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**NEWS FROM  
THE HOME FRONT**

## Useful tips for a clever electrical layout

Presented by Jillian Haramina from the Coral Homes *Clever Living* team

One of the benefits of building your own home is that you can tailor the electrical layout to suit your own family's requirements. However there are a number of things you should consider to help produce the most functional electrical layout for your family. By getting the electrical layout right in the first instance, you can save time and money.

### Power Points

In your kitchen, ensure you have enough power to your bench tops. Family members may need to use different appliances at the same time (eg breakfast time) and you will need to ensure there are enough points to run all these appliances. Also, remember that your main food preparation area should have a power point close by.

Normally you probably wouldn't need a lot of power to your outdoor entertainment areas, however you may want to consider placing a power point there. In the future you may like to use power tools or powered gardening equipment, or you may like to power appliances for entertainment such as a stereo.



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Think about the electrical items you may use in each bedroom. Will you have an alarm clock and light on each bedside? Will you need a TV point or data point? Will the kids play, or have computers in their bedrooms? You may need a minimum of a double power point to each side of the bed, and you may even consider an extra point in some rooms to avoid running excess power boards.

Remember to allow an extra power point next to each TV point in your home to run a television, DVD, stereo or gaming console. The same applies to your phone points if you plan to use cordless phones. Think about whether you will need a phone point in the study for access to the internet.

Consider the size of the power packs attached to your appliances. These can sometimes be quite bulky and cover other available power points. It's also a good idea (in some rooms) to centre your power points on the wall so your power cords can easily reach them from either side of the room. A power point in the garage is always recommended.

Remember, power points and television points should be attached to a stud (frame member). These points will be placed as close as possible to your preferred positions, however they may not be exact because of the stud locations.

### Lighting

The best way to work out your family's lighting requirements is to consult the lighting store from where you will purchase your lights. They will be able to show you the range of lights available, as well as give advice on how many lights you will need to light up each room. Consider things like how the light emits from its source. For example, does the light have a narrow or wide beam? Does it emit a bright white light or a warmer white?



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You may like to use fluorescent lighting in the garage or in functional areas of the home like near the outside clothes line or near external taps. Pendant lights are a good option to provide practical and stylish lighting for features in a room like the kitchen bench top or dining room table. You'll need to choose your light fitting according to current energy efficiency requirements.

Not only will you need to choose the placement of your lights, but you will also need to choose the placement of your light switches. When considering where to switch your lights to, try and picture how you will use the room. For example, you do not want to walk across a dark room to turn a light on. Most light switches are better positioned at the entrance to a room.

Consider two-way switches in certain rooms. These will allow you to operate a single light from two different switches. Two-way switches are particularly useful for switching a hallway light on or off from either end of the hallway.



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