

10 EASY WAYS to save on your energy costs



Not only will these tips help to lower your energy costs, but you'll also be reducing your impact on the environment and conserving precious natural resources.

1 HIT THE LIGHTS WHEN YOU LEAVE A ROOM

A flick of the switch when you leave a room can save about \$18 for every 60W light bulb that would have otherwise burned for 8 hours a day.

2 MAKE YOUR AIR CONDITIONER A PERFECT FIT

If you have a window air conditioner, make sure it's a perfect fit so outdoor air doesn't leak in. During winter months, using an outdoor or indoor air conditioner cover can help prevent leaks if you can't safely remove the unit from the window.

3 PROGRAM SAVINGS INTO YOUR THERMOSTAT

If possible, install a programmable thermostat to automatically adjust your home's temperature settings when you're away or sleeping. When used properly, it can save up to \$100 a year in energy costs. You should also set the "hold" button at a constant energy-saving temperature when you're away or on vacation.

Recommended Settings for Savings and Comfort

Summer  77°F  73°F

Winter  68°F  64°F

4 UNPLUG ELECTRONIC ENERGY-SUCKERS

Many electronic products draw electricity even when switched off! This is called "phantom power load." So unplug any battery chargers or power adapters when not in use. Make this easy by using a power bar as the central "turn off" point. Even in sleep mode, electronics can continue to draw power which could add 5% - 10% to your monthly bill.

5 SHORTER SHOWERS MEAN SAVINGS

A 10-minute shower can use less water than a full bath. With a new 2.5 gallon-per-minute (low-flow) shower head, you'll save 5 gallons of water over a typical bath, and up to \$145 a year in energy costs.

6 LET YOUR AIR VENTS BREATHE

Make sure all air vents are clear of furniture so that air can circulate freely. This can help your heating or cooling system to work more efficiently.

7 DRAPES AREN'T JUST FOR SHOW

In cooler weather, keep your drapes open during daylight hours to take advantage of the sun's warmth. In warmer weather, keep them closed to block out the sun's heat.

8 LET YOUR DISHWASHER HANDLE IT

Most dishwashers today can thoroughly clean dishes that have had food scraped, rather than rinsed off – the wash cycle and detergent take care of the rest. About 16 gal of water is used per load, so always wait for a full load or set the water level to match the size of the load.

9 WASHING CLOTHES IN COLD PAYS OFF

About 90% of energy used by a washer is for heating water – only 10% goes to electricity used by the washer motor. Depending on your water heater, switching to cold water can save you \$60 a year. If you can, wash in full loads. Doing this can save 3,400 gallons of water a year.

10 DON'T LET YOUR DRYER SOAK UP SAVINGS

Cleaning your dryer's lint trap before every load helps it work more efficiently and can help save up to \$34 a year. Also be sure not to over-dry your clothes. Running a dryer for an extra 15 minutes per load can cost up to \$34 a year.

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