



COMMUNICATIONS

Category: Electrical Inspection and Testing – Keeping it legal

1. Purpose

To support u3as to determine what form of testing they should undertake in relation to electrical equipment.

2. Scope

Relevant to all u3as.

3. Testing of electrical equipment

For low risk environments only the following indicates whether or not user checks, visual inspection or electrical testing (PAT) is required and the suggested inspection and testing intervals.

It is easy to determine whether or not a piece of electrical equipment is double insulated (see below).

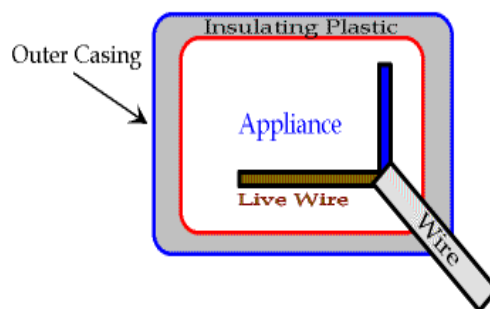
There is no risk in being over cautious in checking and where items are subject to frequent or hard use, more comprehensive and regular checks are to be encouraged.

Equipment / environment	User check	Formal visual inspection	Combined inspection and testing
Battery operated (less than 20 volts)	NO	NO	NO
Extra low voltage (less than 50 volts AC) e.g. telephone equipment, low voltage desk lights.	NO	NO	NO
Information technology: e.g. desk top computer, VDU screens.	NO	YES (2-4 years)	NO if double insulated YES Otherwise (up to 5 years)
Photocopiers, fax machines. NOT hand held. Rarely moved.	NO	YES (2-4 years)	NO if double insulated YES Otherwise (up to 5 years)
Double insulated equipment: NOT hand held. Moved occasionally, e.g. fans, projectors, table lamps.	NO	YES (2-4 years)	NO

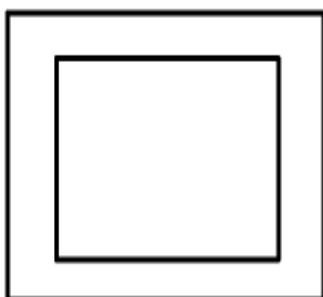
Double insulated equipment: hand held e.g. some floor cleaners.	YES	YES (6 months -1 year)	NO
Earthed equipment (class 1) e.g. electric kettles, some floor cleaners.	YES	YES (6 months -1 year)	YES (1 – 2 years)
Cables (leads) & plugs connected to earthed equipment. Extension leads (mains voltage)	YES	YES (6 months - 4 years Depending on type of equipment connected to)	YES (1 – 5 years Depending on type of equipment connected to)

3.1 Double insulation of electrical appliances

An appliance which is double insulated has the whole of the inside contained in plastic, underneath an outer casing. If anything goes wrong with the appliance, no live conductor can touch the outer casing because of the insulating plastic.



Appliances which are double insulated include electric drills and hairdryers. The symbol for double insulation is shown below.



You will see this symbol printed on the appliance which is double insulated.

Double insulated appliances DO NOT need to be PAT tested.

RELATED DOCUMENTATION

Interest groups - u3a-KMS-DOC-023

Risk assessment templates - u3a-KMS-FRM-002

Health and Safety policy template - u3a-KMS-POL-006

u3a	The Third Age Trust Knowledge Management System	
Electrical Inspection and Testing – u3a-KMS-DOC-011		18/11/2021