

> our mission

To reduce electrical accidents and injuries

The Electrical Safety Council is an independent charity that provides guidance on the electrical safety of products, equipment and installations. We are committed to reducing deaths and injuries through electrical accidents at home and at work.

We are supported by all sectors of the electrical industry as well as local and central government and work to promote safety and good practice.

www.esc.org.uk


> top tips

> Do...

- have your electrics checked regularly (at least every 10 years).
- use an RCD when using electrical equipment outdoors.
- use a registered electrician to carry out electrical work in your home.
- regularly check the condition of plugs, cables and extension leads.
- be careful when using hand-held electrical appliances and ensure that they are switched off and unplugged when you have finished using them.
- remove plugs from sockets carefully. Pulling out a plug by the cable puts a strain on the terminations which can be dangerous.
- check that any adaptor used complies with British Standards and is adequately rated for the connected load.

> Don't...

- bring mains powered portable appliances into the bathroom.
- overload adaptors, particularly with high current appliances such as kettles, irons and heaters.
- use adaptors plugged into other adaptors.
- use any electrical equipment or switches with wet hands.
- wrap flexible cables around any equipment when it is still plugged in.
- clean an appliance such as a kettle whilst it is still plugged in, and especially not with a metal knife – there are often live parts inside!
- fill a kettle or steam iron whilst it is plugged in.



A properly installed and well maintained installation could save lives



Electricity can kill

Helping you...

To find a registered electrician near you or any advice about the safety of electrical products to helpful tips about hazards in the home...

please visit:

www.esc.org.uk

or call:

0870 040 0561



Helping you Electrical Safety Council

home safe home

With added green tips

Britons waste the equivalent of around two power stations' worth of electricity each year by leaving TV sets and other gadgets on standby. You could save up to 10% off your yearly electricity bill.

Never retrieve toast stuck in a toaster whilst it is plugged in, and especially not with a metal knife – there are often live parts inside!

Beware the iron flex!
Not only is it a classic trip hazard, it also shouldn't be wrapped around a still warm iron. Like a kettle, the steam iron should never be filled whilst it is still plugged in.

'It's ok dear, I'll just change this 60 Watt bulb for a 100 Watt version!'
Using a bulb with a higher wattage than allowed by the fitting can cause overheating. In exceptional circumstances the lampshade or lampholder may overheat and start a fire.

Consider using an energy efficient bulb in its place. They last up to 12 times longer and save on electricity.

Changing the belt on a vacuum cleaner is just another one of those annoying jobs that happen when you least need it.
But unless you remember to unplug the appliance and allow it to cool before you attempt even simple maintenance you risk injury from electric shock, burns and mechanical movement.

Lawnmowers have sharp blades and rapidly rotating parts, capable of cutting through electrical cables as easily as grass. Never cut grass in wet conditions, always wear sensible footwear and check the cable and plug before use. Always use an RCD (see below).

Keep trailing cables out of the way.
Flexible cables trailed under carpets, rugs or across walkways are not only a major trip hazard, but also a potential fire risk. Repeated stretching and treading on the cable may damage the cable insulation.

Try turning your washing machine down from a 60° to 40° wash. It'll save you 30% of your electricity bill with every wash.

Think you've found the perfect spot for your new picture? Can't wait to fix it to your wall?
Think again. Never drill holes or fix nails in walls or partitions without knowing what is hidden behind them. Walls and partitions conceal electrical cables and gas and water pipes. A cable and metal detector will help identify the presence of concealed cables and metal pipes.

Try turning your thermostat down by 1° and the only thing that will notice will be your purse. You could save 10% of your annual bill.

Water and electricity are a lethal combination.
That is why the bathroom, of all the rooms in the home, needs to be treated with extra care. Sockets are not permitted in the bathroom (with the exception of carefully positioned shaving points) and lightswitches should be of the pull cord type. Never bring mains powered appliances into a bathroom.

Wired up
Brown to live (L)
Blue to neutral (N)
Green and yellow to earth (E)

Choose the right fuse

It's important to match the right appliance to the right rated fuse. Here is a quick guide, but you should refer to the manufacturers instructions if possible. **3A fuse:** Most lamps, televisions, videos, computers, mixers, power drills etc will use 700W or less. **13A fuse:** Larger appliances such as washing machines, toasters, irons and heaters will use over 700W.

What is a Residual Current Device (RCD)? It's a life saver!

An RCD is a safety device that switches off electricity automatically if it detects an electric current flowing to earth. All power tools, when used outdoors, should be plugged into a socket protected by an RCD.

Electricity can kill. Government statistics indicate that **17% of all fires** in domestic premises in England and Wales are caused by electrical faults which in 2005 resulted in **15 deaths and 1100 non-fatal injuries**. In addition, there were **21 deaths and 2788 non-fatal injuries** caused by electric shock in domestic premises.

But it's not all doom and gloom. By taking the simple steps highlighted here you can vastly reduce any risk to you and your family.

Find out more, visit our website www.esc.org.uk or call us on **0870 040 0561**