



Electrical Inspection

Information Pack

Guidance to help you through
the property buying process

What is a Periodic Inspection?

A Periodic Electrical Inspection is similar to the survey carried out on the structure of a house, usually carried out during the process of purchasing a new home. (A structural survey does not cover the quality and safety of the electrical wiring). Both of these are necessary to confirm that your new home is all that it seems and does not require substantial repair work that should be taken into consideration when negotiating the value of the property. (A Periodic Inspection will start from £100, whereas repair work could cost up to £4000 for a complete rewire.)

More importantly, a Periodic Inspection can also be compared to the annual MOT of your car, used to confirm its safety and road worthiness. In this way a Periodic Inspection inspects the electrical wiring against a comprehensive safety specification (BS7671: IEE Wiring Regulations, which contains around 850 rules). This test will make sure that the wiring is suitable, well installed, in good condition and safe for you and your family to use!

Why is a Periodic Inspection recommended?

A structural survey is seen as a formality for newer homes and only used to confirm the value of the property. Whereas for older properties it is considered essential due to possible deterioration and resultant work that may be necessary to rectify any problems.

An electrical inspection should also be considered as an essential component of the property buying process, not just to confirm that it is in a good condition for valuation purposes, but more seriously to check the safety of the wiring.

Unfortunately the quality of work, even if very recent or in a new home, is not guaranteed unless it has been installed by a competent electrician who would have given you a certificate to prove its quality. For this reason the age of the property should not influence the necessity for an electrical inspection.

What is the Most Important Aspect of Electrical Wiring?

Safety! A well designed, installed and maintained electrical wiring installation that complies with the standards will be suitable for the type of property and provide safeguards against faults occurring, even if a fault were to develop the safety of the system should not be compromised due to the in-built safety protection devices.

Is all Electrical Wiring safe?

NO! Unfortunately not all electrical wiring is safe and able to comply with the standards. The most common problem discovered by an electrician is a loose connection, this can lead to fires or electric shocks.

According to government figures around 10% of domestic fires are electrical, and of these a third are directly due to old or bad wiring. On average there are 2000 electric shock accidents and 9300 electrical fires every year in the home due to unsafe electrical wiring.

Electrical wiring that does not meet the standards in either design or installation, or has deteriorated will not provide the level of safety needed to assure you that you and your property are not in danger.

Will a Periodic Inspection give you the reassurance that you need?

YES! A Periodic Inspection is a detailed investigation that ensures that a property is checked against the current regulations (BS7671: IEE Wiring Regulations). These are a comprehensive set of rules (approx. 850) that electrical wiring should comply with to determine its quality and safety.

This level of testing will:

- Reveal if any of your electrical circuits or equipment are overloaded.
- Find any potential electric shock risks and fire hazards in your electrical wiring.
- Identify any defective DIY electrical work – unfortunately this includes previous work carried out by incompetent persons claiming to be electricians.
- Highlight any lack of earthing or bonding.

Is a Periodic Inspection only recommended when moving home?

There are a few issues to consider here:

Q When was the last time your home was Inspected?

A Inspections of homes are recommended every 10 years to ensure the wiring hasn't deteriorated or suffered damage.

Q If you moved into your home less than 10 years ago, was it inspected at this time?

A Your home should have been inspected as part of the buying process, if it wasn't it means that the safety of your home could still be in question and a Periodic Inspection would be recommended.

Q Has any electrical work been carried out on your home (eg. new lights, security light, electric shower, cooker, garage etc) either personally or professionally and not properly tested? (You would have been given a certificate to prove it was tested.)

A All electrical work, no matter how minor should be tested to confirm that it is well installed and safe to use. (Parts of the electrical wiring can be inspected individually if this is all that was modified.)

When is a Periodic Inspection recommended?

- Prior to selling a property
- When buying a previously occupied property
- When preparing a property for renting
- At least every 10 years for a domestic installation
- At least every 5 years for a commercial installation