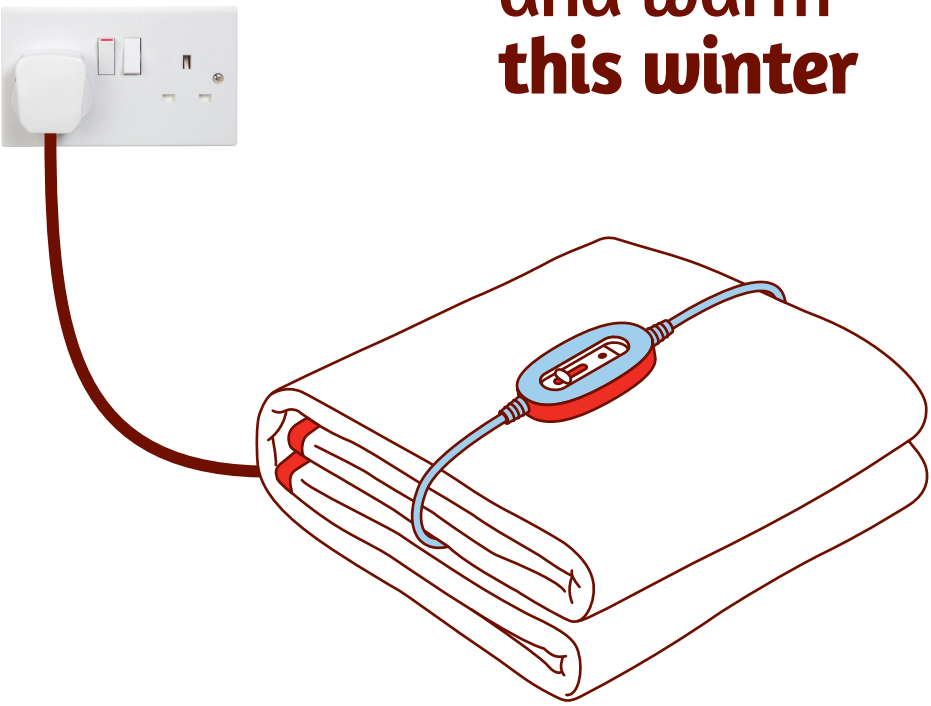
Electrical Safety First

The UK's electrical safety experts

Electric blanket safety

Stay safe and warm **this winter**



electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk

This leaflet will help you stay safe and warm in winter and reduce the number of unsafe electric blankets being used in homes.

We recommend that you follow our simple steps when purchasing, using, storing and disposing of an electric blanket.

Choosing an electric blanket

When choosing your electric blanket:

Do

- Buy a new blanket from a reputable retailer.
- Look out for a UK Safety standard mark.

Don't

- Buy second hand blankets, as they may not be safe and you cannot be sure that they comply with current safety requirements.

UK safety standard marks

When purchasing a new electric blanket, we recommend you look out for a third party certification mark on the blanket and packaging. This will mean that it has been independently tested and meets the latest UK and European safety standards.

Examples of such certification marks to look for are:

