



**/ARKANSAS
MASTER GARDENER
STATE CONFERENCE
June 5 – 7, 2025
Searcy, AR**



2025 SOLAR PORCH LIGHT PROJECT

An optional project that County 76 invites you to participate in is the Solar Porch Light project. These unique Solar Porch Lights will be displayed at the 2025 Master Gardener State Conference for all to enjoy!

The Solar Porch Light will be auctioned at County 76 Silent Auction.

What is a Solar Porch Light?

A 'Solar Porch Light' is a handcrafted porch or garden light that reflects your personal style and message of community spirit. It should reflect your county or various holidays or seasons during the year. It has one to three replaceable solar lights integrated into the art.

Using **2" x 2" x 8' lumber or 2" diameter dowel rod**, cut to three (3) lengths no longer than 2 feet. You may decorate to express what gardening means to your group or the season of the year. The sky's the limit of how to decorate your porch light. It can be created individually or in a group, your choice.

Solar porch lights are pieces of unique garden art that can be displayed on your porch, in the yard or garden, or in your community.



HOW DO I MAKE A SOLAR PORCH LIGHT?

• Supplies & Prep

- Start with a pressure treated lumber 2" x 2" x 8' long or a 2" diameter dowel rod (Lowe's, Home Depot, or other gardening supply stores).



- Cut **3 posts** – **one 1', another 1-1/2', and another 2'**. Check to see if the store will cut it for you. **The longest post should be no longer than 2' in length.**
- Consider topping each post with a solar powered landscape light. **All lights should be removable for transport. At least one solar light is required.**
- Select a base that is **2-3" larger** on all sides of your grouped posts. This will provide stability for the project.
- Sand your posts lightly with 180 grit sandpaper.
 - Prime the posts and all areas that will be painted. We suggest 2 coats of primer. If staining the base, primer is not required.
 - Use a water-based interior/exterior white primer that works on all surfaces. Suggest: KILZ® Waterproof Sealant

• Brainstorm and Plan Your Design

- There are different examples of 'landscape timber crafts DIY yard art' on Pinterest or Google.
- Don't copy, just get inspired! Let your spirit move you.
- What is your message? Consider your color scheme and try out some sample combinations first.
- Decorating ideas and supplies:
 - Use outdoor craft paint or acrylic paint.



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- Decorate at least the front side of the project unless your design encompasses all four sides.
- **All posts must be attached to the base.**

CREATING A SOLAR PORCH LIGHT?

1. Base Coat

- Drill holes in the top of the posts for each solar light. The hole should allow for a snug fit of the solar light post, allowing the light to be changed out when no longer operational.
- Start with a base coat of your background color once your primer is dry as a starting point for decorating your pole. Be sure to paint the entire pole and base.

2. Securing Posts

- Once your base coat is dry, screw the posts onto your base.
- All posts must be secured so the light will not come apart when moving.

3. Next Step

- Use a **non-yellowing waterproof sealant** (Suggest: Rainguard Paint Sealer) over the posts and base.
- Follow label instructions and allow it to dry completely.

4. Decorating Process

- Decorate the grouping of posts based on the theme you have selected.
- All embellishments should be secured to the posts by using a staple gun, wire, nails, screws, or glue.
- Use an exterior adhesive (Suggest: Gorilla Glue Heavy Duty Construction Adhesive) to add stones or rocks.

5. Finish it Up!

- Check the height of your solar lights. You may need to cut the length to accommodate your design.
- Don't forget to **Sign and Date** your unique Solar Porch Light!



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6. Enjoy!

- You did it!
- Ideally, your light should be **completed by mid-May 2025.**

7. Drop Off

- Deliver your Solar Porch Light to the **Liberty Room** in the David B. Burks American Heritage building **no later than June 5.**
- **All lights must be delivered no later than 8:00 AM on June 6.**

WHAT IF I NEED HELP?

- Reach out to the County 76 Fundraising Project. The chair and co-chair would be glad to speak or Zoom with you to answer questions. Contact either Susan Colles at 479-857-8544 or scolles53@yahoo.com or Sheila Waddell at (870-489-9768) or Sheilahs1@yahoo.com for assistance.

PARTICIPATION DEADLINE

- Please confirm your participation in creating a Solar Porch Light by **March 15, 2025** by completing the application at the following link:
https://uada.formstack.com/forms/spirit_pole