

Energy Saving tips

Heating and cooling account for about 56% of the energy use in a typical U.S. home, making it the largest energy expense for most homes. A wide variety of technologies are available for heating and cooling your home, and they achieve a wide range of efficiencies in converting their energy sources into useful heat or cool air for your home.

When looking for ways to save energy in your home, be sure to think about not only improving your existing heating and cooling system, but also consider the energy efficiency of the supporting equipment and the possibility of either adding supplementary sources of heating or cooling or simply replacing your system altogether.

- Your contractor should be able to give you energy fact sheets for different types, models, and designs to help you compare energy usage. For furnaces, look for high Annual Fuel Utilization Efficiency (AFUE) ratings. The national minimum is 78% AFUE, but there are [ENERGY STAR®](#) models on the market that exceed 90% AFUE.
- Place heat-resistant radiator reflectors between exterior walls and the radiators.
- Bleed trapped air from hot-water radiators once or twice a season; if in doubt about how to perform this task, call a professional.
- Clean warm-air registers, baseboard heaters, and radiators as needed; make sure they're not blocked by furniture, carpeting, or drapes.
- Clean or replace filters on furnaces once a month or as needed.
- Use fans during the summer to create a wind chill effect that will make your home more comfortable. If you use air conditioning, a ceiling fan will allow you to raise the thermostat setting about 4°F with no reduction in comfort.
- Turn off kitchen, bath, and other ventilating fans within 20 minutes after you are done cooking or bathing to retain heated air.
- Install a programmable thermostat that can adjust the temperature according to your schedule.
- [ENERGY STAR®](#) labeled products can cut your energy bills by up to 30 percent. Find retailers near you at Energystar.gov when you're ready to replace your heating and cooling systems - as well as appliances, lighting, windows, office equipment, and home electronics.
- Insulate your hot water heater and hot water pipes to prevent heat loss.
- Insulate heating ducts in unheated areas such as attics and crawlspaces and keep them in good repair to prevent heat loss of up to 60 percent at the registers.
- Heating can account for almost half of the average family's winter energy bill. Make sure your furnace or heat pump receives professional maintenance each year. Look for the [ENERGY STAR®](#) label when replacing your system.
- Explore ways to [save energy](#) and improve the environment by taking simple steps around your home.