

**Ask Jon Eakes**

# Changing two prong outlets to three prong outlets.

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Jason asks how to change from the old two-prong outlets to the modern and safer three-prong outlets. It is possible to run a separate ground wire all the way from the outlet to the electrical panel, which will give you the proper third wire you need. Just attaching a three-prong outlet to the two wires does nothing. In fact it can be more dangerous because it makes it appear that the outlet is properly grounded. You can buy little three-prong testers that will tell you if each of the three wires on your outlet are in the right place: the fused (or hot) wire attached to the copper-coloured wire, the return wire attached to the silver screws, and the ground wire attached to the green screw or the bottom of the metal box. You can increase the safety of a two-wire outlet by installing a Ground Fault Interrupter, like we have in all the bathrooms and outdoor plugs today. This does not make a properly safety-grounded outlet, but it will detect more problems than just the circuit breaker or fuse that is presently on the circuit. In all practicality, if you are going to run a new wire for the ground, you might as well run a whole new three-wire set. It is no more trouble and it will give you brand new and much safer wiring for the entire outlet. Remember that all electrical work requires a permit. Some provinces allow homeowners to do their own electrical work, while some provinces require licensed electricians to carry out all such work. [Click here for information on the LEGALITY OF DIY ELECTRICAL WORK.](#)

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