

Extension Cord Safety Fact Sheet

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mployers and employees need to consider an important element of electrical safety in the workplace — the safe use of extension cords. The most important thing to remember is that extension cords are for temporary use only (up to 90 days in General Industry workplaces). Install permanent wiring in conduit when usage is no longer temporary.

Do:

- Do inspect an extension cord for physical damage before use.
- Do check the wattage rating on the appliance or tool that will use the extension cord; do not use an extension cord with a lower rating.
- Do make sure all equipment and extension cords bear the mark of an independent testing laboratory such as UL (Underwriter's Laboratories).
- Do fully insert the extension cord into the outlet.
- Do replace an outlet if a plug is too loose in the outlet.
- Do match up the plug and extension cord on a polarized cord (one hole on the plug is larger than the other).



- Do keep extension cords away from water.
- Do use GFCI (ground fault circuit interrupter) protection when using extension cords in wet or damp environments.
- Do keep extension cords away from children and animals.
- Do pull on the plug, not the cord, when removing an extension cord from the outlet.
- Do store extension cords indoors.
- Do unplug extension cords when not in use.
- Do keep slack in flexible extension cords to prevent tension on electrical terminals.
- Do put safety covers on the unused receptacle outlets on extension cords.
- Do reduce long cord lengths by installing additional electrical outlets.
- Do consider installing overhead pendants to reduce trip hazards.
- Do use cord protectors if a cord must cross an aisle.
- Do use three-wire extension cords from the power source to the end use. (Temporary power must run through a GFCI in construction. Use double-insulated tools with two-prong plugs when plugging into a three-wire extension cord.)

Do not:

- Do not use an indoor extension cord outdoors.
- Do not overload cords with more than the proper electrical load.
- Do not run extension cords through doorways, holes in ceilings, walls, or floors.
- Do not move, bend, or modify any of the extension cord plug's metal parts.
- Do not daisy chain, or connect, multiple power strips together.
- Do not force a plug into an outlet.
- Do not use an extension cord when it is wet.
- Do not overheat an extension cord.
- Do not cover an extension cord with anything other than a cord protector.
- Do not drive over an extension cord.
- Do not drag an extension cord.
- Do not attach extension cords to the wall with nails or staples.



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