If you are opening up walls in a California remodel, low-voltage cabling is one of the smartest things you can add. Extra coax, Ethernet, speaker lines, security wiring, even a conduit or two, can save you from ugly surface raceways and Wi-Fi dead zones later.

Homeowners usually discover the catch when they call their electrician: some electricians happily run data and cable TV lines, others refuse to touch them, and a few will only rough them in and leave the terminations for a different trade. The answer is not just about skill, it is shaped by California licensing rules, local code, and how that particular company runs its projects.

From years of working around remodels and structured cabling projects, I can say this: in California, many C-10 electrical contractors will install low-voltage cable outlets during a remodel, but you should never assume they will. You have to ask the right questions up front and understand where their scope starts and ends.

Let us unpack how it actually works in practice.

What “cabling” really means on a remodel

When a homeowner says “cable outlets,” they might be picturing a coax jack for the TV, a network jack for a computer, or even the low-voltage plate for a doorbell camera. Electricians, on the other hand, draw a line between:

- Line-voltage wiring, typically 120 or 240 volts in a home. This feeds receptacles, lighting, appliances, HVAC equipment, and so on.
- Low-voltage cabling, usually under 50 volts. This includes data networks, coaxial TV lines, alarm, doorbells, thermostats, audio, and control wiring.

People often ask, “Is cabling the same as wiring?” In everyday language, yes, but in the trade those words point at different scopes of work. “Wiring” usually means power circuits. “Cabling” often points to network, communications, and other signal lines.

So when you ask “Do electricians install cable outlets?” you are really asking if they handle that low-voltage side as well as the power. Many do. Some prefer to sub it out to a low-voltage specialist. A few will only pull the cable and leave terminations to your internet or cable provider.

In a remodel, the best time to pull cabling is during framing, after rough electrical and plumbing, before insulation. Once the drywall is back, every new wire is either far more expensive or visibly patched.

California licensing and who is allowed to install low-voltage cabling

California classifies contractors by license type through the Contractors State License Board (CSLB). For residential remodeling, the two main licenses in this conversation are:

- C-10 Electrical Contractor. This is the standard electrical license that covers installation of electrical systems including line-voltage wiring. A C-10 can also legally perform related low-voltage work.
- C-7 Low Voltage Systems Contractor. This license is specific to low-voltage systems like telephone, data, audio, and security.

Legally, both C-10 and C-7 contractors can install low-voltage cabling. So from a strict regulation standpoint, a C-10 electrician in California is generally allowed to install your Ethernet runs and coax outlets during a remodel, as long as the work stays within scope and complies with code.

However, the fact that they are permitted to does not mean they always will. The decision inside each company comes down to:

- Training and comfort with data cabling standards and terminations.
- Liability concerns if they provide a "network" that later gets blamed for slow speeds or streaming issues.
- Productivity and scheduling. Many electrical shops prefer to focus on higher-margin power work and bring in a low-voltage subcontractor for the rest.

If you are already hiring a general contractor, your GC may have a preferred low-voltage subcontractor, even if your main electrician knows how to do the job.

What low-voltage work electricians commonly handle

In practice, here is how typical California electricians approach low-voltage during a remodel.

Most C-10 electricians are comfortable with:

- Coaxial cable for TV and internet. Running RG-6 to TV locations, homerun to a central panel, and installing basic F-connector wall plates.
- Doorbells and chime transformers. Low-voltage runs between button, transformer, and chime, especially if the bell is being relocated.
- Thermostat and HVAC control cable, when it is clearly part of the HVAC scope or coordinated with that contractor.
- Basic speaker prewire. Pulling 2-conductor speaker cable in walls or ceilings to prewire for surround or whole-home audio, sometimes without doing the final terminations.

Some electricians also regularly install:

- Cat5e or Cat6 Ethernet cabling from a central structured wiring panel to rooms.
- Camera prewire to soffits or strategic locations, often leaving tails coiled where cameras will go.

Where electricians often draw the line is at higher-end networking or security system design. They may say, "We will get the cable to the box, but your IT person or security contractor will handle the rest."

So if you want a full structured cabling plan, with a rack, patch panels, PoE switches, and carefully labeled ports, you may get better results from a C-7 low-voltage contractor whose whole business is built around that world.

What does cabling actually do in a home?

People sometimes ask, "What does cabling do?" because Wi-Fi and streaming feel almost magical until something starts buffering.

At home, low-voltage cabling carries information rather than raw power. It moves bits of data, sound, or video around the house. A single Cat6 cable, for example, might:

- Deliver a hardwired gigabit connection to your media center so your TV or Apple TV streams cleanly.
- Feed a wireless access point in a hallway ceiling, improving Wi-Fi coverage in bedrooms.
- Provide power and data to a PoE security camera.

Coaxial cabling typically carries cable TV signals or DOCSIS internet from the demarcation point to your modem or set-top boxes. Speaker cables carry line-level or amplified audio from an amp to in-ceiling or wall speakers.

