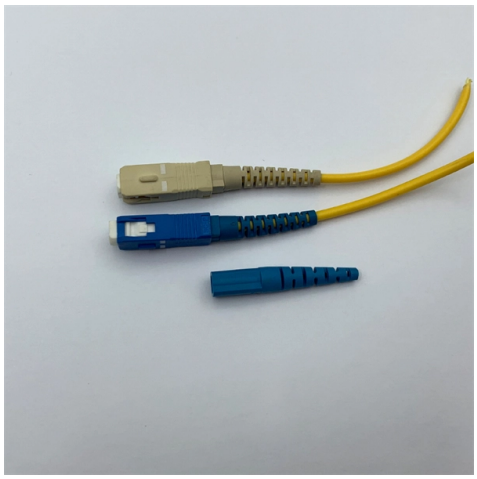
How to install a horizontal plastic junction box



Overview

Learn how to install a junction box safely, from choosing the right box and mounting it correctly to making secure splices and following basic code-safe practices.

Key Takeaways

A horizontal plastic junction box safely houses and protects electrical connections by mounting it securely, feeding cables through knockouts, making proper splices, and covering it for accessibility.

Selecting and Preparing the Box

Choose a plastic junction box that matches your wiring type and environment. For indoor use, standard PVC or ABS boxes are suitable, while outdoor or damp areas require weatherproof boxes with gaskets ( ). Ensure the box is large enough to accommodate all wires, splices, and connectors without overcrowding ( ).

Safety First

Before installation, turn off power at the circuit breaker and verify with a non-contact voltage tester ( ). Wear appropriate personal protective equipment, such as gloves and eye protection, and keep unqualified persons away from the work area.

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Mounting the Box

Mark the location on the wall or ceiling, ensuring it is level and does not interfere with studs, pipes, or other obstructions ( ). Cut an opening in drywall or paneling to fit the box. Secure the box using screws, mounting brackets, or retention tabs.

Horizontal boxes are typically mounted with the longer side parallel to the wall or ceiling surface ( ).

Running and Connecting Cables

Create entry points by removing or partially opening the knockouts on the box. Feed cables through the knockouts, ensuring no more than two wires per hole to prevent overheating ( ). Secure cables within 8 inches of the box using staples or clamps to comply with electrical codes ( ).

Make splices using wire nuts or approved connectors, ensuring all connections are tight and insulated. Check grounding: Plastic boxes do not conduct electricity, so ensure the system is properly grounded using the copper wire in NM cables ( ).

Finishing Up

Cover the box with the supplied plastic cover or a compatible faceplate to protect the connections and maintain accessibility ( ). Test the circuit after restoring power to ensure all connections are secure and functioning correctly ( ).

Tips and Best Practices

Avoid using metal-clad cables with plastic boxes. Horizontal boxes are ideal for switches, outlets, or junctions where space is limited. Always follow local electrical codes and the National Electrical Code (NEC) for compliance ( ).

For outdoor installations, use boxes rated for exposure to moisture and temperature extremes. By following these steps, a horizontal plastic junction box can provide a safe, organized, and code-compliant solution for electrical wiring in residential, commercial, or industrial settings ( ).

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Article Content

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