

Electrician

Business Opportunity Profile

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Introduction

Electricians install and repair a range of electrical systems and controls. This includes fixing electrical faults, replacing or maintaining sockets, switches and light fittings, along with inspecting or testing wiring and equipment to ensure it is safe and working properly.

Some electricians also install electric vehicle (EV) charging points and many work on a sub-contract basis for builders or construction firms.

This profile provides information about starting up and trading as an electrician. It describes the training available, the current market trends and the key trading and legal issues.

Qualifications and training

The majority of electricians who start up on their own have previous experience in the electrotechnical industry. However, there are practical courses available for anyone who is new to running their own business, including:

- The Certificate in Construction Cost Estimation, which is an online qualification delivered by Inspire London College. The course costs around £50 and covers the cost estimation process and types of cost estimation. Go to <https://inspirelondoncollege.co.uk/product/certificate-in-construction-cost-estimation> for more information.
- Free webinars provided by HMRC, covering topics such as the Construction Industry Scheme, VAT and becoming an employer. Go to www.gov.uk/government/collections/hmrc-webinars-email-alerts-and-videos for further information.
- The Consumer Rights Act 2015, which is a one-hour online course provided by Virtual College and developed in partnership with the Chartered Trading Standards Institute. The course costs £25 (excluding VAT) and covers consumers' rights and the time limits for making claims under the Act. For more information, go to www.virtual-college.co.uk/courses/the-consumer-rights-act-2015-training.

Some electricians become qualified to provide PAT testing (portable appliance testing), install EV charging points, fit solar panels or install fire alarms and electric gates. Examples of courses include:

- The Level 3 Award for the In-Service Inspection and Testing of Electrical Equipment provided by NICEIC, which is the benchmark course for electricians providing PAT testing services. The two-day

in-person course costs £395 (excluding VAT). Go to <https://shop.niceic.com/products/training-in-service-inspection-and-testing-of-electrical-equipment-2377-77-level-3-award> for more information.

- The City & Guilds Level 3 Award in EV Charging provided by Trade Skills 4 U, which costs £415 (excluding VAT). The two-day in-person course is for qualified electricians and covers installing, testing and the inspection of electric car and vehicle charging equipment. Go to www.tradeskills4u.co.uk/courses/ev-charging-course for more information.
- The City & Guilds Level 3 Award in Solar PV also provided by Trade Skills 4 U, which covers the design and installation of solar PV. The four-day in-person course is for qualified electricians and costs around £762 (excluding VAT). Go to www.tradeskills4u.co.uk/courses/cg-solar-pv-course for more information.
- Specialist installer courses for beginners and experienced electricians provided by Trade Skills 4 U, which include the installation of fire alarms, electric gates, and trunking and conduits for wiring systems. Go to www.tradeskills4u.co.uk/electrical-courses for more information.

There are various online resources, events and journals to help electricians develop their knowledge and skills, including:

- Voltimum (www.voltimum.co.uk), which is an online resource that provides news, technical guidance, a directory of training courses and a range of online training modules.
- 'Wiring Matters' (<https://electrical.theiet.org/wiring-matters>), which is a free online technical magazine published by the Institution of Engineering and Technology.
- 'Professional Electrician & Installer' (<https://professional-electrician.com>), which is an online news resource and trade magazine.
- News and training courses provided by the Electrical Contractors' Association. Go to www.eca.co.uk/member-support/education-skills for more information.
- Professional Electrician Elex Show: The Electricians' Exhibition (<https://elexshow.info>), which is a two-day trade event held at various locations throughout the year, including Harrogate, London and Exeter.

Key market issues and trends

Current market issues affecting established and start-up electricians include the following:

- A 2025 survey by Drayton Controls and Schneider Electric revealed that 89% of homeowners planned to carry out home improvements to increase energy efficiency. Installing smart thermostats, smart lighting, EV charging and smart sensors were improvements most likely to be made (<https://professional-electrician.com/news/54-of-homeowners-looking-for-installers-to-fit-efficiency-improving-measures>).

- In 2025, around 49% of homeowners intended to renovate, indicating an ongoing interest in home improvement despite broader economic uncertainty. In 2024, around 40% of home renovations involved upgrading critical systems such as electrics, heating and plumbing. When renovating, 59% of homeowners hired an electrician ([www.kbbfocus.com/news/5027-key-findings-from-the-2025-uk-houzz-home-reportRenovations and extensions](http://www.kbbfocus.com/news/5027-key-findings-from-the-2025-uk-houzz-home-reportRenovations-and-extensions)).
- In 2025, trade body SELECT warned of the ongoing danger to public safety from organisations offering to train people in electrical skills in just a few weeks. According to SELECT, there is a rising trend in shorter courses that promise to equip candidates with electrical installation skills in a month, with no prior experience needed (<https://professional-electrician.com/news/select-repeats-warning-about-dangers-of-short-training-courses-in-electrical-skills>).
- Franchises provide opportunities for start-up electricians. Examples include Mr Electric (www.mr-electric.co.uk/become-a-franchisee) and Fixerly (<https://fixerly.co.uk>), which provide details of franchise fees on request.

