

EXTENSION CORD SAFETY

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Electrical extension cords not only present a tripping hazard when run across floors, but can also prove a fire hazard if the cords are run under mats or carpets. Whether at home or work, there are some basic safety rules that apply to using extension cords.

- Unplug extension cords when they are not being used.
- Never use an extension cord that has been damaged or cut.
- Touch extension cords to be sure they are not hot. If a cord becomes hot, unplug it and do not plug it in again until it is determined what is causing the overload.
- Don't file or cut the third or grounding plug.
- Never run an extension cord under a walkway mat, carpet, or over a heater.
- When working outdoors, use only extension cords that are rated for outdoor use.
- Never run extension cords through standing water or over any wet surface such as a wet floor. Avoid running extension cords across walkways. Instead run them overhead if possible.
- Extension cords pose an increased risk when carried up or down a ladder. The cords can become tangled around a person's feet and cause a nasty fall. If you must use an extension cord while working on a ladder or other platform (and there is no way to run the cord away from the ladder) route the cord off one rail or leg of the ladder, rather than hanging it over the ladder rungs where it might trip you (or someone else).
- A better solution, where possible, is to use cordless power tools for ladder or scaffold work. Not all power tools are available in cordless models, so learn to keep extension cords out of the walking or climbing path.
- And of course, don't unplug an extension cord by grabbing the cord section and yanking it.