

TROUBLESHOOTING

Roller Shutter Troubleshooting: Common Problems & Safe Fixes

A roller shutter that suddenly stops working is frustrating, but a surprising number of faults are things you can identify (and sometimes fix) in a few minutes without any tools. This guide walks through the most common roller shutter problems in the order a technician would check them, tells you which fixes are safe to try yourself, and flags clearly where you should stop and call a professional. Trying to force a stuck shutter or tackle a tensioned spring is where a small problem becomes an expensive one.

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<https://shutthefrontup.com.au/roller-shutter-troubleshooting>

QUICK ANSWER

Most roller shutter faults trace back to one of five things: **power, the remote, an obstruction in the tracks, a bent slat, or a worn motor or spring**. Work through the cheap, safe checks first (batteries, power, and clearing debris from the bottom rail and guide channels) before assuming the motor has failed.

One rule matters more than any other: **if the motor hums or clicks but the shutter won't move, stop pressing the button**. Running a motor against a mechanical jam is the fastest way to burn it out and turn a free fix into a motor replacement.

Bottom line: Check power → remote → obstruction → alignment, in that order. Anything involving springs, gearboxes or mains wiring is a job for a technician or licensed electrician.

Who this is for: Australian homeowners trying to diagnose a roller shutter fault safely before calling a repairer.

The five most common causes

No power / no response

A shutter that does nothing at all usually has a power problem: a tripped breaker, an unplugged transformer, or a flat backup battery. This is the first and cheapest thing to rule out.

Remote or wall switch

If the wall switch works but the remote doesn't, the fault is in the remote (flat battery, lost pairing or interference), not the shutter. If neither works, look at power or the motor.

Obstruction in the tracks

Leaves, dirt, small stones or a stray toy wedged in the bottom rail or guide channels can stop a shutter dead. Debris is one of the most common (and easiest to fix) causes of a jam.

Bent or dislodged slats

The curtain is made of interlocking aluminium slats. A slat bent by a storm, an impact or an attempted break-in can catch in the guide rails and stop the curtain travelling smoothly.

Motor, gears or springs

If power, remote and tracks are all fine, the fault is internal: a worn motor, stripped gears or a broken tension spring. These are under load or under tension and are repairer territory, not DIY.

Quick roller shutter symptom checker

SYMPTOM	MOST LIKELY CAUSE	WHAT TO DO SAFELY
Nothing happens at all	Power: tripped breaker, unplugged transformer, flat battery	Check the breaker and that the transformer is plugged in and switched on. Try the wall switch as well as the remote.

SYMPTOM	MOST LIKELY CAUSE	WHAT TO DO SAFELY
Wall switch works, remote doesn't	Flat remote battery or lost pairing	Replace the remote battery; re-pair per the manual. If still nothing, the remote may need replacing.
Motor hums but shutter won't move	Mechanical jam, worn gears, or seized motor	Stop pressing immediately. Forcing it burns out the motor. Check for an obvious obstruction, otherwise call a technician.
Stuck or jammed part-way	Debris in tracks, or a bent slat	Clear any visible debris from the bottom rail and guides. Do not yank the curtain up or down.
Closes crookedly / one side lags	Track misalignment or a slipping strap/motor limit	Stop operating it. Misaligned tracks and limit faults get worse with use. Book a service.
Grinding or squealing noise	Dry guides, worn bearings, or debris	Clean and lubricate the guides with silicone spray. Persistent grinding means worn parts. Call a repairer.
Won't stay down / lifts easily	Failed lock, broken spring, or manual override left engaged	Do not attempt spring work yourself. This is a security and safety issue for a technician.

Start here: the shutter won't respond at all

Before anything else, rule out power. Electric roller shutters run off a low-voltage transformer or a hard-wired supply, and the most common "dead shutter" call-out turns out to be a tripped safety switch or an unplugged transformer after other work was done nearby.

- Check the switchboard for a tripped circuit breaker or RCD and reset it once.
- Confirm the shutter's transformer/plug pack is plugged in and switched on at the wall.
- Try the hard-wired wall switch as well as the remote. This tells you whether the problem is the shutter or just the remote.

If the breaker trips again immediately, or you smell burning, stop and call a licensed electrician. A breaker that won't stay on is protecting you from a wiring or motor fault.

The motor hums but the shutter doesn't move

This is the single most important fault to get right. A humming or buzzing motor that isn't turning the shutter is almost always straining against a mechanical jam or a failed gear. **Every extra press cooks the motor a little more.**

Let go of the button. Look for an obvious obstruction in the bottom rail or guides and clear it. If there's nothing visible and the shutter still won't move on a short test press, the fault is internal (gears, motor or spring) and needs a technician. Continuing to operate it is how a \$150 service becomes a full motor replacement.

Stuck, jammed or closing crookedly

Roller shutter curtains travel through guide channels on each side. Anything caught in that path (leaves, grit, insect nests, a bent slat) can stop or skew the curtain.

