

# Surge Protector and Power Strip Safety



A surge protector is an appliance designed to protect electrical devices from voltage spikes. It attempts to limit the voltage supplied to an electric device by either blocking or by shorting to ground any unwanted voltages above a safe threshold.

A power strip is a block of electrical sockets that attaches to the end of a flexible cable, allowing multiple electrical devices to be powered from a single electrical socket.



## Safety Tips

These important safety principles can help keep your home and/or workplace safe from electrical hazards:

- Use only surge protectors or power strips that have an internal circuit breaker. These units will trip the breaker if it becomes overloaded or shorted to prevent overheating.
- Surge protectors and/or power strips are not a substitute for permanent wiring and when it is not in use, unplug the unit.
- If at any time the unit is hot to the touch, evaluate the electrical load to ensure it is not overloaded. Immediately unplug it and throw it away. Reduce the electrical load and purchase and replace with a new unit.
- At no time should a unit be placed into a situation that will allow it to be exposed to a moist environment.
- Any unit that does not have an internal circuit breaker, has frayed wiring, or that is not working properly, should be replaced immediately.
- Do not plug into an existing unit. This practice is called “daisy chaining” or piggy backing” and can lead to serious problems.
- Ensure that all units are certified by a nationally recognized testing laboratory such as Underwriters Laboratories (UL), Canadian Standards Association (CSA), Factory Mutual (FM) or ETL Testing Laboratories/Intertek Testing Services (ETL) and read the manufacturer’s instructions carefully.
- There should only be one unit plugged into a single duplex electrical outlet.
- Do not place a unit in an area where the unit would be covered with carpet, furniture, or any other item that will limit or prevent air circulation.
- Do not staple, tack, or tape a unit.
- Visually inspect all units on a regular basis to ensure that they are not damaged or showing signs of too much wear or tear. During the inspection, ensure that the plug is fully engaged into the outlet.
- The unit should always have three-prong grounded plug. Never use a three to two prong adapter to power the unit.
- Units should have a cord of no more than 6 feet in length.
- Never plug medical equipment into a unit unless it has been approved by the manufacturer for this purpose.

