

# How to guide – Trip Switches



There are a variety of different types of distribution boards (AKA Consumer Units).

The vast majority of modern units are grey or white in colour. Within the unit there are 'trip switches' (AKA circuit breakers or RCDs).

Trip switches are basically fuses; when too much current (AKA load) passes through a given circuit the switch (which are rated e.g. 13 AMP) is 'tripped' and the circuit is broken.



The trip switches in the picture are all currently switched on.

Most trip switches are black in colour and deal with small circuits e.g. a few light fittings. Most large trip switches are red in colour and deal with a heavier electrical load e.g. several circuits or the entire distribution board.

If a switch *trips* it will be in a downward position (opposite to the picture). In order to reset; first check that there is nothing obvious causing the circuit to trip e.g. water in a light fitting then flick the switch upwards and power will be restored. If it does not reset recheck for obvious signs of a problem and call electrician if necessary.



In this example (see picture left) the large switch in the middle relates to all the bedroom power sockets.

If this type of switch trips the red bar will be in a central position. To reset; first check that there is nothing obvious causing the circuit to trip e.g. a non-UK adaptor, hairdryer or fan heater then press the switch down and then up, power should now be restored. If it does not reset recheck for obvious signs of a problem (in this example all rooms) and call electrician if necessary.