

A woman with long brown hair, wearing a dark blue dress with a small floral pattern, stands in a modern dining room. She is looking towards the camera with a slight smile. In the background, there is a wooden dining table with white chairs that have red cushions. A large, textured vase sits on the table. The room has large windows and a bright, airy feel.

YOUR GUIDE TO ELECTRICAL SAFETY FOR EXTENSIONS AND LOFT CONVERSIONS

THE POWER TO MAKE YOUR HOME SAFER



INCREASINGLY THE SIZE OF A PROPERTY VIA AN EXTENSION OR LOFT CONVERSION IS A POPULAR OPTION FOR MANY HOMEOWNERS.

The obvious advantage of extending a property is the ability to increase space without the need to move home. This is particularly relevant for people who may feel settled in an area and are reluctant to move.

Adding an extension or loft conversion to a property can increase its value, but it is important that the work is carried out by professionals to ensure the maximum value is added – otherwise it could become a costly project.

What do I need to know?

Undertaking an extension on a property is a big job. Due to the nature of the work involved and the disruption it can create there are many things to consider.

It is almost certain that you will require additional power and lighting.

It might be that power and lighting can be supplied via existing circuits or it could be that a new consumer unit is required. Consult with a local NICEIC registered electrical contractor before any work is carried out to ensure you get the best and most appropriate advice.

If you are planning to install an additional bath or shower room within your loft conversion then extra precautions are necessary. Water and electricity are a potentially dangerous mix, so when it comes to installing any electrical circuits or items, a bathroom is considered a special location (see factsheet on bathrooms).

If you are using a building company who is subcontracting parts of the build please ensure that they are using an electrical contractor registered with a government approved Part P scheme (England and Wales only), such as an NICEIC Domestic Installer to carry out the work.

Building Regulations

In some instances, an extension to your home is considered to be a permitted development, not requiring an application for planning permission subject to certain conditions.

However, larger extensions will require planning permission before any work can take place.

Therefore, we would advise that you check if the planned works does need approval beforehand or is in fact permitted development:

www.planningportal.co.uk for England and Wales

www.mygov.scot/add-extension-house for Scotland

Whatever the size of your extension it will almost certainly be subject to building regulations for all types of work carried out including structural, plumbing, flooring, foundations and electrical.

Any electrical work will have to comply with Part P of the building regulations (England and Wales only). House extensions in Scotland may require a building warranty prior to any work commencing.

The best way of meeting the Part P requirements (England and Wales) is to use an electrical contractor who is registered with an electrical competent person scheme such as an NICEIC Domestic Installer. They can self-certify the work and notify the local building control body on your behalf if needed.

If the work is notifiable you will then receive a Building Regulations Compliance Certificate confirming the work has been carried out to the required standard as well as receiving an electrical certificate for the work.

Keep your certificate in a safe place. You will need it if you go on to sell or rent your home.

How do I know if the electrics are safe in the rest of my home?

If there is noticeable damage to sockets or light fittings or they look very old, then it could be a sign that your electrics need checking. If you have any concerns regarding the electrics in your home, then you should call a registered electrical contractor. If the wiring is old, then a full re-wire may be advisable.

A full rewire can take place when major building work such as an extension or loft conversion is being carried out.

How can I get my home checked for electrical safety?

You should contact your local NICEIC Approved Contractor and ask them to carry out an electrical inspection (sometimes known as a periodic inspection).

Much like an MOT, this is an inspection of the current condition of an electrical installation in your home. On completion of the inspection, you will receive an Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR) detailing any damage, deterioration, defects, dangerous conditions and anything not in line with the current safety standard which might give rise to danger.





How often should this be carried out?

There is no regulation regarding how often an electrical inspection should be carried out for the general public. However, NICEIC recommend that an EICR is carried out every 10 years in a privately-owned home. For rented properties this will be subject to different regulations and may need carrying out every 5 years.

Why use an NICEIC registered electrical contractor?

Choosing an NICEIC registered electrical contractor is a householder's best way to ensure a safe job. Electrical contractors registered with NICEIC are assessed on a regular basis to ensure high standards and their work is checked against the Wiring Regulations as well as other standards.



What happens if something goes wrong?



All NICEIC registered electrical contractors are covered by the Platinum Promise – a promise that protects you against all non-compliant installation work.

Should any work carried out by one of our contractors be found not to comply with the Building Regulations or relevant installation standards, we can instruct the contractor to go back and carry out the work to the required standard.

If the contractor is no longer in business or disputes the matter, we will have the work rectified by another registered contractor at no extra cost.

The Platinum Promise is valid for up to six years from the date of the completion of the original work and covers work up to a maximum of £25,000 for any one consumer rectification.



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