

Guide for **consumers** when ordering domestic electrical work

This guide has been produced to help you when you want electrical installation work carried out in your home.

Within the guide you will find general tips and advice as well as a quotation request. The quotation request is for you to complete and pass to an electrician so they will know what electrical work you want them to quote for.

The benefits of using the quotation request are:

- You can provide it to more than one electrician so you can compare quotes.
- The electrician will know exactly what electrical work you want carried out and why.
- The electrician is aware in advance of any special instructions.
- The electrician will be able to give you options if there is more than one way of providing the work you want done.
- Once you have agreed a quote you can ask the electrician to sign the bottom of the quotation request as confirmation of what has been agreed.
- The quotation request could help to avoid a dispute because both you and the electrician are clear on what work has been ordered.

Consumer tips & advice

You may wish to consider the following advice when choosing an electrician.

- Be clear about the work you want done and, unless the work is minor, obtain at least three written quotations.
- Check that the electrician is approved by a reputable body or registered with a government-approved scheme. Details can be found on our website at www.esc.org.uk.
- Ask for references and check they have public liability insurance of at least £2 million.
- All electrical installation work should be carried out by a competent, electrically trained, person and the work should meet BS 7671 (IEE Wiring Regulations). On completion of the work, a detailed certificate, confirming the work meets with this safety standard, should be issued to you.

- Check whether any new electrical work you need doing comes under the requirements of the Building Regulations for your area. If it does, then you should either use an electrician registered with a government-approved scheme who will take care of everything on your behalf or notify your local authority **before** the work is started. (Please note that the Building Regulations in England & Wales are different to those in Scotland. Also there are no Building Regulations for domestic electrical work in Northern Ireland. You can find more information on our website at www.esc.org.uk.)

10 rogue electrician warning signs

The rogue electrician:

1. Avoids giving references.
2. Only supplies a mobile no. and gives no address on their letterhead/business card.
3. Will do the job 'cheaper for cash' on the grounds that the customer avoids paying the VAT.
4. Says they can start tomorrow - a registered electrician is usually booked up well in advance.
5. Will not confirm anything in writing.
6. Tells the customer they are approved by an organisation when they are not.
7. Tells the customer not to worry about the details of the job.
8. Confuses the customer with jargon and complicated explanations.
9. Cannot give a specific cost for materials or labour but asks for money upfront.
10. Provides a quote that is surprisingly low - if something sounds too good to be true, it usually is!



For more advice or guidance, contact Consumer Direct, the government-funded telephone and on-line service. Consumer Direct provides clear and practical advice to help consumers sort out problems and disagreements with suppliers of goods and services; you can contact them on **08454 040506**.