



Extension Cord Safety

Extension cords are designed as conveniences, not hazards. Too often they're converted into hazards by the people who use them. Listed below are ways to avoid such dangers.

- Extension cords are often placed in areas where people don't expect them to be, which results in a tripping hazard. The plug can also be damaged in the accident, in which case it would be deemed a hazard. Keep cords out of aisles and other places where pedestrians might trip over them. Eliminate the hazard by hanging the cord with ample clearance, or by placing a board on either side when left on the floor. Extension cords should never be used as permanent wiring.
- Many hazards can be eliminated to start with by selecting the right extension cord for the job. All cords should be UL listed, properly grounded, and meet all other applicable electrical code specifications. The electrical equipment should also be properly grounded.
- Appropriate cords should be used with portable electric tools or extension lamps to be used in boilers, tanks, and other grounded enclosures.
- Cords should always be kept in excellent condition and brass shell sockets should never be used. Handles on lamps should be made of non-conductive material, and there should not be a metallic connection between the lamp guard and socket shell.
- Plastic covers are recommended for extension cords that are used around solvents or oils. Do not twist or kink cords and protect them from sharp objects.
- Be sure to use the proper cord type if moisture, heat or chemicals are present in the working environment.
- Wet or sweaty hands form a dangerous connection when they come in contact with a wet floor, a steam or water pipe or any another electrical connection.
- It is important to inspect extension cords often. Do not use any damaged cords. Be careful to avoid overloading electrical circuits by adding too many extension cords to the circuit.

Always keep in mind the intended purpose for extension cords. They are a product of convenience designed for a specific purpose. Handle them with care and use them safely. They are not the answer to every electrical need, but they can be a lot of help when used correctly.

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