



Guidance on User 'Before Use' Visual Checks On Electrical Appliances

Extracted from the IEE Code of Practice for
In-service Inspection and Testing of Electrical Equipment (3rd Edition)

Plug	<p>Free from cracks or damage Free from signs of overheating (scorching etc.) Flexible cable secured in its anchorage by the sheath Pins are not bent or otherwise damaged Cardboard wiring instructions removed Pins are sleeved Plug does not rattle If the plug is of a moulded or non re-wireable type the cable grip should be checked by firmly pulling and twisting the cable. No movement should be detected. Should not be loose in the socket and can be inserted and removed without difficulty Only supply one flexible cord</p>
Flex or Cable	<p>Be in good condition Free from cuts, fraying and damage No joints or connections that may render it unsuitable for use such as taped joints Should not be tightly bent Should not run under a carpet, (especially laptop style power supply modules) Should not present a trip hazard Should not be placed where it could be easily damaged Not too long or too short An extension lead should be inspected through its entire length, this will mean uncoiling coiled types.</p>
Socket outlet or Flex outlet	<p>Free from cracks or other damage No signs of overheating Shutter mechanism of socket outlet working correctly Is not loose (i.e. properly secured) Switch, if fitted, operates correctly</p>
Adaptor or extension lead fitted with an RCD	<p>Inspect the device and ensure it has a rated residual operating current not exceeding 30mA Check device by plugging in, switching it on and then pushing the test button. The RCD should operate and disconnect the supply to the outlet socket(s)</p>
Appliance or item of equipment	<p>Free from cracks, chemical or corrosion damage to the case or damage that could result in access to live parts Equipment is operated with protective covers and doors closed No signs of overheating Switches on and off correctly Able to be used safely Sufficient space to permit cooling. Not positioned so close to walls and partitions that there is inadequate spacing for ventilation and cooling. Not likely to overheat. No towels over convection heaters, no books or files on top of computers and lamps are correctly rated for the luminaire. Cups and plants etc. are not placed where their contents could spill into equipment</p>
Environment	<p>That the equipment is suitable for its environment No indiscriminate use of extension leads or multi-way adaptors. Extension leads are not to be 'daisy chained' Equipment not normally left on overnight</p>
Suitability	<p>That the equipment is suitable for the work it is carrying out.</p>