

AC OUTLET CHECKER

The "AC Outlet Checker" article (August, 1979) is interesting and provides a circuit that should give a lot of information. However, a much simpler checker for AC outlets can be made by connecting a neon lamp (through a resistor) between the hot terminal of a three-connector plug and the *grounding* terminal.

The neon lamp can be mounted in the base of the three-connector plug. If the lamp goes on, you know that (1) the hot

wire is connected correctly (2) the outlet box is grounded, and (3) the grounding wire is connected correctly. Those are the principle safety factors.

To check that the common wire is connected, all you have to do is to plug an ordinary lamp into the socket.

Incidentally, on page 53 of the article the labeling of the "O", "X," and "K" lamps is confusing. And should "K" be a red lamp?

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The labeling of the lamps is indeed confusing. They should be labeled as follows: DS1=O, DS2=X, DS3=K.—Editor.