If you just rely on Wi-Fi and one coax from the builder, you are leaning entirely on radio waves trying to punch through walls and interference. Good cabling shares the load. It puts wired connections where they matter most, then lets Wi-Fi handle phones and tablets.

Types of cabling you will hear about during a remodel

Homeowners are often confronted with a mess of terms and ask two versions of the same questions: “What are the three types of cabling?” and “What are the 5 types of cable?”

Professionals slice this in different ways, but for residential low-voltage cabling, you will most often encounter these three broad categories:

First, twisted pair network cable. This is your Cat5e, Cat6, Cat6a, and beyond. Eight small conductors twisted into pairs. This is the most common type of cabling used in networks, and it is what your electrician will use any time you say “hardwire my office.”

Second, coaxial cable. In houses you almost always see RG-6 these days. A solid or stranded center conductor, insulation, a shield, and an outer jacket. Coaxial is still standard for cable TV and many cable internet services.

Third, specialty low-voltage cable. This group includes doorbell cable, thermostat cable, security wire (such as 22/4), and speaker wire (often 16/2 or 14/2).

If you want a slightly deeper cut at “five types,” you can add fiber optic and HDMI. Fiber is slowly moving into residential backbones for large homes and high-end projects. HDMI is more of a premade cord than in-wall cable, but in some theaters we do run active HDMI over distance inside conduit.

When people ask about “the best wire for home use,” they usually mean the best network cable. At the time of writing, a good quality solid copper Cat6 hits the sweet spot for most homes. It supports gigabit easily, 10-gigabit at moderate distances, and is affordable and widely supported. For power circuits, that is a different discussion, governed by the National Electrical Code Cabling Services Provider California and the California Electrical Code, but that is your electrician’s daily bread.

The three primary components of cabling

Professionals often talk about three primary components of cabling: the cable, the pathway, and the termination.

The cable is the obvious one: the Cat6, RG-6, or speaker wire you are buying.

The pathway is what carries and protects the cable. In a **Cabling Services Provider California** remodel, this might be open stud bays, bored holes through framing or conduit stubs to an attic. If you are forward-thinking, you can ask for empty conduit to certain locations so you can pull new cabling later.

The termination is where most DIY attempts fall apart. For Ethernet, that is the RJ-45 jack in the wall and the patch panel or plug at the other end. For coax, it is a clean F-connector. For speakers, it may be a binding post plate. Poor terminations, sloppy punchdowns, or cheap connectors are a common reason for intermittent network issues.

A California electrician who regularly handles low-voltage work will think about all three, not just getting a cable from point A to point B.

Is cabling difficult?

From a trade standpoint, pulling cable is not inherently difficult. That is why some homeowners ask, “Is cabling difficult?” and wonder if they should just do it themselves to save money.

The answer depends on what you are trying to achieve.

Physically fishing a cable from a wall box into an open ceiling is straightforward during a remodel. The real difficulty lies in:

- Planning a layout that will still make sense ten years from now.
- Respecting code rules about separation from power wiring, fire blocking, and penetrations.
- Avoiding signal losses by following bend radius limits and not crushing cable under staples.
- Terminating and testing lines so that when your ISP shows up, everything works.

If you only want one extra coax to a bedroom and you are comfortable with drywall repair, DIY can be fine. If you are remodeling a whole floor, wiring for a home office, media room, and access points, the planning and labeling alone can justify a pro.

California adds another wrinkle: in permitted remodels, inspectors may want to see that low-voltage cabling meets code for support, plenum rating (in certain buildings), and firestopping at penetrations. Electricians and low-voltage contractors live in that world daily and know what will pass.

How much does cabling cost during a remodel?

Costs vary by region, but California labor and permit costs run higher than many other states. Homeowners often start with a broad question: “How much does cabling cost?”

For low-voltage cabling during an open-wall remodel, a realistic range for straightforward runs is often:

- Rough-in of one low-voltage drop (for example, a single Cat6 to a room) can fall in the neighborhood of 75 to 200 dollars per drop when done as part of a larger project. That usually covers labor and materials for cable and a basic wall plate, assuming clear access.
- More complex routes, long runs, two-story fishing, or retrofit conditions after drywall can push that closer to 200 to 400 dollars per location.
- A whole-home structured cabling package in a mid-size house - say, 8 to 16 data/TV drops, a central panel, labeling, and testing - can easily land in the 1,500 to 4,000 dollar range, depending on finish level and region.

These are ballpark ranges, not quotes. High-end projects with fiber backbones, equipment racks, and enterprise-grade Wi-Fi can cost many times more.

One important nuance: an electrical company might give you a blended quote that hides the exact low-voltage cost. They will include data and TV lines as part of the full electrical package. A dedicated C-7 low-voltage contractor may itemize each run more explicitly.

