

Flexible LED Strip FAQs

Are flexible LED strips easy to install?

Yes, they are easy to install. In most cases you just connect the power supply to the LED strip and then plug the power supply into a normal outlet.

Is there anything I need to watch for when installing the strips?

Yes. On the RGB flex strips, you need to be careful that the (+) "Black wire" doesn't touch/short to one of the colored wires as it could fry the mosfet in the controller for that color. If that occurs, that color would always stay on. It is always good to double check, to make sure none of the wires are touching, before you power the lights. While the black wire on the RGB strips is (+) the Black wire on the single color strips and the "Male/Female Power Connectors" is (-) (so if there are only 2x wires (Red/Black) then Black = (-) & Red = (+).

If I connect the strip backwards (+) to (-) and (-) to (+) will that ruin the strip?

No. LEDs are diodes so they only let power through in one direction. Simply reverse the wires and the strip will work fine.

I already have a 12V DC power supply - can I use it?

Yes, any 12V DC power supply will work as long as the output rating is high enough for the length of strip you are trying to connect to it (for a 5' strip you would need at least a 1000mA or 1A or 12w DC power supply). You can always use a larger power supply than what is needed. However, a power supply which is too small may cause your lights to be dim or flash on/off; it may also kill the power supply. For LEDs we recommend a switching mode power supply as opposed to a heavy magnetic transformer, as switching mode power supplies have a regulated output voltage that doesn't change based on input voltage. You can even use an old power supply out of a computer as they are well designed and can handle some large loads.

Can I use your strips on my car, truck, motorcycle, or boat?

Yes, most of our controllers and strips are 12V DC so you can connect them straight to your battery (we recommend a 3-5A fuse in-line after the battery).

Does the power supply have to be close to the lights?

No. You can run low voltage wire/control cable up to 50 feet in most cases. But keep in mind the longer the run the more voltage drop you will have and while it can be hard to notice with LED lights

they may not be as bright as they could be if they were shorter runs. On long runs and using the RGB strips set to white you may notice a change in the color temp the farther you go from the power supply so keep it short or use larger wire if you have long runs.

Is it possible to extend the wire between strips to go around obstacles?

Yes. You can use low voltage wire/control cable between the strips up to 50 feet in most cases.

How many strips can I connect together end-to-end?

We recommend only connecting 2 rolls together in each direction from the supply wire.

What size wire should I use?

In order to connect up to 2 rolls, you should use at least 22 gauge wire. If you use 16-18 gauge wire, you can connect up to 4 rolls at a time (2 in each direction). For longer runs (over 10'-15'), you can run multiple wires or use a larger gauge wires in order to avoid color change/drop in brightness due to voltage drop.

What wire should I use?

For single color strips, you only need 2 conductor wire, and for RGB strips, you need 4 conductor wire. We recommend using stranded copper wire 10-22 gauge.

You said that the lights are dimmable. Can I use my existing dimmer switch?

No. The power supplies are not made to be dimmed- it will damage them. The strips, however, can be dimmed by using any one of our dimmers or placed between the power supply and the strip.

I would like to use a strip outside where it could get wet, but I don't want to use the thicker IP-68 strip. Can I just use the IP-65 strip?

Yes, you can use the standard IP-65 strip, as it does have a waterproof coating on the front side (just not on the back side). We recommend that you use silicone and seal along the edges to help make it more waterproof (this also works well on motorcycles and under deck railings).

Can the strips be used in high temperature areas?

Yes and no. While LEDs are quite durable and will work great in most any environment, heat is the main cause for shortened LED lifespan. Therefore, the cooler you can keep the LEDs, the longer they will last (if you can keep them below 80°C you should get the rated life out of them). With this in mind, leaving them on for extended periods of time while on the reel or bunched up in a confined space will shorten their lifespan.

Do the strips get hot / do I need to have a heat sink?

No, they do not get hot as long as you don't leave them rolled up on the reel.