



How To Connect A Backup Generator To Your House

We've never been more reliant on power, yet with warnings of extreme weather events, and the power outages they cause, becoming the new normal the main power supply can't always be relied upon.

Having a backup power supply ready, in the form of a portable generator, can help keep a power failure from being a disaster.

Knowing how to connect a generator to a house in the UK safely, so that you can still run the essential appliances, is going to be a key skill needed to keep yourself and your family safe and well in a power cut.

Choosing the Right Generator

To effectively and safely connect your portable generator to your home, you will need to choose a generator with a transfer switch.

Transfer switches allow for your portable generator to be connected to the mains supply and, therefore, power your home's lights, heating and hot water. Without a transfer switch, your portable generator is limited to appliances that you can plug directly into it.

This is an important consideration when thinking about [how to pick a generator for your house](#). If you choose a generator without a transfer switch, it is sometimes possible to install a transfer switch depending on the make and model. You should always consult an expert as well as the manufacturer's instructions regarding this.

Assessing Power Needs

Part of choosing the right portable generator to help you in a power outage, is also about assessing your power needs to enable you to get the right size generator for the job. You can work this out by adding up the power required in watts for each of your essentials that will be used at any one time.

If you have specific or unusually high power needs, such as you [need a generator for your farm](#) or smallholding, then getting advice from our expert team is recommended.

Understanding Types of Transfer Switches

To connect a generator, whether it is a standby generator or a portable generator, to your home's wiring, you must use a transfer switch. There are several types of transfer switches, but the main types are:

Manual Transfer Switch

These can sometimes be installed yourself and you can find them in your local home improvement store. However, they do not give you uninterrupted power as someone will have to manually switch it on in the case of power loss, and even then, the generator's engine will need time to warm up. Furthermore, if you are out or asleep, important appliances go without being turned on – your fridge/freezer for example.

Automatic Transfer Switch

This, as the name suggests, is automatic and provides you with uninterrupted power in the case of a blackout. They usually cost a little more, but the benefits are clear. It is advisable to have a professional install an automatic transfer switch.

Preparing Your House for Generator Installation

There are some things you will need to do prior to generator installation. It is recommended that you first turn off your utility power by switching your fuses or circuit breakers to the 'off' position.

You should also follow the instructions of your generator installation expert, as well as the user manual of your generator.

Selecting a Suitable Location for the Generator

If you are using a petrol or diesel generator, this must not be used indoors due to the fumes they release and the serious fire hazard presented by the fuel. It is recommended that this type of generator is placed at a safe distance of at least 5 metres away from your house.

Installing the Transfer Switch

Unless you are a qualified electrician, it is advisable to hire a qualified and experienced person to install your transfer switch to the main supply by connecting it to your electrical panel wiring system. If you have any questions about the installation process or safety rules, get in touch with us at Generator Pro and ask about our [generator installation service](#).

Testing the Setup for Safety and Efficiency

It is important to test your generator backup system, both to check that it works effectively and to check it is safe, before relying on it in an emergency situation. This testing will also help you get used to the process so that having to do it in the dark or with only a torch won't be a problem.

Conclusion

Having backup portable generators should give you peace of mind in the event of a power cut. However, not getting the correct advice and installation support could end up giving you valid concerns about the safety of your generator. So, our advice, always consult a professional.