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Make Your Own Small Electrical Repairs

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The knowledge of how to make minor repairs on small electrical devices is often a great convenience. Sometimes the mere tightening of a screw is all that is needed to make your light work. Frequently the difficulty with electric irons is not in the irons themselves, but in the cord or its connections, and such difficulties as these are comparatively easy to remedy.

Difficulty with light cords is very apt to develop at or near the plug. Sometimes this is due to carelessness in disconnecting the plug. To remove a cord from its connection grasp the plug firmly with one hand. Take hold of the socket with the other hand and pull them apart. Never just pull on the plug, not back into it. Sometimes this is due to some lack of guile at the end of the cord, not back into it. Sometimes this is due to some lack of guile at the end of the cord, not back into it.

In repairing a cord or putting in a new one, cut away the outer covering and insulation for half an inch and scrape each group of wires clean and bright, but be careful not to break them. Pull the wires through the hole in the plug. Bring one group of wires around back of one of the prongs of the plug and wind the bare part of the wires around the screw on that side, first loosening the screw if necessary. Wind the other group of wires back of the other post and around the other screw. Tighten the screws and the job is done, and the troubling that no wires cross from one group to the other.

Perhaps you wish to put a new wire into a different type of fixture than this simpler plug—a socket of either the pull chain or push button variety. At one end of this socket there is a hole for the cord to enter. Near this end of the socket the division in it can be distinguished. Sometimes a row of small corrugations mark the place where the end cap of this socket is put on over the other section, or the word “press” indicates the division. The socket covering must be taken apart at this point. When the covering comes apart, a porcelain section and a layer of new insulating material comes to view. There will be two screws in the porcelain section to which to attach the wires as you did in the plug, only they will not be in just the same position.

For instance one of the screws will be far back to separate the group of wires. Slip the cord through the hole in the covering part of the socket, snapping this together as you found it. The socket is now ready for use.

These are the two most common types of minor repairs needed on electric fixtures or appliances. If the cords of any electric fixtures or appliances are tied in knots or are left around and are stopped on, the wires inside may become broken and so may cause trouble. Good care will save such difficulties, but if a cord does become broken, it must be repaired. Cut it off completely at the worn place. Cut out any part that is damaged in the least, then scrape the insulation from both ends of the cord for as much as 3 inches. Place a group of wires from one end of the cord beside a group from the other end, running them by 2 1/2 inches, and wind them firmly around each other. Wind these wires thoroughly with friction tape well back of the insulation which you did not scrape off. Repeat this process with the other groups of wires. When each group of wires is thoroughly covered, wind them together with the tape. If carefully repaired, the cord will be entirely satisfactory.

Learn to know how the cords and plugs are put together and you will understand the care they need. Take intelligent care of them and they will need little repairing. Make these minor repairs yourself instead of having an electrician make them.