



ELECTRICAL INSTALLATION

This trade should only ever be carried out by an expert. It is a specialist skill and safety is extremely important. Most suppliers will not connect the power until such time as the system is checked and certified by a qualified electrician.

YOUR ELECTRICIAN

The electrical trade is normally carried out on a supply and fix basis and is divided into two parts:

- **First Fix** concerns the general carcassing where the wires are simply run into position down the walls and through the middle of any timber flooring to the outlets.
- **Second Fix** which happens after plastering is complete, concerns the fixing of faceplates the wiring up and fixing of light fittings and the wiring and testing of the boiler in conjunction with the plumber.

POWER POINTS AND FITTINGS

Most self builders will want to ensure that they have sufficient power points and that the lighting is designed to give them the ambience they want in their new home.

It is easy to go over the top with electrical fittings but, it should be borne in mind that it is much easier and cheaper to put things in at the early stages than it is to add them later. When you do have a price from the contractor, get prices for extra points and switches.

Building regulations require that all power sockets must be no lower than 450mm from the floor. All light switches are required to be no higher than 1200mm from the floor. New regulations bring electrical works within the ambit of the Building Regulations and require that works to domestic premises must be carried out by a 'competent person', defined as 'A person registered under an electrical self certification scheme or a competent electrician capable of signing a BS7671 Electrical Installation Certificate'. This would normally preclude a DIY private individual or even a general builder's own right to provide the load bearing wall element of a package deal house.

TIPS

- Mark up a plan and then, before the contractor starts, mark the positions on the walls of the house, imagining as you do, the furniture layout. You may find that you want to alter things a little at this stage
- Only use a fully qualified electrician
- Think about shaver points, TV aerial points, telephone and computer modem points and trunking
- Don't forget to fit lights in cupboards and the loft
- Be creative with your lighting. Lights can change the mood of a house at the flick of a switch
- Don't forget outside and security lighting
- Always keep a copy of your electrical completion certificate safely with your other house documents
- Circuits should be clearly marked on the consumer unit