

Fabulous DAILY

HOW TO CARE FOR A CHRISTMAS TREE

CHOOSING your Christmas tree is an exciting part of the festive season occasion. But to make sure your tree looks its best on the big day, there are a number of things you need to do. **Sam Lyle** has run Christmas tree company Pines And Needles for more than 20 years, bringing festive cheer to celebrity clients. He says:

ON ARRIVAL

The first thing to do when you take your tree home is cut three inches off the bottom of the trunk. This will help the tree soak up water more efficiently.

Secondly, your tree should drink as much as you do this Christmas.

Houses are generally extra-warm over the festive period, so feed your tree with two or three pints of water each day.

Naturally, keep your tree away from radiators. The same goes for draughts as the spruces do not like extremes.

DECORATING

Lots of people do not start with the fairy lights – but they should.

You only want to do the job once, so do it properly by getting an even spread of lights.

We believe 240 lights for a 5ft tree and 300-plus for a 6ft one.

Try to theme it (blue and pinks are big this year) and do not make it too busy. Let the deep green of the branches shine through.

PET PROBLEMS

Dogs and cats can make a right mess of your Christmas tree, so it

is best to keep them at arm's length if possible.

“Thirty years ago, most people bought their tree a couple of weeks before Christmas. But now we are putting them up earlier, meaning it's more important than ever to keep your tree looking bushy and bright.”

Here, he gives tips on how to keep your home looking tree-mendous.

Needles are not harmful as they do not contain toxins. But it would still cause your furry friend some discomfort if they started eating too many.

Keep chocolate treats away from the lower branches and have a water spray handy to stop your pets from getting too close.

WHEN IT'S OVER

Putting the tree up is the fun part but be sure to dispose of your tree responsibly.

The carbon footprint of a tree becomes much bigger if it ends up in landfill.

Be sure to get yours to your local authority's collection point before the deadline.

Those looking for more inventive ways to reuse their tree can take part in the annual Irish Christmas Tree Throwing Championships.

You can also leave your tree out to dry, cut it up and then use it for firewood or put in your green bin.