Trading, commercial and legal issues

Start-up and established electricians face the following trading, commercial and legal issues:

Trade bodies

Membership of a trade body can provide a wide range of individual and business benefits. Relevant bodies include:

- The Electrical Contractors' Association (www.eca.co.uk), which represents electricians in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Members have access to expert advice, training and networking opportunities. Applicants must meet qualification and selection criteria and comply with a code of practice. Details of the annual membership fee are available on request from the association.
- SELECT (www.select.org.uk), which represents the electrical industry in Scotland. Membership benefits include networking and training opportunities. The annual membership fee is £373, plus a minimum levy of £373 based on turnover. An initial joining fee of £325 is also payable (all prices excluding VAT).

Competent person schemes

To comply with building regulations in England, Wales and Scotland, electricians who are registered on a 'competent person scheme' in England and Wales or as an approved certification body in Scotland can self-certify their own work instead of having it verified by local authority building control.

Self-certification means an electrician can legally approve certain types of electrical installations such as replacing consumer units, rewiring bathrooms or kitchens, installing an EV charging point or installing new circuits.

In Northern Ireland, there is no requirement for electricians to have their work certified or verified.

Examples of competent person schemes include those provided by:

- NAPIT (www.napit.org.uk/join-us/trade/EAS-Initial-Application).
- The NICEIC (<https://niceic.com/for-the-trades-1/professional-standards/schemes/competent-person-register>).
- Blue Flame Certification (www.blueflamecertification.com/about/Competent-Person-Scheme).

A full list of competent person schemes can be viewed at www.gov.uk/building-regulations-competent-person-schemes.

Installing EV charging points

Electricians must be authorised by the Office for Zero Emission Vehicles before they can install charging points under the Workplace Charging Scheme and the EV Chargepoint Grant scheme. The schemes provide funding for householders and businesses to install charging points on their premises.

Go to www.gov.uk/guidance/electric-vehicle-chargepoint-and-infrastructure-grant-guidance-for-installers for more information about becoming authorised.

Some electricians can also join an approved installer scheme, which can create leads and opportunities to install EV charging points on behalf of the scheme provider. Examples include:

- Rolec (www.rolecserv.com/become-an-approved-installers).
- Wallbox (<https://wallbox.com/en/become-partner>).
- Replenishh (www.replenishh.com/Installer-Training).

Wholesale and trade-only suppliers of EV charging points include:

- EV Chargers Direct (www.evchargersdirect.co.uk/electrical-trade).
- EV Chargers UK (<https://evchargers.co.uk>).
- TradeSparky (www.tradesparky.com/more/electrical-vehicle-charging/charging-point-wall-mounted).

Pricing and VAT

The average hourly rate charged by electricians is between £45 and £60. The average day rate is around £400. Go to www.checktrade.com/blog/cost-guides/electrician-hourly-rate for more information about pricing.

Electricians typically charge around £1,000 to supply and install an EV home charging point. Go to www.checktrade.com/blog/cost-guides/electric-car-charger-installation-cost for more information.

Electrical work is standard-rated for VAT and electricians must register for VAT once their turnover reaches the mandatory threshold. However, certain kinds of renovation work and materials are zero-rated for VAT and electricians should ensure that they charge VAT at the correct rate. Go to www.gov.uk/guidance/rates-of-vat-on-different-goods-and-services for more information about VAT rates.

Emergency electrician networks

Many electricians are members of local networks of emergency electricians. The networks match electricians with householders looking for an emergency electrician in their local area. Examples include:

- Emergency Hero (www.emergencyhero.co.uk/register-with-us).
- DisasterCare (<https://disastercare.co.uk/home-emergency>).
- Emergency Electrician (<https://emergency-electrician-24hour.co.uk>).

Trusted trader schemes

Most local authorities have trusted trader schemes that electricians can join. Being registered on a scheme indicates that an electrician provides a reliable and fair service. Go to www.derbyshire.gov.uk/community/trusted-trader/trusted-trader.aspx for an example of a scheme.

Electricians can also register with a trusted trader scheme such as TrustMark (www.trustmark.org.uk/business/information-guidance/join-trustmark) and the Which? Trusted Trader scheme (<https://trustedtraders.which.co.uk>).

Consumer and business protection legislation

Under the Consumer Contracts (Information, Cancellation and Additional Charges) Regulations 2013 (CCRs), electricians must provide householders with certain pre-contract information, such as their pricing, payment and cancellation terms, before accepting a job.

The pre-contract information requirements under the CCRs do not apply to emergency repairs where the work is to be carried out urgently, or for work costing £42 or less.

Under the Consumer Rights Act 2015 and the Supply of Goods and Services Act 1982, electrical work must be carried out within a reasonable time and for a reasonable charge, if this has not been agreed in advance. Electrical materials and products installed must be of satisfactory quality, as described and fit for purpose.

The Business Protection from Misleading Marketing Regulations 2008 make it an offence for electricians to make unfair comparisons with other electricians or similar tradespeople.

