

Extension Cords

SafeTips from the Naval Safety Center

Quick and easy summaries to find out about something new you're doing or as a refresher for something you haven't done in a while. They're a great training tool to pass around at meetings, through e-mail, or post on bulletin boards.

Mishap Data

- ※ The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission estimates that 4,000 people are treated in emergency rooms each year because they were injured while using extension cords.
- ※ Half the injuries involve fractures, lacerations, contusions, or sprains from people tripping over extension cords.
- ※ About 3,300 residential fires start with extension cords each year, killing 50 people and injuring about 270 others. The most frequent causes are short-circuits, overloading, damage, and/or misuse of extension cords .

Do's and Don'ts

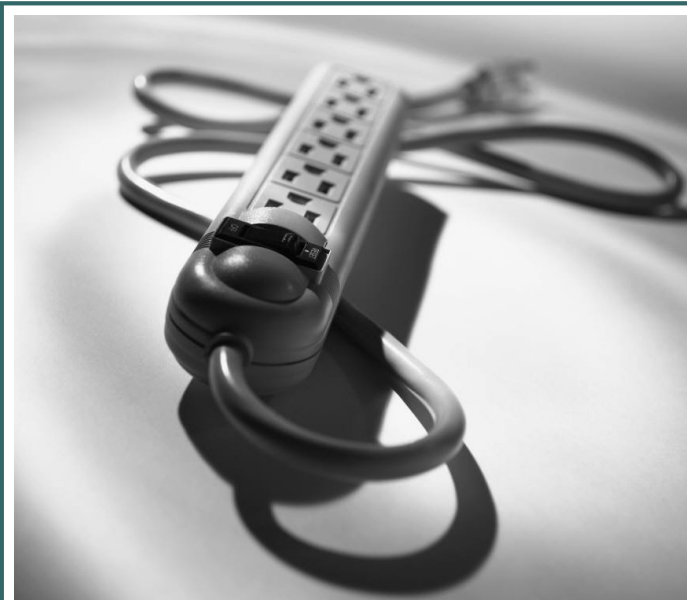
- ※ If an extension cord is not marked for outdoor use, use it indoors only. The UL label will tell you if it is OK for outdoors.
- ※ Inspect the cord before you use it. Look for areas that are cracked or frayed. If you find any, dispose of the cord.
- ※ The appliance or tool that you are plugging into the cord will have a wattage rating on it. Match this up with your extension cord. Don't use a cord that has a lower rating.
- ※ Don't run extension cords through doorways, or through holes in ceilings, walls or floors.
- ※ Make sure the appliance or tool is off before you plug it into the cord.
- ※ Make sure the plug is fully inserted in the outlet.
- ※ Don't remove, bend or modify any of the metal parts of the cord's plug.
- ※ Don't plug a three-prong plug into a two-hole cord.
- ※ You shouldn't have to force a plug into an outlet.

www.public.navy.mil/comnavsafecen/pages/media/index-safetips.aspx



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- ※ If the plug is too loose in the outlet, the outlet may be too old and needs to be replaced.
- ※ Some cords are polarized; one hole on the plug is larger than the other. Match up the outlet and the cord.

During use:

- ※ Keep away from water.
- ※ Don't use it when it is wet.
- ※ Keep it away from children and pets.
- ※ Don't plug one extension cord into another.
- ※ Don't overheat the cord. Uncoil it, and don't cover it with anything.
- ※ Don't drive over the cord. Don't drag it or lay anything on it.
- ※ Don't walk on it.

After use:

- ※ Remove it from an outlet by pulling on the plug, not the cord.
- ※ Store it indoors.
- ※ Unplug it.

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