require industrial input, whether in the direct use of gas to power the lights or in the indirect use of fossil fuels to manufacture the involved technologies of solar and batteries. If you want to avoid this reliance on the industrial economy, or if you just want backup light in case of emergency, you can always opt for primitive lighting.

Whatever off-grid lighting option you decide, we do recommend keeping candles on hand. They're quite romantic for a late night dinner, and quite useful in case of emergency or if any other systems fail.



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