

Vocabulary



fuse a safety device used in a circuit

A fuse contains a thin wire or metal strip that melts and opens the circuit when there is too much current. The wire in a fuse is thinner than the other wires in the circuit. This causes the fuse to melt and stop the flow of current before other wires in the circuit get hot enough to start a fire. Cars have many fuses to protect the clocks, locks, lights, and radios. Appliances may also have fuses. Homes may have either fuses or circuit breakers.

short circuit an unintended path that connects one part of a circuit with another

A short circuit may be caused if a cord is damaged and lets two wires inside the cord touch. This changes the path of the current in the circuit, allowing current to skip bulbs or other devices before returning to a battery or other power source. When a short circuit happens, current can change to heat and cause a fire.