



Electric Space Heater and Blanket Safety

Electric space heaters and blankets can provide safe warming if you take simple, common sense steps. Always read and follow the manufacturer's instructions. Never use damaged electric heaters or blankets.

Check the Condition

- Only use electric space heaters or blankets that have the Underwriters Laboratories (UL) mark indicating that the product has been safety tested.
- Discontinue the use of any electric space heater or blanket that has broken or frayed cords.
- Unplug your space heater or blanket if you see or smell smoke coming from it. Discoloration of the blanket may indicate the heating elements are burning internally.
- Never use an electric blanket that is wet, soiled or wrinkled.

Use Safely and Avoid Heat Buildup

Space Heaters

- Put heater on a level, hard nonflammable surface, such as a tile floor. Never put it on furniture since it can fall.
- Keep heater at least three feet away from bedding, drapes, furniture and other flammable materials.
- Run electric cord so no one can step or trip over it. Don't hide cords under rugs or carpets.
- Keep children and pets away from space heaters.

Electric Blankets

- Avoid tucking an electric blanket in at the sides of the bed. This can cause excessive heat buildup.
- Avoid placing other blankets or comforters on top of an electric blanket while it is in use.
- Never place items such as books, pillows, or stuffed animals on top of the blanket. These items can trap the heat, leading to elevated temperatures and serve as a source of ignition.
- Keep the blanket flat, not crumpled or in a ball. If left on, a crumpled blanket allows for excessive heat build-up within the blanket
- Always turn the blanket off when leaving the room.
- Do not place an electric blanket between the mattress and the box spring.
- Place your blanket on top of you, not below you. Sitting or lying on an electric blanket may damage the internal coils of the blanket, exposing the heating element to combustible material (the blanket).
- Never use electric blankets on a waterbed.
- If you have trouble feeling pain or have numbness in your extremities, electric blankets pose a risk of burns.
- Small children and infants should not use electric blankets.

Caring for Electric Space Heaters and Blankets

- Keep space heaters and blankets in safe working condition.
- Do not wash an electric blanket. The twisting, tugging and turning action of the washing machine will damage the internal coils. Follow the manufacturer's instructions for cleaning.
- Turn space heater or blanket off when not using it. Some models don't have an internal temperature control that turns the heat off when they get too hot.

For More Information

For more information about electric space heater and blanket safety, visit [nyc.gov](https://www.nyc.gov) or call 311.