



A Beginner's Guide to Saving ENERGY (and Money!)

Energy is produced by burning coal and burning coal releases carbon dioxide (CO₂) pollution, making energy use the single largest source of greenhouse gases in the U.S. and the world. There are so many ways you can save energy with little effort and expense. By implementing even a few of the tips below, you will start to see the impact in your monthly bill. Compare each month to the same month in the previous year and see if you start to notice the change!

The Steps

1. Turn Off Lights – This might be a no brainer but once you start paying attention, you will notice how many lights are left on needlessly.
2. Air Dry Dishes – Turn off the 'drying cycle' on your dishwasher and let your dishes dry naturally. Try running the wash cycle before you go to bed and then leave the door open overnight to let the dishes dry.
3. Wash Clothes in Cold – Washing your clothes in cold water is just as effective as hot water and cuts the energy use by 50%! If you need to wash in hot water (to kill bacteria in bed sheets, for example), remember to rinse in cold.
4. Air Dry Clothes – Pick up a dryer rack at your local home good store and lay your clothes out to dry on it. Not only will you save energy, your clothes will shrink less and have less wear and tear. In the summer, dry your clothes outside. The sun also acts as a natural bleaching agent, making your whites whiter!
5. Use CFL bulbs – CFL bulbs have come down in price and many discount chains and buying clubs now sell them for very reasonable prices (IKEA and Costco). CFL bulbs are best used in light fixtures that are left on for periods of time such as the living room lights, entry lights or kitchen lights. Hallway lights, for example, may not be a good place for a CFL bulb if they are constantly being turned on and off. Energy Star bulbs use 75% less energy than incandescent bulbs and last 10 times longer – what are you waiting for?
6. Use Window Coverings – If you have blinds or drapes, close them! You'd be surprised at how many homeowners don't use their window coverings. In warmer months, close window coverings before noon to keep your house cool. In cooler months, close window coverings in the evening to keep heat in the house.
7. Use a Programmable Thermostat – You can save up to 10% a year on energy costs by spending \$50 on a programmable thermostat. Set the thermostat to regulate the temperature when you are sleeping or away from home.

8. Close Air Vents – If you have a guest room or bathroom, close the air vents in those rooms unless you have guests staying. Don't eat in the formal dining room often? Close the air vents and save money on heating unused rooms.
9. Wrap Your Hot Water Heater – If you have an electric hot water heater, you can wrap it with a blanket specifically made for it yourself. You can find one at a local home improvement store. Just insulating your hot water heater can reduce heat loss by 25% percent or more. While you're at it, turn down the temperature on the heater by 10 degrees – believe me, you won't notice anywhere but on your heating bill!
10. Schedule an Energy Audit – Many city municipalities now offer home energy audits, some for free. It will help to identify more ways to save energy like sealing leaks, replacing energy guzzling appliances or installing low flow showerheads. Call your utility company for more information.

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