

Tinting Clear Lights to Orange and Purple Colors

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With the growing number of Halloween items that we carry at HolidayCoro we get a number of questions from our customers on where to find cheap orange and purple lights for their projects. Often, orange and purple Halloween lights are “concave” LED styles (not good for use with our coro products), are in smaller quantities such as 35 counts or are just more expensive as “specialty” lights. This document covers how you can take cheap clear incandescent or LED lights and convert them to orange or purple lights.

How It Works

The key to this process is a paint that resembles “candy” paint or “anodized” aluminum – these paints are produced by Krylon, called X-Metals (<http://www.krylon.com/products/xmetals>) and by Dupli-Color, called MetalCast (<http://duplicolor.com/products/metalCast>). These paints are a translucent color and will allow light to pass through it while emitting a shade of the paint color. If you’ve ever looked at colored incandescent lights, you’ll notice in most cases that they are nothing more than clear/white lights that have been dipped into a coloring paint to change the color of the bulb. This is the same process that will be used here. The clear bulb will be tinted the color of the paint.

The Materials

It’s pretty simple – you’ll need clear incandescent or LED lights, any type will do – you can usually pick incandescent up at after Christmas sales for a dollar or less a box, on eBay or from people on the Christmas forums. You’ll also need either Krylon X-Metals or Dupli-Color Metalcast paint. You can get this in a variety of colors, though the primary colors we’ll be using are Red, Orange and Purple. Krylon offered at one time an orange version of x-metals that you can still find for sale on the web, though this is not problem – when red X-Metals is put over a clear light it will show up as a deep orange color!

- Wal-Mart (Krylon X-Metal colors and availability varies)
- Autozone Auto Parts (Dupli-Color, usually only red and purple)
- Amazon (Krylon X-Metals):
<http://www.amazon.com/Krylon-2305-X-Metals-purple/dp/B001OKOGLO> (purple)
<http://www.amazon.com/Krylon-2302-X-Metals-red/dp/B00266W7WA> (red - shows up as deep orange)
- Amazon (MetalCast):
<http://www.amazon.com/Dupli-Color-MC205-Orange-Metal-Anodized/dp/B00099BJVQ> (orange)
<http://www.amazon.com/Dupli-Color-MC200-Metal-Anodized-Color/dp/B000994BUM> (red)
<http://www.amazon.com/Dupli-Color-MC204-Purple-Metal-Anodized/dp/B002NGPFFE> (purple)
- ACE Hardware (Krylon X-Metals):
<http://www.acehardwareoutlet.com/productDetails.aspx?SKU=1229368> (red)
<http://www.acehardwareoutlet.com/productDetails.aspx?SKU=1229392> (purple)

A few other minor things are also helpful – gloves if you will be holding the lights in bundles while painting them, a respirator for your safety and wire for suspending the item or lights you are painting or, if you done painting them, hanging them up “to dry”. You should be able to do 500-1000 lights per can of paint depending on how many coats and the method you use to paint the lights with.



The Process

We recommend painting the lights in bunches prior to installing them. In most cases if you are using new lights, this is a fairly simple process as all the lights have been gathered in a bunch with the tips pointing outward (see photo to right.) If you are using unwrapped lights such as icicle lights, you will need to first bundle the lights together so that the tips are all easily reached when painting them. Following the instructions on the can as to shake time, safety, temperature and humidity, proceed to paint the lights. We recommend shallow, "dusting" coats instead of a single heavy coat. We recommend plugging in the lights AFTER (do not plug them in WHILE painting as this could result in a fire) you paint each coat to make sure you have the right depth of color as more coats will result in a deeper color. Allow your lights to dry for the period indicated on the can label. That's it – now you are ready to install them into your HolidayCoro Halloween item!



Here is a pumpkin from our Pumpkin Bunch after clear incandescent lights have been installed and then lit up in white:

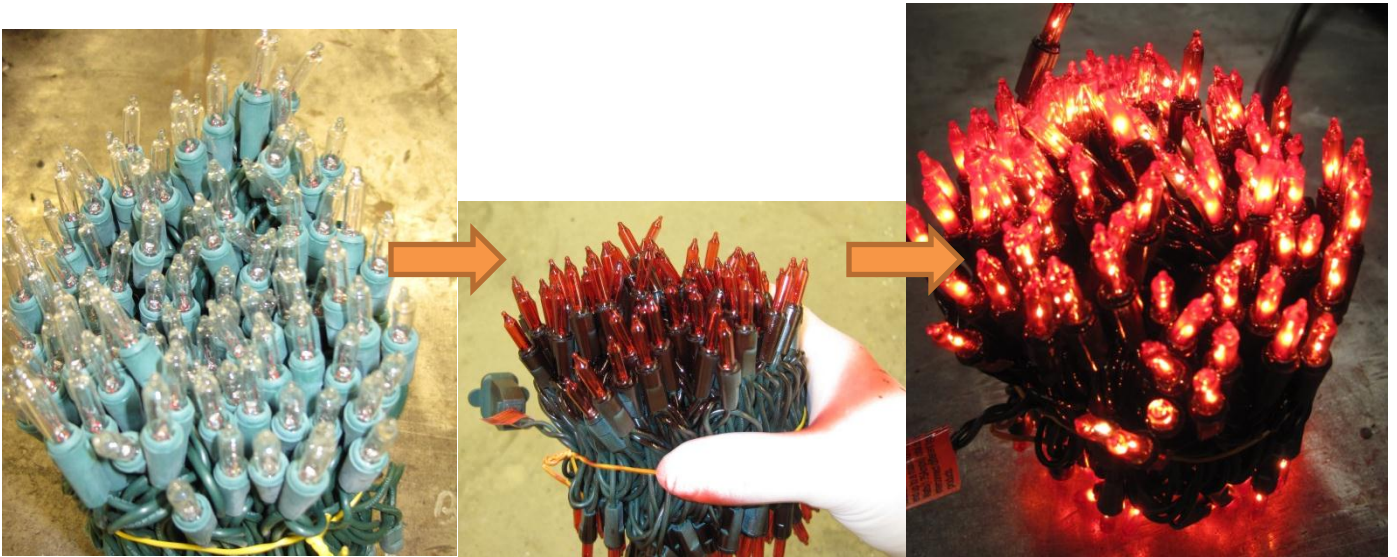


Here is the same Pumpkin Bunch after being painted with Red x-Metals paint:



While it is hard to make out the color due to the quality of the camera used to take this photo, when viewed in person, it is a deep orange color.

The photos below show a 200 count of clear incandescent lights prior to painting, after they have been painted and then lit up:



Red Krylon X-Metals over clear incandescent lights (above)



Purple DupliColor MetalCast over clear incandescent lights (above)