Looking to build a float? There are many resources online to help you; search: “How to construct a Lighted Parade Float”, “How to Build a Parade Float”, “Night Parade Float”, and “Light Parade Float Ideas” to name a few. The internet is full of ideas, information and inspiration.

Below we have consolidated some information we found from various online resources. There are also additional links and a few videos to help you gather ideas to bringing your float alive. And links to local rental companies where you can source larger items for your float.

**How to build a float?** Resource: [Parade Floats 101](#)

- **Form a committee or group of float builders**
  - Gather friends, teammates, volunteers or classmates; the more people you have on your float committee the more ideas you will generate.
  - Split up the work among the groups of people
  - Building a float is a team effort, so make sure everyone understands their part in building the float.
  - Most importantly, remember to have FUN.

- **Set your schedule and float-building location**
  - Estimate how long each step of building your float will take (including any lead time needed to have float-building materials shipped, and to find the trailer you will use.).
  - Try to avoid doing everything at the last minute – no one needs that stress.
  - Plan your float-building location to be as centrally located for all team members.

- **Plan your float**
  - Choose a theme and/or slogan that will draw attention to your float.
  - Finalize your color scheme.

**How to design a vehicle or float for a night parade?** Resource: [Parade Float Supplies Now](#)

- Selecting Materials is key to bringing your float to life. Below are some materials that may help you:
• **Banners** – Don’t forget to announce who created your homecoming float and who sponsored it! Use a 24” x 52” custom banner with your words and design.
  o **Possible Vendors to assist you:** Fast Signs, Vista Print and Office Depot make signs and banners for your floats.

• **Festooning** – These garlands are a great accent to your homecoming float. Versatile and lightweight, festooning is perfect for edging and decorating. Available in metallic, vinyl or tissue.
  o **Possible Vendors to assist you:** Party City, Oriental Trading, Michaels, Hobby Lobby

• **Floral Sheeting** – Create rich texture and color! Cover your entire float bed or wrap around poles or other float structures. Available in vinyl or metallic.
  o **Possible Vendors to assist you:** Astro Turf - Parade Coverings

• **Fringe** – Drape fringe over the sides of your float bed base. It helps hide an unsightly undercarriage and flutters gently in the wind to create a fun and festive look for your float. Available in metallic, vinyl or tissue.
  o **Possible Vendors to assist you:** Party City, Oriental Trading, Michaels, Hobby Lobby

• **Pomps** – For large, colorful, detailed structures, pomps provide the perfect texture and come in all colors of the rainbow and then some! Simply create a chicken wire structure, and fill each hole with pomps in the color and pattern of your dreams! Available in metallic, tissue or poly.
  o **Possible Vendors to assist you:** Party City, Oriental Trading, Michaels, Hobby Lobby, Parade Poms

• **Styrofoam Letters** – Spell out anything you want with jumbo Styrofoam letters and numbers. Use tempera paints to add some color. Available 8” or 11” high.
  o **Possible Vendors to assist you:** Party City, Oriental Trading, Michaels

• **Chicken Wire** - wrapped around vehicle and string lights/ tissue paper through to cover or make designs
  o **Possible Vendors to assist you:** Home Depot, Lowes, Ace Hardware

• **Holiday Lights** – String Lights for landscaping that could cover sections of a vehicle/ float
  o **Possible Vendors to assist you:** Oriental Trading, Walmart, Amazon

• **Cardboard Boxes** - wrap like presents as décor.
  o **Possible Vendors to assist you:** Office Depot, Home Depot, Lowes, Uhaul

• **Inflatables** - to cover large spaces of the float
  o **Possible Vendors to assist you:** Party City, Oriental Trading, Michaels, Hobby Lobby, Amazon, Walmart

➢ Use a truck bed or trailer bed pulled by a vehicle for best results.

**Lighting Tips:** Multiple Resources

• Standard Holiday Lights, Inflatables and decorations that easily plug in.
• Batteries – keep in mind they have limited life so ensure you have fresh batteries for event day.
• LED lights are great; they are bright, they draw very little power, and you can generally string 20-25 strings together.
• Net Lights are great for larger areas of the float and can be zip tied together to create full coverage.

How to get power for the lights on a vehicle or a float?
Resource: ehow-light-parade-float

• Portable gas-powered generators or inverter is the most common.
• If you are using a lot of amps, consider using two generators. Most generators have two outlets; so if you are using an 8,000 volt generator, each outlet would carry 4,000 volts or 33.3 amps. You can use a plug-in splitter on each outlet, to give you four outlets carrying 2,000 volts or 16.6 amps each.
• Inverters – an inverter is a device that converts 12-volt DC current into 110-volt AC. This device easily connects to a cigarette lighter, generator, car battery or electrical source. Inverters are fairly inexpensive. Inverter must match the capacity of wattage needed to operate your lights.

Tips Resource: Warehouse Lighting-Parade Float Lighting

1. Do not overload your circuit
2. Consider rope lighting
3. Don’t be afraid to play with colored lights
4. Position lights properly
5. Choose low or no heat emitting solutions
6. Know your amps
7. Have backup bulbs handy

How to use lights in a walking group?

• Glow sticks, flashlights, LED gloves, battery powered candles/ lights
• Marching band equipment/ accessories can be wrapped or lined with battery operated lights
• LED light up hats
• Decorate Carts which can be pushed during the parade with battery powered lights
• Wear Bright colors to help illuminate

Resources/ Links for Ideas:

14 Budget friendly DIY Parade Float ideas - DIYsCraftsy
How to Light a Parade Float
How to Decorate your Vehicle for a Night Parade
Parade Float Lighting
Lighting Cars for a Parade

Creating Your Own Float

HOW TO BUILD PARADE FLOAT (beverlyfarms.org)

Warehouse Lighting - Supplies

58 Parade Float Ideas | parade float, parades, float (pinterest.com)

Building a Parade Float & Supplies

Videos:

Top 5 Tips for Building an Award-Winning Parade Float - YouTube

Giant Lollipops DIY - YouTube

The Making of Main Street Electrical Parade Float For The Newport Beach Christmas Boat Parade - YouTube

Rental/ Décor Services

A Grande Affair
12907 Alcosta Blvd. Suite B
San Ramon, CA 94583
(925) 275-1075
www.agarents.com

Pleasanton Rentals
7066-A Commerce Circle Pleasanton, CA 94588
(925) 468-0624
www.pleasantonrentals.com

Elegance Party Rentals
2221 Commerce Ave., Suite F Concord, CA 94520
(925) 798-0913
www.elegancepartyrentals.com

Festa Party Rentals
76 B Wright Brothers Ave.
Livermore, CA 94551
(510) 378-3400
FestaRentals@gmail.com

Special Events
**Supplies:** Additional Supplies Needed? Here are a few places you can find parade float materials, trailer rentals and banners/signs.

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