BEAB Approved

KEMA KEUR

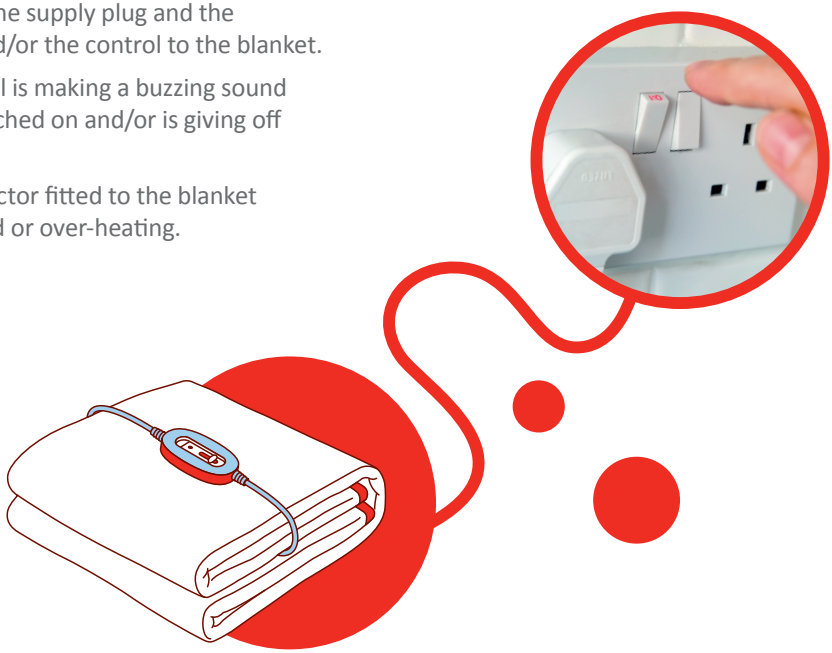
Routine visual checks

Before putting your electric blanket on the bed to use over the winter months, take a few minutes to check that it is safe for continued use.

Your blanket should be replaced with a new one if:

- The fabric is worn or frayed.
- Scorch marks or discoloration areas are visible on the fabric.
- Wires are visible or poking through the fabric.
- There is damage to the flexible cord between the supply plug and the control and/or the control to the blanket.
- The control is making a buzzing sound when switched on and/or is giving off a smell.
- The connector fitted to the blanket is damaged or over-heating.

If you are in any doubt about your blanket, we recommend that you contact the manufacturer before further use to check with them that it is safe.



Using your electric blanket

When using your electric blanket:

Do

- Read and follow the manufacturer's instructions before use.
- Remember to keep the instructions in a safe place for future reference.
- Examine your blanket regularly for signs of wear or damage.
- Use the blanket only for the purpose the manufacturer intended, i.e.
  - Over-blankets must only be positioned above the occupant of the bed.
  - Under-blankets must only be positioned under the occupant of the bed.
- Check the manufacturer's instructions to make sure your blanket is suitable to wash.
- Carry out a visual check of the blanket to make sure it is intact with no visible signs of damage caused in transport when first purchase.
- Be careful if you need to change the fuse in the 13 amp plug; a 3 amp BS 1362 fuse must be fitted.

Don't

- Use the blanket while it is folded, rucked or creased.
- Use a hot water bottle at the same time as using your electric blanket.
- Touch the blanket with wet hands or feet.
- Use the blanket if it is wet or damp.
- Insert or use pins to hold the blanket in place on the bed.
- Use underblankets on adjustable beds – there is a risk that the blanket or cord could get trapped or rucked, for example in hinges.
- Use an electric blanket on the bed of an infant or person who may have a condition that makes them insensitive to heat.
- Allow the blanket to be used by young children unless the controls have been pre-set by a parent/carer.
- Allow people with pacemakers fitted to use heated bedding for all night use.

Storing your blanket

When your blanket is not in use, it should be stored as the manufacturer recommends and as follows:

Do

- Leave the blanket on the bed all year round or place it flat on a spare bed.
- Let the blanket cool down before folding.
- Loosely fold or roll the blanket in a towel or plastic bag and store it in a cool, dry place.

Don't

- Use any moth-proofing chemicals.
- Place heavy items on top of the blanket while it is being stored.

Safe disposal of blankets

If your blanket is more than ten years old, you should consider disposing of it safely and buying a new one.

Disposing of your electric blanket should comply with EU legislation under the WEEE (Waste Electric and Electronic Equipment) Directive. This means that blankets should not be disposed of with general domestic waste.

Blankets should be taken to a recycling facility which accepts electrical appliances. Check with your Local Authority to find your nearest recycling centre.

Find out more

For more information about electrical safety visit:

electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk

Electrical Safety First
The UK's electrical safety experts

Electrical Safety First is the UK charity dedicated to reducing deaths and injuries caused by electrical accidents. Our aim is to ensure everyone in the UK can use electricity safely.

electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk

ESC16

Electrical Safety First
45 Great Guildford Street
London SE1 0ES

Email **enquiries@electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk**

Registered Charity (England and Wales) No. 257376
(Scotland) No. SC039990