

Desk/Table Top Power Solutions

The British Standard BS 6396:2008+A1:2015 (BS 6396) Electrical Systems in Office Furniture and Educational Furniture (which supersedes BS6396:2002) specifies the requirements for the safe provision or installation of electrical power, data and telecommunication systems in office furniture, office screens and educational furniture.

Electrical equipment and installations must be designed and tested to ensure their safety and to comply with statutory regulations, in particular, the “Electricity at Work Regulations” and “Health & Safety at Work Act”. Relevant British Standards may be used as a means of demonstrating safety and compliance with the regulations. In the case of electrical systems in office furniture and educational furniture, the relevant standard for systems connected to the mains supply by means of a 13A plug is BS 6396.

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BS6396 – Socket Outlets

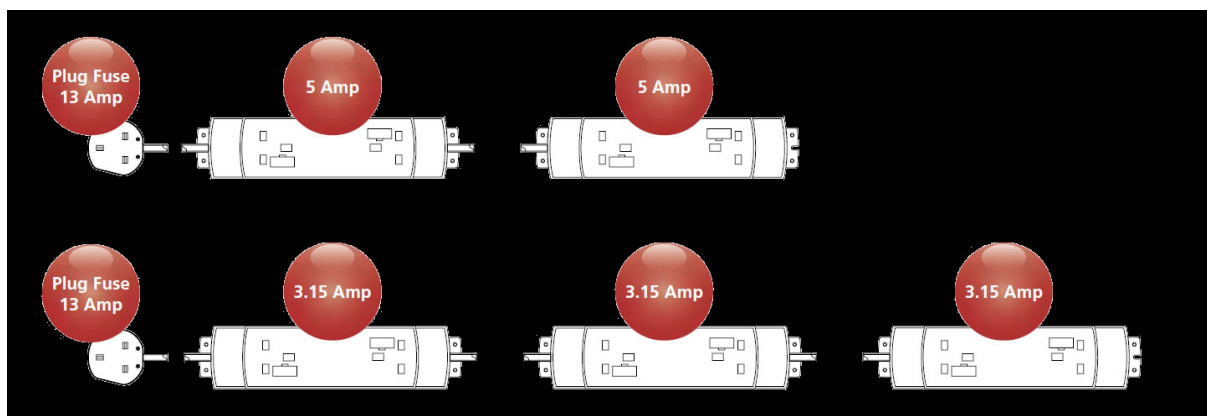
Sockets installed in office and educational furniture are intended to supply office equipment with a rating not exceeding 5A with BS 6396 referring to all office furniture electrical installations when completed must be tested. Section 7 of BS 6396 sets out the procedures.

These tests should also be carried out on reconfigured desks and screens as well as new installations. Periodic inspections and tests must be carried out to fulfil the requirements of BS 6396 and the “Electricity at Work Regulations” in maintaining a safe working environment.

To meet the requirements of BS6396 the points listed below must be followed when configuring electrical systems. Any electrical system being fed from one 13 Amp UK plug must not consist of more than;

- Six individually fused sockets rated at 3.15 Amps each or
- Four individually fused sockets rated at 5 Amps each.

The diagrams below indicate the maximum number of socket outlets that may be connected from a single power supply cable fed from a 13 Amp BS 1363 plug and their relevant fuse ratings.



BS6396-Socket-Configuration

Any piece of equipment rated higher than 5 Amps should not be plugged into the electrical system installed in an office or educational furniture. These sockets are designed for office equipment.

No unfused sockets. Each socket must be rated at either 3.15 Amps or 5 Amps.

No unfused power modules, even if surge protectors, MCBs etc. are fitted to your electrical system.

Amendments in 2015

BS 6396 was updated December 2015 to now incorporate a 30mA RCD protection and reflect the changes which have been in place for fixed wiring installations complying to the 17th Ed IEE Wiring Regulations BS 7671, the amendment to BS 6396 now requires new Desk Electrics installations to incorporate a 30mA RCD protection if the fixed wiring does not.

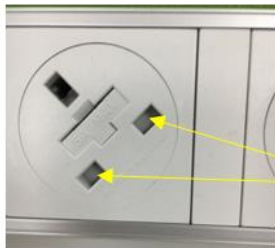
BS6396 Exclusions

If the connection to the mains supply is by some other form (i.e. not a 13 Amp UK plug) then BS6396 does not apply.

Any individual item which requires more than 5 Amps must be connected directly to its own 13 Amp wall socket.

Any electrical system in an office or educational furniture which exceeds 13 Amps.

Shutters on UK Plug Sockets



You can see the closed shutters in the holes for safety – this is a feature that UK plug sockets are expected to have



When the earth pin is inserted on a plug it then opens the shutters on the live and neutral