- With the shutter stopped, inspect the bottom rail and both guide channels. Vacuum out loose debris with a narrow nozzle.
- Look along the curtain for a slat that's visibly bent, cracked or popped out of line. A damaged slat catching in the guide is a repair, not a clean.
- Never force a stuck curtain up or down by hand. You can bend more slats or damage the tube.

If the shutter closes crookedly or one side lags, the guide rails may be out of alignment or a limit setting has slipped. Both get worse with every cycle, so stop using it and book a service.

Remote issues and after a power cut

If the wall switch works but the remote doesn't, start with a fresh remote battery and re-pair the remote following your manufacturer's manual. Radio interference from other devices, or being out of range, can also cause dropouts. If one shutter in a group won't respond, it's usually that shutter's motor or receiver, not the remote.

After a blackout, some electric shutters need to be reset or re-homed, and most have a **manual override**, a winch, crank or strap that lets you raise the shutter by hand in an emergency. Check your manual for where the override is and how to disengage it afterwards; a half-engaged override can stop the motor working normally.

When to stop and call a professional

Some roller shutter repairs are genuinely dangerous. Call a qualified roller shutter technician (and a licensed electrician for anything mains-wired) when:

- The tension spring is broken or the shutter lifts too easily / won't stay down. **Springs are under high tension and can injure you badly.**
- The motor hums but won't turn, or you smell burning.
- A circuit breaker trips repeatedly when you operate the shutter.
- The tracks are bent or the curtain has come off its guides.
- Slats are cracked or damaged and need replacing.

If the unit is old and repairs are adding up, it can be worth comparing the cost of a repair against a replacement. Our [quote comparison tool](#) lets you get written quotes from local installers so you can weigh repair versus replace with real numbers.

Safe checks before you call a repairer

☐ Test the wall switch and the remote separately

This isolates whether the fault is the shutter or just the remote/battery.

☐ Check the switchboard

Reset a tripped breaker or RCD once. If it trips again, stop and call an electrician.

☐ Clear the bottom rail and guide channels

Vacuum out leaves, grit and debris. A very common cause of jams.

☐ Never run a humming motor

If it buzzes without moving, let go of the button to avoid burning out the motor.

☐ **Don't touch the springs**

Tensioned springs and internal gearboxes are a technician's job. The injury risk is real.

☐ **Know your manual override**

Locate the emergency crank/strap so you can open the shutter during a power cut.

Frequently asked questions

Why won't my electric roller shutter close?

The usual causes are a power issue (tripped breaker or unplugged transformer), a flat remote battery, an obstruction in the tracks, or a bent slat catching in the guides. If the motor hums but the shutter won't move, stop pressing the button and check for a jam. Forcing it can burn out the motor.

My roller shutter motor hums but doesn't move. What does that mean?

A humming motor that isn't turning is straining against a mechanical jam or a failed gear. Stop operating it immediately, clear any visible obstruction, and if it still won't move, call a technician. Continuing to press the button is the quickest way to destroy the motor.

Can I fix a roller shutter myself?

You can safely check power, replace remote batteries, clear debris from the tracks, and clean and lubricate the guides. You should not attempt spring, gearbox or mains-wiring repairs. Springs are under high tension and electrical work must be done by a licensed electrician in Australia.

How do I open a roller shutter during a power cut?

Most electric roller shutters have a manual override (a winch, crank handle or strap) that lets you raise the shutter by hand. Check your product manual for its location and remember to disengage it correctly once power returns, or the motor may not operate normally.

Is it worth repairing an old roller shutter or replacing it?

If the motor, spring and slats are all failing on an older unit, replacement is often better value than repeated repairs. Get a written repair quote and compare it against replacement quotes from local installers before deciding.

Related reading

Roller shutter maintenance

Simple upkeep that prevents most of these faults.

<https://shutthefrontup.com.au/roller-shutter-maintenance>

Solar panel troubleshooting

Faults, red lights and no output on solar systems.

<https://shutthefrontup.com.au/solar-panel-troubleshooting>

Roller shutter glossary

Plain-English definitions of the parts named above.

<https://shutthefrontup.com.au/roller-shutter-glossary>

Are roller shutters worth it?

<https://shutthefrontup.com.au/are-roller-shutters-worth-it>

Compare replacement quotes

<https://shutthefrontup.com.au/quote-compare>

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All prices shown are indicative estimates drawn from marketplace data and change over time. They are not quotes, offers or valuations. Measurements, site conditions, product specification, electrical work, access, location and supplier terms all change the final figure. Only a written quote from a supplier, after inspection and final measurement, is an actual price.

Installation, repair and maintenance work carries real risk. In Australia, mains electrical work must be carried out by a licensed electrician under AS/NZS 3000. Roller shutter tension springs are under high load and can cause serious injury. Do not attempt electrical work, spring work or work at heights unless you are qualified and equipped to do so safely. If you are in any doubt, stop and engage a qualified professional.

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Beyond a DIY fix?

If it needs a repairer (or the old unit is due for replacement), compare written offers from approved local suppliers. No obligation, and your contact details stay hidden until you choose.

Compare Quotes: <https://shutthefrontup.com.au/quote-compare>

Maintenance guide: <https://shutthefrontup.com.au/roller-shutter-maintenance>