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## HOME ELECTRICAL SAFETY & UPGRADE GUIDE (2026)

PRACTICAL ADVICE  
FOR DORSET  
HOMEOWNERS — STAY  
SAFE, EFFICIENT AND  
FUTURE-READY

Dorset Electrical Solutions – Trusted electricians for over 20 years



## Home Electrical Safety & Upgrade Guide (2026)

Practical advice for Dorset homeowners — keep your home safe, efficient and future-ready  
Introduction



Homes built 15–30+ years ago were not designed for the electrical demands of modern living. Today's households use more devices, charge electric vehicles, work from home and run advanced heating or ventilation systems — all of which increase load on wiring and consumer units. Dorset Electrical Solutions has prepared this short guide to help homeowners recognise problems early, prioritise sensible upgrades and plan improvements that boost safety and long-term value.

### Why this matters now

- Energy usage patterns have changed permanently: more devices, more powerful chargers and more reliance on electrical systems.
- Older wiring and consumer units may be safe now but often lack the protection and capacity required for modern equipment.
- Early intervention saves money — addressing small faults prevents larger, costlier problems later.

### Recognising the warning signs

Electrical faults usually show themselves as subtle signs before they become dangerous. If you notice any of the following, you should arrange a professional inspection:

- Frequent tripping of breakers when multiple appliances are in use — a sign of overloaded circuits.
- Flickering or dimming lights when kettles, pumps or ovens start — usually indicates voltage drop or weak circuits.
- Warm or discoloured sockets and switches — sockets should not feel hot.
- Burning smells, scorch marks or visible arcing — treat these as urgent and stop using the affected circuit.
- Buzzing from the consumer unit or frequent unexplained fuse trips.
- Old-style fuse boxes with rewirable fuses or no RCD protection — these lack modern safety devices.

If you see burning smells, sparks or persistent tripping that won't reset, call an electrician immediately rather than attempting DIY fixes.

### Small checks you can do safely

- Look for discolouration around sockets and plugs.
- Test a few lights and plugs — note if dimming occurs when appliances switch on.
- Check the age of your consumer unit — if it's older than ~15–20 years, consider an inspection.
- Keep a short log of any incidents (date, issue, what was on) — this helps an engineer diagnose intermittent problems.


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## Practical upgrades that deliver value

A carefully scoped electrical upgrade improves safety, reduces the chance of disruption, and prepares the home for future technology.

### Consumer unit (fuse board) upgrades

Modern consumer units with RCDs and RCBOs provide selective protection and faster fault isolation. Upgrading:

- Improves safety and reduces fire risk
- Enables new circuits to be added safely (EV, hot tub, workshop)
- Is often essential before insurers will accept certain claims or before major installations

### Dedicated circuits and capacity planning

High-demand equipment (EV chargers, electric showers, immersion heaters) should run on dedicated circuits. A survey can determine if your supply and meter rating are adequate, or whether a supply upgrade or additional circuits are required.

### EV charger readiness and installation

If you own or plan to buy an electric vehicle, an EV charger is a priority. Key points:

- Chargers must be installed on a dedicated, appropriately protected circuit by a qualified electrician.
- We'll check supply capacity, earthing, and whether a demand-management solution or supply upgrade is needed.
- Early planning avoids costly post-installation changes to your wiring or meter.

### Solar PV & battery-prepared electrics

If you plan to install solar panels or battery storage:

- Prepare consumer units and distribution cabling in advance to simplify later installation.
- Ensure metering and potential export limits are understood — some installations require notification to the Distribution Network Operator (DNO).
- Pre-wiring for battery or EV connections can save time and money at the installation stage.

### Energy-efficient lighting & controls

LED lighting upgrades are low-cost, high-impact improvements. They:

- Cut energy bills and maintenance
- Improve light quality and control options (dimming, zoning)
- Work well with smart-home controls for scheduling and energy management

PIV & ventilation — electrical considerations

Positive Input Ventilation systems improve indoor air quality by gently introducing filtered, conditioned air. Electrical considerations include:

- PIV units require a small, permanent power supply and low running costs
- Integration with timers or humidity controls helps optimise performance
- Installing PIV reduces condensation-related damage, which in turn reduces electrical risks from damp-affected circuits or fittings

### Smart home & power management

Smart meters, timers, and home energy management systems allow you to schedule high-draw activities (EV charging, heating) at cheaper tariffs and reduce peak loads. These systems can be integrated into an overall upgrade plan to deliver measurable savings and better control.

Practical  
Home  
Upgrades  
2026



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# EICR Explained, Process, FAQ & Next Steps

What is an EICR and why you should consider one

An Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR) is a professional inspection and test that assesses the condition of a property's fixed electrical installation. It checks wiring, earthing, bonding, protective devices and overall compliance with current standards.

An EICR will:

- Identify deterioration and dangerous defects
- List remedial work requirements and priorities
- Provide a clear safety record for owners and landlords

**Recommendation:** If your home is over 20 years old, you're planning renovations or installing EV/renewables, arrange an EICR before work begins.

- How **Dorset Electrical Solutions** works — our process
- **Initial enquiry & friendly advice** — we'll discuss your concerns and needs by phone or email.
- **Site survey** — a qualified engineer visits to inspect the property, review usage and check access.
- **Proposal & options** — we supply a clear written quote, scope and timeline, with recommended priorities.
- **Installation** — our team completes the works professionally, minimising disruption and maintaining a tidy site.
- **Testing & certification** — all work is fully tested and issued with documentation required for insurers and compliance.
- **Handover & aftercare** — we explain the work, provide user guidance and offer ongoing maintenance if required.

Next steps — book a survey

If you're planning upgrades or worried about your electrics, contact us for a no-obligation consultation and site survey. We'll assess your needs, explain options plainly and provide a written plan and quote.

Call: 01202 985027

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**Safety  
First In  
2026**



## Frequently Asked Questions

Q: How much does a consumer unit upgrade cost?

A: Costs vary with complexity. A standard domestic upgrade is priced depending on the number of circuits, accessory requirements and any remedial work identified during testing. We provide a clear fixed quote after the initial survey.

Q: How intrusive is the work? Will I be without power?

A: We plan to keep disruption minimal. A short, scheduled power interruption is common for consumer unit work, but we always notify customers in advance and restore power promptly.

Q: Will my insurance require certification?

A: Most insurers require evidence of safe, certified electrical work. We issue all necessary certificates (e.g. Electrical Installation Certificate, EICR) and documentation.

Q: Can you install an EV charger if my supply is limited?

A: Yes — we assess your supply and meter. Solutions include adjusting charging rates, load balancing, or arranging a supply upgrade with your DNO. We'll explain options and costs clearly.

Q: What if I only want an inspection?

A: We offer stand-alone inspections and EICR services. A survey allows us to advise on immediate risks and sensible upgrades without obligating further work.

Q: How often should an EICR be done?

A: For owner-occupied homes, an EICR every 10 years is commonly recommended, sooner if the property is older or after major works. For rentals, current guidance often requires checks every 5 years or at each change of tenancy — confirm with your local regulations.

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