

# HOME ELECTRICAL AUDIT



## EVERY ROOM

### Lights \_\_\_\_\_

- Check all lights in your home, including lamps, to ensure the appropriate wattage bulb is in place.*

**NO:** Replace the bulb with the correct wattage. If no wattage is recommended, use 60 watts or less for a regular socket, 25 watts for miniature sockets. A bulb that is a higher wattage than recommended may overheat, becoming a fire hazard.

### 3-Prong Adapters \_\_\_\_\_

- Are properly grounded 3-prong adapters used to attach 3-prong power cords to 2-prong outlets?*

**NO:** Always connect the grounding wire or metal tab on the adaptor to the center screw on the outlet cover. This lessens the risk of fire or shock in cause of a fault. Never remove the ground pin from a 3-prong plug.

### Electrical Cords \_\_\_\_\_

- Is any cord frayed, cracked, or otherwise damaged?*

**YES:** Replace all damaged cords or replace equipment. Damaged cords may have exposed live wires that can be shock and fire hazards.

- Is any cord placed where it might be stepped on?*

**YES:** Move out of traffic areas. Exposed cords are tripping hazards, and may be damaged when walked on thereby becoming a fire hazard.

- Is any piece of furniture or rug resting on an electrical cord?*

**YES:** Move cords or furniture. Weight on a cord can cause damage resulting in a shock or fire hazard.

## EVERY ROOM CON'T

- Is a cord tightly wrapped around an object?*  
**YES:** Unwrap cords. Wrapped cords trap heat, leading to melting or weakening of insulation.
- Are cords attached to anything (wall, baseboard, etc) with nails or wire staples?*  
**YES:** Remove nails or staples and replace cord if damaged.
- Do all extensions cords have safety covers on unused outlets?*  
**NO:** Insert safety covers. Children can be shocked or seriously burned through contact with uncovered outlets.

## Portable Electric Heaters

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- Does the heater have a seal of a nationally-recognized testing laboratory such as CSA?*  
**NO:** Replace heater. With an uncertified heater, there is less assurance that safety features are adequate.
- Is the heater placed at least 3 feet from combustibles, such as drapes?*  
**NO:** Move heater at least 3 feet away and check that nothing can fall into it.  
Some heaters can produce enough heat to ignite combustibles.
- Is the heater stable and placed where it will not tip over?*  
**NO:** Place heater on a stable surface and ensure it is out of high traffic areas. While many heaters have a fail-safe that will cause the unit to shut down if tipped over, a precariously placed unit is still a fire hazard.

## Electrical Ratings

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- Is an extension cord carrying more than its proper load?*  
**YES:** Replace with a higher capacity cord. An overloaded cord can become overheated, a fire risk.
- Are you using any extension cord as a permanent electrical solution?*  
**YES:** Have new outlets installed or move appliance to an outlet. Installed wiring is designed to carry more current than extension cords, preventing shock and fire.

## EVERY ROOM CON'T

### Entertainment Equipment \_\_\_\_\_

- Can air circulate freely around all entertainment equipment?*  
**NO:** Move equipment. Blocking air flow can cause overheating, a fire hazard.
- Is all entertainment equipment protected from water, including spills?*  
**NO:** Move equipment. Electricity and water can lead to serious shock.

### Electrical Outlets and Switches \_\_\_\_\_

- If children are frequently in the home, do outlets have safety covers?*  
**NO:** Insert safety covers. Children can be shocked or seriously burned through contact with uncovered outlets.
- Are all outlets and switches working properly?*  
**NO:** Contact an electrician to inspect. Improperly working outlets may indicate unsafe wiring.
- Do all electrical plugs fit snugly into all outlets?*  
**NO:** Have the outlet replaced. Loose-fitting plugs may overheat, a fire hazard.
- Do faceplates cover all wiring?*  
**NO:** Properly install faceplates. Exposed wiring is a shock hazard.

### Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter (GFCI) Protected Outlets \_\_\_\_\_

- Have you installed GFCI outlets in your kitchen, bathroom, unfinished basement, garage and laundry? Have you tested them recently?*  
**NO:** Install GFCIs and test once a month:
  - 1) Plug a light into the outlet and turn it on.
  - 2) Press the test button. Did the light go out? If not, replace the GFCI.
  - 3) Press the reset button. Did the light come back on? If not, replace the GFCI.

## BATHROOM

### Small Appliances \_\_\_\_\_

- Are all appliances unplugged when not in use?*  
**NO:** Unplug all small appliances. They are an unnecessary risk.
- Are all appliances in good condition?*  
**NO:** Discard or have repaired. Irregular operation is a sign of damage to electrical parts.
- Are portable heaters ever used in the bathroom?*  
**YES:** Remove if possible and replace with a fixed heating unit. If impossible, ensure it is plugged into a GFCI outlet.

## KITCHEN

### Counter Top Appliances \_\_\_\_\_

- Are all counter top appliances unplugged when not in use?*  
**NO:** Unplug. Plugged in appliances are an unnecessary risk.
- Are all appliance cords placed away from hot surfaces, such as stove top?*  
**NO:** Move cords. Excess heat can cause a cord to melt or burn, a fire and shock hazard.
- Are any appliances located next to the sink?*  
**NO:** Move appliance. If you cannot, ensure they are plugged into a GFCI outlet, thereby reducing the chance of shock if they are accidentally knocked into the sink.

## KITCHEN CON'T

### Large Appliances \_\_\_\_\_

- Have you ever received even a slight shock from an appliance?*  
**YES:** Do not touch the appliance. Turn off the power at the breaker box and call an electrician to inspect.
- Is the area around the range free of combustibles such as potholders?*  
**NO:** Remove all possible combustibles. They are a fire risk.

## BEDROOM

### Electric Blankets \_\_\_\_\_

- Are all electric blankets in good condition? (Look for cracks in wiring and dark, charred, or frayed areas on the blanket.)*  
**NO:** Discard blanket. These conditions indicate a potential fire hazard.
- Is anything covering the blanket when in use?*  
**YES:** Remove object. Blankets may overheat when covered, a fire risk.
- Is the blanket laid out flat?*  
**NO:** Unfold the blanket. Folded blankets may overheat, a fire risk.

## BASEMENT & GARAGE

Fuse Box (No fuse box? Check your circuit breaker box.) \_\_\_\_\_

- Are fuses the correct size for the circuit?*  
**NO:** Install the correct size. If unknown, have an electrician identify and label.  
The wrong size fuse can allow too much current, a fire hazard.

Circuit Breaker Box \_\_\_\_\_

- Do you periodically turn circuit breakers off and on?*  
**NO:** Flip each circuit breaker off and on three times once a year. Breakers may seize if not flipped periodically.
- Do you test GFCI breakers periodically?*  
**NO:** Test GFCIs monthly. A defective breaker should be replaced by an electrician.
- Do you test Arc Fault Circuit Interrupters periodically?*  
**NO:** Test AFCIs monthly. A defective breaker should be replaced by an electrician.

Electrical Power Tools & Garden Tools \_\_\_\_\_

- Do all corded tools have 3-prong plugs, or are they double insulated?*  
**NO:** Replace if possible. If not, ensure they are plugged into GFCI outlets.
- Are tools in good condition and operating properly, in a consistent manner?*  
**NO:** Replace or repair. Improper operation is usually a sign of electrical damage.
- Are corded electric power tools used in wet or damp areas?*  
**YES:** Avoid using corded tools in damp or wet locations. If a tool gets wet, unplug it before touching it. Let it dry thoroughly. Use GFCI outlets in areas that may get wet.