

Outdoor Safety

- Electric lawn mowers and other electric tools should not be used in the rain, on wet grass or in wet conditions.
- Inspect power tools and electric lawn mowers before each use for frayed power cords, broken plugs and cracked or broken housings. If any part is damaged, stop using it immediately. Repair or replace it.
- Always use an extension cord marked for outdoor use and rated for the power needs of your tools.
- Remember to unplug all portable power tools when not in use.

Ladders

- When using ladders, *never* come in contact with overhead wires and power lines. Stay at least 10 feet from all wires and lines.

Lightning

- During an electrical storm, do not use appliances (i.e., hairdryers, toasters and radios) or telephones (except in an emergency). If lightning strikes a tree or wire outside, the jolt could come in on the wire and not only ruin the appliance, but also strike you.

Updated Inspection

The Electrical Safety Foundation International recommends a comprehensive electrical inspection which specifically covers the electrical systems of your home. If the "last-inspected date" on your home's electrical panel is more than 10 years ago, get a new inspection.

Don't ignore flickering lights, blown fuses or sparks. Your home is your haven. Keep it that way. Be electrically safe, not sorry!

Education

Educate your children about electrical safety. Teach them never to put fingers or objects into outlets or appliances, and use outlet covers wherever necessary. Don't let your children climb trees near power lines. Let them play with kites and balloons in open areas away from power lines. Help them recognize "Danger-High Voltage" signs and identify electric utility equipment. Teach them to use 9-1-1 and to seek help in the event of an electrical emergency.

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Electrical Safety at Home



Electrical shocks and fires injure thousands of people each year. How often do you check your home for potential electrical hazards such as frayed cords, overloaded outlets or light bulbs that are the wrong wattage?

No other hazard we face in daily life is as insidious or unforgiving as electricity. Electrical problems, particularly with wiring systems, cause more than 40,000 residential house fires each year.



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Electrical Safety Tips

Here are some potential sources of trouble for you to check in your home to ensure electrical safety:

Outlets

- Check for outlets that have loose-fitting plugs, which can overheat and lead to fire.
- Replace any missing or broken wall plates.
- Make sure there are safety covers on all unused outlets that are accessible to children.

Ground Fault Circuit Interrupters (GFCIs)

- GFCIs should be used in any area where water and electricity may come into contact. When a GFCI senses leakage in an electrical circuit, it assumes a ground fault has occurred. It then interrupts power fast enough to help prevent serious injury from electrical shock.
- Test GFCIs according to the manufacturer's instructions monthly, and after major electrical storms, to make sure they are working properly. Replace all GFCIs that are not working properly with another GFCI. Never replace a GFCI with a non-GFCI outlet or circuit breaker.

Plugs

- Make sure your plugs fit your outlets. Never remove the ground pin (the third prong) to make a three-prong fit a two-conductor outlet; this could lead to an electrical shock.
- **NEVER FORCE A PLUG INTO AN OUTLET IF IT DOESN'T FIT.** Plugs should fit securely into outlets.
- Avoid overloading an outlet with too many appliances.



Cords

- Make sure cords are in good condition—not frayed or cracked.
- Make sure cords are placed out of traffic areas.
- Cords should never be nailed or stapled to the wall, baseboard or another object.

- Do not place cords under carpets or rugs or rest any furniture on them.

Extension Cords

- Check to see that cords are not overloaded.
- Extension cords should only be used on a temporary basis; they are not intended as permanent household wiring.
- When there are insufficient electrical wall receptacles available and an extension cord is needed for a longer period of time, temporary powerstrips (multiple plug outlets) can be used. These devices may have 3 to 6 electrical receptacles, a circuit breaker, a 6-ft. to 15-ft cord and a surge protector, and should bear the mark of a certified testing organization.
- Multiple plug outlets must be plugged directly into wall-mounted electrical receptacles. They cannot be chained together.
- Make sure the extension cord or temporary power strip you use is rated for the products to be plugged in and is marked for either indoor or outdoor use.



Light Bulbs

- Make sure light bulbs are the correct wattage for the size of each light fixture.
- Replace bulbs that have higher wattage than recommended; if you don't know the correct wattage, check with the manufacturer of the fixture.
- Make sure bulbs are screwed in securely; loose bulbs may overheat.

Water and Electricity Don't Mix

- Don't leave plugged-in appliances where they might come in contact with water. If a plugged-in appliance falls into water, NEVER reach in to pull it out—even if it's turned off. First turn off the power source at the panel board and then unplug the appliance.

- If you have an appliance that has gotten wet, don't use it until it has been checked by a qualified repair person.

Circuit Breakers/Fuses

- Circuit breakers and fuses should be the correct size or current rating for their circuit. If you do not know the correct size, have an electrician identify and label the size to be used.
- Always replace a fuse with the correctly specified size.
- Create a circuit map that identifies all outlets, fixtures and the major appliances each circuit serves.

Entertainment/Computer Equipment

- Keep the equipment in good condition and working properly.
- Look for cracks or damage in wiring, plugs and connectors.
- Use a surge protector bearing the seal of a nationally recognized certification agency.

Space Heaters

- Space heaters are meant to supply supplemental heat.
- Do not use space heaters with extension cords; plug directly into an outlet on a relatively unburdened circuit.

Appliances

- If an appliance repeatedly blows a fuse or trips a circuit breaker, or if it has given you a shock, unplug it and have it repaired or replaced.
- Keep all heat-producing appliances unplugged when not in use. If a small appliance is turned off but still plugged in to a working outlet, it is 'live'. That means you could get a shock if it is faulty or comes in contact with water. If you are not using an iron, toaster, coffee maker, etc., unplug it for safety.

Wiring

- Unless you are qualified and experienced in electrical work, hire a licensed electrician for electrical repairs, maintenance and installations.