

Everyday Tips to Save Energy

These no-cost or low-cost tips are easy ways to save energy and money.

- Replace incandescent bulbs with compact fluorescents.
- Air-dry dishes instead of using your dishwasher's drying cycle.
- Use a microwave oven instead of a conventional electric range or oven.
- Turn off your computer and monitor when not in use.
- Plug home electronics, such as TVs and VCRs, into power strips and turn power strips off when equipment is not in use.
- Lower the thermostat on your hot water heater; 115° is comfortable for most uses.
- Take showers instead of baths to reduce hot water use.
- Wash only full loads of dishes and clothes.

Landscape for Energy Efficiency

Landscaping is a natural and beautiful way to keep your home more comfortable and reduce energy bills.

- Plant trees or shrubs to shade air conditioning units, but not block the airflow. A unit operating in the shade uses less electricity.
- Grown on trellises, vines such as ivy or grapevines can shade windows or the whole side of a house.
- Avoid landscaping with lots of unshaded rock, cement, or asphalt on the south or west sides because it increases the temperature around the house and radiates heat to the house after the sun has set.
- Find more tips at the Energy Savers [landscaping page](#).



Long-Term Savings Tip — Trees provide shading and cooling. Just three trees, properly placed around a house, can save between \$100 and \$250 annually in cooling and heating costs. Daytime air temperatures can be 3° to 6° cooler in tree-shaded neighborhoods.

Shade Your Windows

During summer, sunny windows can make your air conditioner work two to three times harder.

- Install white window shades, drapes, or blinds to reflect heat away from the house.
- Close curtains on south- and west-facing windows during the day.
- Install awnings on south-facing windows. Because of the angle of the sun, trees, a trellis, or a fence will best shade west-facing windows.
- Apply sun-control or other reflective films on south-facing windows.
- Read more at the Energy Savers [windows page](#).



Long-Term Savings Tip — If you want to replace your windows, consider the new double-pane windows with spectrally selective coatings. Look for the ENERGY STAR®.

Weatherize

Air leaks can waste energy dollars year-round.

- Caulking and weatherstripping will keep cool air in during the summer.
- If you see holes or separated joints in your ducts, hire a professional to repair them.
- Add insulation around air conditioning ducts when they are located in unconditioned spaces such as attics, crawl spaces, and garages.
- Check to see that your fireplace damper is tightly closed.
- Visit the Energy Savers [insulation and weatherization page](#) for more information.



Long-Term Savings Tip — Invest in insulation. Visit www.eren.doe.gov/buildings/wthr_insulating.html for R-values specific to your home.