

PRESS RELEASE
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Fake Christmas: Brits confess to festive decorating fails

- New research into Christmas trees reveals three times as many of us opt for an artificial tree rather than a real one –

- Three quarters of Brits who celebrate Christmas prefer to put up an artificial tree
- The first week of December is the most popular time to decorate
- Almost one in five Brits trim up for Christmas before December 1st
- More than one in four of us have argued over decorating the tree
- The average annual spend on Christmas decorations in the UK is £155.42
- 63% of people end up with the wrong number of baubles and a quarter end up with wrong number of lights, so Admiral Home Insurance has created a Christmas Bauble Calculator to help Brits get it right

A new investigation into the nation's Christmas decorating habits by [Admiral home insurance](#) has revealed that three quarters of those who celebrate Christmas prefer a fake tree to the real deal.

Millennials are more likely than any other generation to decorate a real tree during the festive period, while more men than women prefer the real thing, and when it comes to location, Londoners are most likely to get a real tree than any other region in the UK.

Meanwhile households in eastern England are most likely to opt for artificial.

When are we doing it?

While two thirds of us will deck the halls in the first (32%) or second (31%) week of December, some people are much keener, with 17% of people admitting to putting up Christmas decorations before they even open the first door of their advent calendar.

Getting tangled up

Despite being an annual event over two thirds of Brits admit they've bought the wrong size tree for their home.

Having the wrong size tree could be a costly mistake, as Admiral reveals that 39% of home insurance claims related to Christmas trees involve damaged TVs from positioning the festive fir.

When it comes to getting the lights right, a quarter of people don't have the right number of lights for their tree and while almost a third of us manage to get the correct number of them, they usually find some aren't working.

When it comes to baubles, 39% of people say they always have too many, with festive ornaments leftover once the tree is decorated. Meanwhile, one in 10 people say they have the opposite problem, running out of baubles most years.



Admiral has teamed up with a Mathematician and bauble boffin from Cardiff University to create [a handy tool](#) to help you avoid this problem and get the right number of baubles and lights for your tree this year.

Arguing round the Christmas tree

While a third of us enjoy festive harmony when decorating the Christmas tree, a quarter of Brits admit to it causing arguments, with heated discussions over where to put the tree itself, where to place the decorations, which baubles are used, and people not pulling their weight.

It seems we're a nation of control freaks when it comes to decorating with 41% of Brits saying they decorate the tree by themselves. By comparison, 16% leave it to their partner to do – with more men leaving it to their partners than women.

It seems decorating by yourself could save you from arguments, with 38% of people saying having just one person in charge means they don't argue over it.

However, with one in 10 Christmas-related claims received by Admiral Home insurance arising from moving furniture to make space for Christmas decorations, decorating on your own could lead to mishaps.

Christmas Scrooge

Of the people who celebrate Christmas in the UK, 8% don't put up any Christmas decorations.

The reason? A third of people simply don't like them, while 15% of people who don't decorate think Christmas decorations are "tacky" so don't put them up.

However, there are more practical reasons why some people don't decorate for Christmas with over a quarter of people saying they don't do it because they don't spend Christmas at home and 1 in 9 people saying don't have enough space for them.

Spreading the festive cheer

Despite the arguments, running out of baubles and not having enough lights, many Brits still want to share the festive cheer, with over three quarters of us sharing snaps of our Christmas trees on social media.

Social media channel	% of Brits who share
Facebook	26%
Instagram	18%
YouTube	14%
Tumblr	4%
Pinterest	7%
Twitter	7%

Facebook tops the list for sharing, with over a quarter of us admitting to uploading snaps of our Christmas trees to the site. Unsurprisingly, Millennials and Gen X are more likely to post on social media than the other generations.

And one in five people admit to looking on social media to get inspiration for their festive displays.

Money goes on trees

While many people don't get it quite right when it comes to having the right quantity of Christmas decorations, over half of us (55%) buy new decorations every single year.

Nearly four in 10 Brits add new decorations to their Christmas displays every year, while 12% of the nation splash out on brand new decorations every year.

Those in the North West are most likely to buy brand new every year, while those in Wales are the most likely to recycle their existing decorations.

The average annual spend on Christmas decorations in the UK totals up to £155.42, but 8% of us admit to forking out more than £500 a year on festive embellishments every year.

Londoners fork out the most, with an average spend of £296.25 on Christmas decorations. At the opposite end, those living in the West Midlands spend the least, with an average of £84.26.

Noel Summerfield, Head of Admiral Home Insurance says: "In an age dominated by technology it's comforting that the vast majority of us still decorate our homes every Christmas.

"Despite this so many people end up with the wrong size tree, the wrong amount of decorations and potentially fall out with their loved ones over something that should be a happy experience.

"Christmas should be a time of fun, festivities and family-time. Getting organised when it comes to decorations and taking your time to prepare your space before getting the trimmings from the attic could not only reduce the stress of Christmas on you and your wallet but could also save you from having a Christmas-related mishap and having to make a claim.

"Although thankfully rare, we've seen several Christmas decorating claims over the last few years. So whether you prefer a real tree or an artificial one, take care when putting up your decorations to avoid damaging yourself or anything in your home."

The three most common Christmas decorating related claims Admiral sees are:

- TVs damaged by falling trees or by people falling off ladders while putting up decorations.
- Carpets and flooring damaged by leaking Christmas trees.
- Ceilings damaged by homeowners putting their feet through them when getting decorations from the attic.

To prevent having to make any claims over the Christmas period, Admiral has produced a list of tips:

1. When getting decorations down from the loft, go up prepared with a torch and only step on the joists.
2. Candles make a home Christmassy, but don't leave them burning unattended or anywhere near curtains.
3. Never go up a ladder without someone else around and always make sure it is stable.
4. Check your fairy lights conform to British Standard (EN 60598) and unplug them when you go to bed. And of course never overload a plug socket.

5. If you are leaving your home empty over Christmas, either leave your heating on low or turn off the water supply at the mains and drain the system. This will prevent any burst pipes.
6. Keep glasses of wine and other drinks up high to prevent them being spilled by excited children or pets.
7. Never leave presents in view of passers-by and if you are having items delivered, never leave a note for the delivery driver saying you are out.

ENDS

Notes to editors

Average Christmas decoration spend per region	
East Midlands	£108.28
East/East Anglia	£93.94
London	£296.25
North East	£186.22
North West	£117.31
Norther Ireland	£252.55
Scotland	£141.27
South East	£87.66
South West	£119.61
Wales	£149.23
West Midlands	£84.26
Yorkshire and Humber	£116.33

Region	October	November		December			Never	
	In October	First two weeks	Second two weeks	First week	Second week	Third week	A few days before Christmas day	Don't put tree or decorations up
East Midlands	0%	5%	4%	33%	30%	15%	3%	10%
East/East Anglia	1%	2%	6%	26%	32%	16%	9%	9%
London	9%	12%	18%	29%	16%	6%	4%	5%
North East	1%	8%	11%	33%	27%	7%	7%	7%
North West	0%	4%	6%	37%	30%	14%	3%	7%
Norther Ireland	2%	5%	10%	27%	34%	15%	2%	5%
Scotland	2%	2%	7%	23%	35%	16%	7%	8%
South East	0%	2%	4%	30%	30%	12%	9%	12%
South West	2%	3%	7%	27%	29%	16%	9%	7%
Wales	4%	2%	4%	34%	32%	11%	3%	10%
West Midlands	1%	1%	4%	30%	37%	11%	7%	8%



Yorkshire and Humber	1%	2%	3%	23%	39%	17%	6%	9%
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When regions put their Christmas decorations up