The Construction Industry Scheme

The Construction Industry Scheme (CIS) is an HMRC scheme that sets rules for contractors and sub-contractors in the construction industry concerning the deduction and payment of income tax and National Insurance contributions.

Electricians who work as a sub-contractor for another contractor, such as a builder or construction firm, must be registered with the CIS. Under the scheme, the contractor must deduct 20% from the payments made to the sub-contractor and pay the money to HMRC. Go to www.gov.uk/government/collections/construction-industry-scheme-cis-detailed-information for guidance.

Health and safety

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) provides advice and guidance on best practice for working with electricity. Go to www.hse.gov.uk/electricity/index.htm for more information.

Under the Electricity at Work Regulations 1989 and equivalent legislation in Northern Ireland, electricians must install and maintain electrical systems in a safe way that prevents danger.

The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and the Health and Safety at Work (Northern Ireland) Order 1978 place a general duty of care on electricians to protect the health and safety of their customers and anyone else that may be affected by their business activities.

Under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 and equivalent legislation in Northern Ireland, electricians are required to identify and assess any work-related risks at all locations where jobs are carried out. The HSE publishes a guide to managing risk at www.hse.gov.uk/simple-health-safety/risk/index.htm.

Other health and safety responsibilities applicable to electricians include:

- The safe use and maintenance of work equipment (www.hse.gov.uk/work-equipment-machinery/puwer.htm).
- The use of protective workwear (www.hse.gov.uk/ppe/index.htm).
- Working safely at height (www.hse.gov.uk/work-at-height/introduction.htm).

Insurance

An electrician requires several types of insurance cover, including:

- Public liability insurance, which covers an electrician against claims for compensation from anyone injured or adversely affected as a result of their activities.
- Professional indemnity insurance, which covers an electrician against errors or omissions when carrying out electrical inspections.
- Efficacy or 'failure to perform' cover, which provides cover if a product or installation fails to work correctly.

- Employers' liability insurance, which is mandatory as soon as the electrician employs anyone.
- Legal expenses insurance, which provides cover for defending disputes with suppliers, competent person schemes and customers, or to defend employment tribunal cases.
- Equipment insurance, which will be needed to cover the electrician's equipment and materials against accidental damage or theft.
- Income protection insurance, which will pay an income, usually for a set period of time, if an electrician is unable to work as a result of sickness or injury.
- Commercial van insurance to cover 'carriage of own goods', which includes tools and equipment, along with personal possessions stored in the van.

Specialist insurance for electricians is available from insurers and brokers such as AXA (www.axa.co.uk/business-insurance/trades) and Cura (www.curainsurance.co.uk/occupations/electricians).

Legislation

This section provides an at-a-glance list of the key legislation that electricians must comply with.

Building regulations

- The Building Regulations 2010 (as amended) set the standards for building work in England and Wales. Electrical work is covered under Part P of the Regulations.
- The Building (Scotland) Act 2003 and the Building (Scotland) Regulations 2004 set out requirements for electrical work in Scotland.
- In Northern Ireland, there are no specific requirements for electrical work, but certain building projects that an electrician may work on (such as extending a home or installing central heating) must be notified to and approved by local authority building control.

Health and safety

- Under the Electricity at Work Regulations 1989 and equivalent legislation in Northern Ireland, electricians must install and maintain electrical systems in a safe way that prevents danger.
- The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and the Health and Safety at Work (Northern Ireland) Order 1978 place a general duty of care on electricians to protect the health and safety of their customers and anyone else who may be affected by their business activities.
- Under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 and equivalent legislation in Northern Ireland, all employers, and the self-employed, are required to identify and assess any work-related risks.

- The Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations 1992 (PPE) (as amended in 2022) and equivalent legislation in Northern Ireland specify the circumstances in which protective clothing and equipment must be used by electricians.
- Under the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 (PUWER) and equivalent legislation in Northern Ireland, electricians must ensure that all equipment used in their business is properly maintained.
- The Work at Height Regulations 2005 and equivalent legislation in Northern Ireland place duties on electricians relating to the planning of work at height.

Consumer and business protection

- The Business Protection from Misleading Marketing Regulations 2008 make it an offence for electricians to make unfair comparisons with other electricians or similar tradespeople.
- Under the Consumer Contracts (Information, Cancellation and Additional Charges) Regulations 2013 (CCRs), electricians must provide consumers (meaning anyone acting for purposes unconnected with their business or profession) with certain pre-contract information, such as their pricing, payment and cancellation terms, before agreeing to commence work.
- Under the Consumer Rights Act 2015 and the Supply of Goods and Services Act 1982, electrical work must be carried out with reasonable care and skill, within a reasonable time and for a reasonable charge, if this has not been agreed in advance. Electrical materials and products installed must be of satisfactory quality, as described and fit for purpose.

Related factsheets

SEC015 Construction - Sector Update

SYN004 Construction and Building Trades - Industry Snapshot

BOP069 Building Contractor

BOP423 Property Maintenance Service

BOP556 PAT Tester

MBP436 Ariel and Satellite Installer

BIF456 Construction Industry Scheme

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