

# Home Matters

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## Electrical Safety Tips for Your Home

Electrical appliances provide convenience and enjoyment to the entire family. However, items such as lamps, televisions and electrical outlets can also pose serious injury risks, as volts of electricity travel through them constantly. To reduce the potential for danger, walk through your home and identify all the items that use electricity. After you've done that, use the following recommendations as precautions to reduce the risk of shock and burn injuries.

### Electrical Safety Recommendations

#### Lighting Tips

When replacing light bulbs in fixtures and lamps, always select the correct bulb based on the wattage the fixture can handle. To do so, look inside the fixture or lamp and find the label that outlines which size bulb to use. Using the wrong size can cause the lamp or fixture to overheat and start on fire.



### Safety First

Though a blown fuse may indicate that you were simply running too many appliances at once, it could also be an indication that there are wiring problems in your home.

If you notice your lights flickering often or your power going out frequently, contact an electrician to inspect your home for damage.

#### Safety with Small Appliances

- Buy appliances with the UL mark on the label. This indicates that they have been tested for safe use by Underwriters Laboratories.
- Unplug toaster ovens, coffee makers and mixers when they are not in use.
- Store appliances away from water sources. Be cautious when using appliances such as curling irons, hair dryers, mixers, toasters and blenders near water sources in your kitchen and bathroom.
- Avoid plugging in an excessive number of appliances at the same time.

#### Electrical System Warnings

- Cover electrical outlets and switches with faceplates when they are not in use, especially if you have young children. Kids may stick their fingers or small toys into the openings and risk electric shock.
- Discard cords that are frayed or worn or that have exposed wires. These defects pose major burn hazards.
- Never tie or knot cords or place furniture on top of them.
- Make sure that the electrical outlet in your bathroom has a Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter (GFCI). This will protect you from shocks if water and electricity connect—for example, if water accidentally splashes onto a curling iron as it is plugged in and heating up. If you do not have GFCI outlets in your bathrooms, contact an electrician to install them.

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