How to Reset a Trip Switch

General advice

Modern electric circuits are fitted with a circuit breaker fuse system. If a fault develops, a switch is tripped and the circuit is broken. The fuses and trip switches are in the consumer unit. The unit is usually next to the electricity meter, except when your meter is in an outside cupboard.

Trip switches usually operate because:
- too many appliances are being used at the same time;
- an appliance is faulty or misused;
- a kettle has been over-filled;
- a toaster hasn’t been cleaned;
- a light bulb has blown; or
- an immersion heater is faulty.

If your plug in appliance is faulty, leave it unplugged and get a qualified electrician or service engineer to check it.

If a wall or ceiling light is faulty, keep it switched off (put some tape over the switch) and contact us.

You may be able to reset the trip by not using the faulty switch, allowing the other lights on the circuit to work.
Never touch the electricity companies fuse and seals

To check your consumer unit you may need:

- Torch
- Screwdriver
- Step ladder

What to do next:

- Open the cover on the consumer unit so you can see the trip switches.
- Check which switches have tripped to the OFF position.
- Put these switches back to the ON position.

If the trip goes again, you probably have a faulty appliance. You need to identify which circuit is being affected and which appliance on that circuit is causing the problem.

To identify the problem appliance;

1. Check all the rooms in the house and note which set of lights or sockets (circuit) is not working.
2. Unplug all appliances on that circuit and switch off the immersion heater.
3. Switch the ‘tripped’ switch to the ON position.
4. Plug in appliances and switch on lights one at a time until it trips again.
5. Do not use double adaptors when testing appliances. Test one appliance per socket, until the trip goes.