



How To Save Energy This Winter

There are lots of ways to make your home more energy efficient and comfortable.
Try some of our tips to save energy - and to reduce your bills.

<p>Record your energy bills</p> 	<p>By taking a few minutes to record details of your energy bills you will get a much better idea of where your money goes.</p> <p>Your energy bills give you feedback on how effective your efforts to save energy - and therefore money - are.</p> <p>It is useful to record the amount of units you use as well as the cost, because your bills might go up due to increased charges even though you are using less.</p>
<p>Stop drafts</p> 	<p>Heating your home accounts for 60% of your energy use. Drafts can account for up to 50% of heat loss.</p> <p>Stopping drafts is a very important money saving action especially as many of the actions are very quick, easy and cheap.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Seal gaps in the floor, skirting and ceiling.• Fit draft excluding strips around doors and windows.• Hang heavy curtains over doors and windows.• Close off fireplaces whilst not in use.• Close doors between rooms.• Check the attic hatch for drafts <p>WARNING: Never block ventilators and ventilation bricks.</p>
<p>Insulate your attic</p> 	<p>Heat rises! 30% of all the heating you pay for can be lost through a roof space that is not insulated or only poorly insulated. That could be up to 20% of your total energy bill.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The one-off job of insulating your attic with 250mm (10") of good quality insulation has a payback time of less than 4 years. Your home will be cosier; it will warm up faster, stay warm longer and save you money.• If it is some years since you insulated your attic, chances are that you don't have the full 250 mm that is the current building requirement. Consider topping up your existing insulation to save money and make your house more cosy.• Check that the attic hatch door fits well and has no drafts. Attaching insulation to the upper side of the hatch will save even more energy.

<p>Insulate behind radiators</p> 	<p>Insulating behind your radiators will keep heat in your room, by stopping it leaving straight through the wall.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purchase and fit foil backed panels behind radiators on outside walls • Make and fit your own panels from corrugated cardboard wrapped in tin foil
<p>Check room and boiler thermostats</p> 	<p>Turning down room or boiler thermostats by one degree could lower your energy consumption by 5%.</p> <p>Stored hot water will start to cool down even if the tank is well lagged. It therefore makes sense to use a timer to coordinate water heating with hot water usage.</p> <p>After taking the other actions on this sheet you should be able to turn down thermostats without any feeling of discomfort.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Try turning down the room and boiler thermostats a little. The recommended output temperature for radiators is 75 degrees celsius, and for the water it is between 50 and 60 degrees C. • Close down radiator valves and keep the curtains shut in little or never used rooms. • Investigate the timing of your hot water and heating usage and set timers to deliver when you need it most. Experiment a little! • When the central heating is on, you nearly always have hot water. Consider using the washing machine and dishwasher, or having baths, when this hot water is available.
<p>Heat your body, not the room</p> 	<p>Putting on an extra layer of clothing rather than turning up the heating is an excellent energy saving alternative. Not only is it free but it is very controllable!</p> <p>This is especially true for periods such as when you have just got out of bed and you need a little extra heat for a short while.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Put on extra clothing when needed during the day. • Put an extra blanket on the bed and use a hot water bottle at night.
<p>Turn it Off</p> 	<p>Turning things off when you are not using them saves energy and will save you money by reducing your electricity bill and reducing wear on the appliance.</p> <p>Appliances left on standby account for a surprisingly large proportion of all electricity used.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Turn off appliances completely rather than leaving them on standby.



	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• If you are the last one to leave a room then turn off the light.• Do you need to have outside lights on all night? Consider fitting a movement sensor so that your outside light comes on only when someone needs it.• If you are concerned about security whilst you are away, consider buying a timer to turn the lights on and off. Not only does this use less electricity, it also gives the impression that someone is home.
 <p>Lag your tank</p>	<p>Heating water accounts for between 15 and 20% of your household energy use.</p> <p>By lagging your hot water storage tank with an 80 mm thick insulation jacket you can save 30 % of the energy needed to heat your water, that's about 5% of your total energy consumption.</p> <p>Purchasing an insulation jacket will therefore pay for itself in about 6 months. In addition to saving you money you will also heat your water much faster and it will stay warmer longer.</p>
<p>Keep your boiler serviced</p> 	<p>To run at maximum efficiency, and for safety reasons, oil fired boilers need to be serviced annually and gas boilers every 2 years.</p> <p>The cost of the service should be recovered in lower fuel and repair bills.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Have your boiler serviced regularly.• If you need to replace your boiler, investigate modern high efficiency types. Even if your old boiler is working well it is worth getting an estimate to see if a modern one would save enough money to justify the expense. There are also new developments for home heating including solar water heating systems, geothermal heat pumps and combined heat and power plants. Although these options require a large initial outlay
<p>Turn down the heat</p> 	<p>Water heating alone accounts for about 19% of the energy use in your home.</p> <p>Most of your washing machine's energy use is from heating up water. Cut down on this by washing your clothes at a colder temperature.</p> <p>Doing so also will help your clothes last longer (and reduce the amount of microfiber pollution).</p>

<p>Use LEDs</p> 	<p>LED light bulbs use up to 90% less energy than incandescent lighting.</p> <p>Electric Ireland estimates that lighting accounts for around 11% of household electricity bills. Switching to more energy efficient bulbs can therefore lead to quick and easy energy savings.</p> <p>And LEDs save money in the long run, too: The average LED bulb will last up to ten times longer than a Halogen bulb.</p> <p>LEDs are also mercury free, making them more environmentally friendly.</p>
<p>Cook Smart</p> 	<p>The kitchen is a great place to make enormous energy savings, by making some very simple changes to how you use your kitchen appliances.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Save energy by making sure you chop up all of your vegetables and have your cooking essentials handy before you turn on your appliances. • Always use lids on pots and pans while cooking, to speed up the cooking process, and save lots of energy. • Use a slow cooker. Slow cookers are a great energy-efficient alternative to ovens. • Heat water in the kettle: Heating water that way is faster and more energy-efficient than waiting for it to boil on the hob. • If you are using the hob, turn off the cooker when your food is nearly cooked, and use the built up heat to finish cooking your food. • Develop a batch cooking habit: cook several meals at once, and store the food in the fridge or the freezer until it's needed. • You can make your oven as energy-efficient as possible by putting food into the oven while it's heating up, and keeping the door closed while it's cooking. • Turn off the oven for the last 10-15 minutes of cooking time.
<p>Speak Up!</p> 	<p>Energy efficiency is a win-win solution – it helps protect the climate by cutting down on carbon emissions while also saving you money on your energy bill.</p> <p>Make sure to let friends and family know that small changes in your day-to-day habits can lead to big societal changes - and save you money. Remember that climate action affects us all, and that no-one can solve it alone. We need to encourage each other to make the changes that are needed now.</p> <p>No action is too small, and no initiative too insignificant. And never assume that other people don't care!</p>