



Outdoor lighting

We can only light very small parts of the world around us at night.

We can light our homes and schools quite well because these are only small places. But when we try outside lighting, we find out how difficult it is to turn night into day.

The only natural light at night comes from the Moon (Picture 1). The most powerful outdoor lights that we can make are used in football stadiums and other places where important competitions are taking place.



▲ (Picture 1) The Moon is the major source of light on many nights in the countryside.

The cost of bright lighting is high. If you look along a street at night you will see the lighting we have for our cities is only just enough to see by (Picture 2).

▼ (Picture 2) Street lighting is really not very bright. That is why cars have to have their own lights.





▲▶ (Pictures 3 and 4) The top picture shows the lights of the world's cities as seen from space. Even the lights in the world's brightest cities, such as New York (bottom right), are not powerful enough to turn night into day.

How we light our world

You can get a good idea of how little light we can make for ourselves if you look at our world from space at night (Pictures 3 and 4). As you can see, we only manage to light up tiny patches of the world. The rest – the countryside and oceans – stays dark.

Summary

- We use street lights to help us see outdoors at night.
- We can only light up small parts of our world at night.

