

ELECTRICAL SAFETY FACTSHEET: Power Bar and Multi-Plug Devices



What are they?

Power bars, multi-tap receptacles and multi-plug extension cords are designed to allow users to plug more than two devices into a receptacle at one time.

Where would I use them?

Power bars, multi-tap receptacles and multi-plug extension cords are ideal for home or office use, where devices with little demand of electricity can all be plugged; for example, chargers for electronic devices and lighting fixtures.

Where should I not use them?

These devices are not to be used with relatively high-load appliances or where the use of two appliances or devices simultaneously on the same circuit may overload the branch circuit, and trip the breaker. Examples of such appliances

or devices include microwaves, vacuum cleaners, toasters, irons, steam-mops or portable space heaters.

The worst appliances to use with multi-plug devices are space heaters where the device is used for long periods of time. These appliances should also not be “daisy chained”, where a power bar is plugged into another power bar.

Can I just reset the breaker?

Just because you can, doesn't mean you should. Once a breaker trips, the ability for the breaker to trip the next time is diminished. Repeated resets will eventually result in the breaker's failure to trip. This negates the safety feature of the breaker, which is protecting the circuit from overloading and causing a fire.