

MAKING 12V CONNECTIONS

No matter how many 12v lights and appliances a caravan already has, most caravanners eventually want to add more, whether it be further lights, a radio or a device to help with chores. If you do want to add more appliances one of the easiest ways of making the electrical connection to the van's existing 12v system is with Scotchloks – also known as snap-on connectors or cable-lock connectors. Do remember, however, that they must NEVER be used to make mains connections.

1 Scotchloks come in three sizes: 5A, 15A, and 30A, coloured red, blue and yellow respectively (*see picture, right*). All are readily available from high-street motor accessory shops as well as from well-stocked caravan accessory suppliers.

As far as their use in tourers is concerned, you should never need to use the 30A capacity. The most commonly used variety is the blue (15A) Scotchloks.

2 You'll notice that the Scotchlok has two tubes and a bridging, metal blade with slits in it. The outer tube is continuous while the inner one has an end-stop. The cable which is to supply the power to the new cable is pushed into the outer tube while the new cable is pushed into the inner one until it is up against the end-stop. Pliers are then used to push the metal blade down through the Scotchloks (*take care not to push too hard*).

3 As the blade is pushed down through the plastic it cuts the cable's insulation, thus making a bridge for the current to flow to the new wire. It is important to use the correct size of Scotchlok to ensure that you cut all the way through the insulation without touching the individual copper strands. Finally, the plastic lock is snapped into position. (**Tip:** For a 'belt and braces' approach, wrap insulation tape around the Scotchloks).

