

- Use outdoor motion detectors and timers. Instead of leaving outdoor lights on all night while you sleep, let these handy devices turn them on only when they detect motion. With motion detectors, use the lowest wattage incandescent bulb that will do the job.
- Use low-wattage bulbs where applicable, like in a closet where you don't need lots of light.
- Dust off light bulbs. Dirty, greasy, smoky light bulbs can reduce light output by as much as 10 percent.
- Remove unnecessary lighting. Especially in track and recessed lighting, use only the number of bulbs needed to light an area.
- Use light from windows. Natural light is more efficient than electric, not to mention free.
- Paint and decorate in light colors. Dark colors absorb light. Light colors reflect light.
- Use timers when on vacation. Set your timer to turn lights on and off at different times on different days. Your home will look occupied, too.
- Install dimmers in areas where dimmed lighting makes sense, like the dining room and bedroom.
- Check your lamp shades. You may want to consider switching to a more efficient shade in a lighter color.
- Use task lighting. If you're working diligently at a desk or workbench, other light in the room could be turned off or dimmed.

Keeping warm

- Keep the thermostat between 65° and 68°F.
- Add extra insulation. You can add too much, so consult an expert or utility company representative to determine the appropriate amount to add.
- Open outside doors as little as possible, and when you do, do so quickly.
- Clean or replace furnace filters monthly. Shake reusable filters outside or spray them with a garden hose. Make sure they're dry before replacing.
- Close your chimney damper as soon as you're certain the fire is completely out.
- Use sweaters and blankets. Throw an extra blanket on the bed.
- A ceiling or portable fan running at a very low speed can help distribute warm air more evenly and reduce the desire to turn up the heat.
- Keep drapes and blinds closed. Drapes add an extra layer of insulation.
- Check heat ducts for leaks. Any you find should be sealed tightly using foil-backed tape. Ducts in unheated areas should also be insulated where possible.
- Keep heating vents unobstructed.

Staying cool

- Air conditioner filters should be cleaned or replaced once a month during use.
- Maintain unobstructed air flow. Be certain no objects are leaning on or directly in the path of incoming or exiting air flow.
- Maintain 78°F. For every degree you lower the temperature, the energy costs rise by 6 percent. A temperature setting of 75°F costs 18 percent more; a 72°F setting costs 36 percent more.
- Use a programmable thermostat.
- Enter and exit your home quickly. When inside, close doors to rooms you don't use.
- Wear the right clothes. Loose and lightweight clothes can make a big difference in your comfort level.
- In the summer, proper amounts of insulation in walls, attics and crawl spaces helps keep warm air outside.
- Plant shade trees that lose their leaves in winter. Not only will shade trees absorb the radiant heat before it hits your roof, planting trees helps clean the air, too.
- Install a ceiling fan above the area where you spend most of your time.

For more information on how to save energy, contact your local utility or go to www.bpa.gov and select Energy Efficiency.

How to save energy in your home



There are some simple steps you can take to cut your energy consumption.

Some are surprising. Almost all are surprisingly simple. Individually, they may not seem hugely important. Together, they can make all the difference in the world.

Turning off appliances

TVs, VCRs, DVD players, computers and printers, stereos, microwaves, coffee machines, washers and dryers, and rechargeable power tools use electricity around the clock. You think you have turned them off, but they are still running. For example, a TV with a remote could use more energy during the 20 hours it is turned off than it does when you watch it for four hours.

Here's some things you can do:

- Unplug appliances directly from wall outlets when not in use. Instead of turning off your electronic devices one-at-a-time, make the job easier by plugging all of your electronics into a power strip or two and switch off the power strip after you have finished using the items.
- If you are not going to be using your computer for a while and don't want to shut it down, simply turn off your monitor. Screen savers do not reduce the amount of energy used.

(Source: Energy Information Administration)

Refrigerator/freezer

- Set the temperature in your refrigerator between 38°F and 42°F; your freezer should be set between 0°F and 5°F.
- Keep them full. It takes less energy to cool a full refrigerator or freezer than an empty one, provided air can circulate.
- Twice a year, clean the condenser coils that are located on the bottom or the back side of most models.
- Check the seals and replace any that are cracked or worn.
- Open the refrigerator door less. Every time the door opens, warm air rushes in.
- Let food cool before storing in the refrigerator.
- Always cover everything. Humidity escapes from uncovered foods, which causes the compressor to work harder.
- Instead of defrosting food on the counter where it may spoil, or in the microwave where it will use extra energy, place it in the refrigerator 24 hours before you need it.
- Replace worn out or inefficient appliances with energy-efficient models, such as those labeled ENERGY STAR®.

Range/microwave

- Use your microwave for most cooking. A microwave does small and medium cooking jobs more efficiently than an oven or range top.

- Choose the right pan for the job. When using the range top, remember that pans with flat bottoms heat more efficiently than those without. If you're using a small pan, use the small heating element.

Other appliances

- Wash only full loads in the dishwasher.
- Wash clothes in cold water on the economy cycle and always have a full load.
- Don't over-dry clothes in the dryer. Use air dry cycles on lightweight loads. Hang clothes on a drying rack or outside in the summer.

Water-related tips

- Install energy-efficient shower heads and faucet aerators.
- Heat water to the right temperature (120°F). Some dishwashers require the temperature to be slightly higher. Check with the manufacturer or consult your product manual for your specific model. Caution: Turn the power off at the circuit breaker before changing the temperature on a water heater.
- Repair leaks at once. Replacing a worn out faucet washer takes just a few minutes.
- Insulate hot and cold water pipes. If pipes are exposed beneath your home, insulate them with special pipe-insulating foam, or tape a standard insulation blanket around them.
- Turn your water heater off when you plan to be away for more than five days.

- Take a shower instead of a bath. The average bath uses twice as much hot water as a five-minute shower.
- Do not leave the faucet running while you wash dishes, brush your teeth or shave.

Windows and doors

- Apply weather stripping to stop drafts around doors and windows. Beneath doors, install draft guards available at most hardware stores and home centers.
- Caulk smaller gaps. Most homes have cracks and leaks that are equal to a 2' x 2' open window. For large cracks without moving parts, such as in walls, floors or foundations, apply spray foam insulation.
- Double insulate windows. Storm windows are the most effective energy saver you can add to windows. An economical alternative is plastic sheeting.
- Use drapes to insulate. Keep drapes closed to keep warm air in. Keep them open to allow the sun's rays to help warm chilled rooms.

Lighting your home

- Switch to compact fluorescent bulbs in light fixtures used often. Traditional incandescent bulbs are not energy efficient.
- If you're not in the room, you don't need the light. Get in the habit of turning off the light every time you leave a room for more than a few minutes.