If a client wants to lower cost, we sometimes rough in conduit and a pull string only. That way, you or a future provider can add or upgrade cabling later without opening walls again.

Do electricians install cable outlets, or do providers handle that?

There is a lot of confusion between what your construction team does and what the service provider handles. People ask, “Who is the cheapest cable provider?” and then assume that provider will run everything inside the house at no cost.

Cable and internet companies in California typically:

- Run their line from the street or utility pole to a demarcation point on your building.
- Bring a line to the modem or primary TV location.
- Occasionally run short inside-jack extensions as a courtesy.

What they usually do not do is full structured cabling inside the walls during remodels. If they do, it is often a quick surface run with stapled coax on baseboards, which is exactly what you are trying to avoid.

So yes, many California electricians do install cable outlets, at least for coax and basic low-voltage points. They just are not your service provider. Think of them as building the roads inside your property. The ISP’s job is to bring the traffic.

If you want the absolute cheapest way to get online, you will choose your internet or cable provider based on promotions, not on who pulls cable in your walls. But for a remodel, the electrician or low-voltage contractor is the one who gives you a clean, hidden distribution network so that any provider can plug in later.

Coordinating timing during a remodel

The success of low-voltage cabling during a remodel depends heavily on when it is done. Create a clear scope with your electrician early. During design, discuss:

- Where you want TVs, desks, wireless access points, security devices, and speakers, even if you are not buying all of them now.
- Whether the electrician is willing to install all low-voltage cabling, only some, or prefers a subcontractor.
- How they will label and terminate the cables so you are not stuck guessing which jack is which.

One practical pattern that works well in California remodels is this: let the C-10 electrician rough in both line-voltage and low-voltage cabling at the same time, then bring in a C-7 specialist or IT person later for network gear, router placement, and any troubleshooting.

If you decide to separate the scopes, insist that the two parties coordinate. It is painful to find your low-voltage contractor on site trying to drill new holes in the same studs your electrician has already loaded up with Romex.

Key questions to ask your California electrician

To avoid misunderstandings, it helps to be explicit. Before the framing inspection, sit down with your electrician and, if relevant, your general contractor, and ask:

- Will your scope include all low-voltage cabling (Ethernet, coax, speakers, doorbell, cameras), or do you only handle some of those?
- Are you comfortable terminating Cat6 jacks and patch panels, or do you prefer to leave terminations to a low-voltage contractor?
- How do you price low-voltage drops, and is there a price break when we add more locations?
- How will you label each cable so we know what goes where once the walls are closed?

Even experienced homeowners skip this conversation and end up with one lonely coax behind the TV and nothing in the office. The electrician did what they considered standard, but not what you had in mind.

Planning a simple low-voltage layout for a typical home

You do not need to become a network engineer to make good decisions, but it helps to sketch a simple plan before you talk to your contractor. Very roughly, a sensible layout for many homes includes:

- A central location, often in a closet or mechanical room, for a structured wiring panel or small rack with the modem, router, and any switch.
- At least two Cat6 jacks at each major TV location, plus one coax, to cover current and future gear.
- Hardwired Cat6 drops to any dedicated desks, home office areas, or locations likely to host a desktop computer, gaming console, or stationary work laptop.
- Ceiling or high-wall Cat6 runs to a couple of spots central to bedroom clusters for future wireless access points.

- Coax or Cat6 to any locations where you might add a security camera, plus Cat6 to the doorbell and front entry if you are open to smart locks or intercoms.

That is basic and does not resemble a commercial network design, but it is a giant upgrade from relying on a single modem/router combo in one corner of the house.

When a separate low-voltage contractor is the better choice

There are plenty of California electricians who do meticulous low-voltage work. There are also some who treat it as secondary, something to rush through at the end of the day.

You may want to bring in a dedicated C-7 low-voltage contractor if:

- You are building a large home or doing a full-gut remodel and want a long-term, scalable network.
- You care about detailed labeling, testing results, and performance certifications.
- You are integrating audio, video distribution, cameras, and automation into one system.
- Your electrician openly says low-voltage is not their strong suit or prefers not to warranty that part of the job.

If you decide to involve both trades, get them talking early. Give the low-voltage contractor a copy of the electrical plans and vice versa. Good coordination here prevents crowded stud bays, last-minute changes, and failed inspections.

Practical takeaways for California homeowners

If you are remodeling in California and wondering whether your electrician will install low-voltage cable outlets, the honest answer is: often yes, but only if you spell out what you want. Legally, a C-10 can handle it. Practically, some will and some will not.

Your job as the homeowner is to define your low-voltage goals clearly, pick the right mix of electrician and cabling specialist, and lock in expectations while the work is still on paper.

Think hard before you let the walls close with only whatever “standard” wiring the last owner or builder thought was enough. The cost of an extra Cat6 or coax run while the studs are open is small. The cost of trenching through finished plaster later is not.