

**3 common electrical problems at home that may not require a sparky immediately.**



There's a few times we get called out and it's a really easy fix, and probably something the homeowner is able to check themselves. Now when it comes to household electricity, your safety is paramount. We're not going to be showing you how to wire anything up here, but ... please try these before you call us... Lets face it you don't want to spend your hard earned cash on an after hours callout, that could have an easy fix, or wait til morning.

### 1. + MY OVEN IS NOT WORKING:

We've had a few calls like this one and sometimes it is as easy as this:

If the Fuse is fine: The oven has a manual timer which overrides the standard cook functions. Ensure the timer is not engaged. It's a little hand icon. In older stand alone type stoves it's easy to knock the dial and turn this on.

If this is not the case, it might be time to consult a professional electrician.

### 2. + SECURITY LIGHTS

Sensor security lights can be fussy things and we often get called in to repair lights which are actually fine.

- Adjusting the sensitivity there's an adjustment on most fittings and it's a little trial and error. The sensors do wear out over time and require replacement.

- Ensure it's actually on, the switching is confusing, turn it off and leave a minute, then back on again, if the light comes on and goes off after the required period your all set, if not try again.

- The bulb... YES REALLY, some people really just need to change the lamp. They're out in the weather constant cooling and heating can cause lamps to work loose so they don't connect so well. Give it a really good turn and make sure it's well in the lamp holder.

It's worth considering upgrading to LED type fittings and there will never be a bulb issue again.

### WHAT TO DO IF PROBLEMS PERSIST

If electrical problems are ongoing around your home, you should consider contacting an electrician. So don't leave anything to chance. Get in touch with a professional, **A and E ELECTRICAL**, to help diagnose the problems with your home electricals for peace of mind.

### 3. + FREQUENT CIRCUITS GOING OFF:

High wattage items like heaters, electrical jugs and hairdryers can trip circuit breakers, particularly when other power consuming items are used on the same source. A circuit breaker is designed to protect you and your home, so when it does trip, that's a sign it's doing it's job.

Look at what you were using when it tripped. If it was a hair dryer, try using the low setting. Alternatively, limit the electrical usage on a single circuit while high watt devices are in use.

Sometimes there is a fault in the appliance, these can trip circuits just because they're plugged in, even though they are not being used.

- Unplug all items on that circuit.
- plug each one back in checking the fuse/ RCD each time until it trips. The one you just plugged in may be faulty, (even if it's brand new)
- Unplug it and try it on another circuit, to check it's not just an overload.
- Put this item aside for repair or replacement.



### WHEN CIRCUIT OVERLOAD CAUSES FUSES TO BLOW:

If a circuit breaker in your switchboard trips it can mean anything from one appliance going down to a whole section of the house being left in the dark. It pays to know how to reset one that's fizzled out so you can get your day or night back on track, without having to call out the electrical services company. Here are a few things to remember when your circuit breaker trips:

### KEEP AN EMERGENCY TORCH (AND REMEMBER WHERE THIS IS)

If the circuit breaker trips and it's night then you're in the dark. Use the flashlight function on your phone to find your way around the house. It's also a good idea to have a torch on hand for situations like these, or at least matches and a candle. Even if you know where your electrical box is and feel confident you could do it with your eyes closed; it's just not a good idea to go feeling around inside electrical boxes without a proper light source.

# 3 STEPS TO FOLLOW WHEN A CIRCUIT BREAKER TRIPS

## 1. + Turn Appliances Off

Always turn off appliances that are connected to the affected circuit. Your circuit breaker tripped for a reason. Having all of your appliances on can do that. If this was the case when the breaker tripped, make sure you go around and switch off and unplug everything that's connected to the circuit, otherwise it will be immediately loaded with power and may cause the issue to occur again.

## 2. + Master Switch

Once at the power board, turn off the master switch. Make sure you do this before doing anything else! This is going to cut all the power to the circuits, so if there is a fault it can't hurt you while you are in the switchboard.

## 3. + Safety Switch

Make sure you always have a RCD safety switch installed and tested regularly. These are essential for houses to ensure that everyone in the house is protected from getting a zap! These will also be triggered if, while making the Christmas pavlova, the mix master burns out, or the hairdryer falls into the bath. If that is the case unplug all of the appliances, see if they'll work in another area of the house. If one of these appliances doesn't work at all, it's likely that this was the cause of the tripped circuit breaker. Don't plug this appliance back in. See if you can replace it or have it fixed.

## READY TO GO AGAIN

Turn on the master switch. After all this fuss you almost expect a sort of powering-up noise to signal that you've done it. No such luck. Go back to your appliances and turn them all back on.



## WHAT CAUSES CIRCUIT OVERLOADS?

One of the most common problems of tripping a circuit breaker is what we call "overloading the circuit". Too much extra power consumption on one circuit could cause the breaker to trip.

This may seem like an inconvenience, but it's actually a nice reminder that your circuit breaker is working. Using both thermal and magnetic tripping mechanisms, modern circuit breakers will cause a power outage, rather than allowing a circuit to overwork, catch fire, and burn your house down. Electrical circuits have a limit to how much electricity they can provide, so it's also a reminder to consider the amount of appliances you're powering.

Common causes include a sudden excessive power use, the dryer hairdryer and jug on all together and add a heater too BANG: , excessive powering of air conditioning and fans during a heat wave, or overloading a circuit with too many electrical devices. Other causes are old and perished wiring insulation, and very commonly rodents chewing away the tps sheath causing wires to short.

If you notice your lights are dimming, buzzing, your outlets are warm or your appliances are lacking power then you can catch a trip before it happens. There are a few ways you can prevent a circuit overload:

- Have an electrician rewire old circuits with new ones that can meet a higher electrical demand (you can [just give us a call on 021454997](tel:021454997))
- Avoid connecting too many devices to the one circuit.
- Regularly check the roof space for rodent activity. Instead, share the load across different circuits.





## BACK TO LIFE AS NORMAL AGAIN

Now go back to whatever it was you were doing before you were so rudely interrupted. Re-setting a circuit breaker isn't rocket science, and certainly doesn't require an electrician. It's a matter of preparation and keeping calm. If you're uncertain of what the problem is after trying the above, or if you want a professional to look at it, **just give us a call on 021454997**, we are always here to help.