



Why save energy?

The typical U.S. family spends about \$1,900 a year on home utility bills?

Energy-efficient improvements not only make your home more comfortable, they can yield long-term financial rewards.

7 energy conservation tips from 1Sky and Grist Magazine

There is a lot you can do to save energy and money at home. An energy efficient home can help you save money and fight global warming.

From Grist.org: There are easy ways you can cut your energy use at home and help fight global warming. Follow one hint a day and you're on your way in a week.

Day 1: Unplug Gadgets

Electronic equipment and appliances suck up energy even when they're turned off -- they've actually earned the nickname "vampires." **Americans waste \$1 billion a year** powering items like TVs and DVD players while they're turned off. So unplug your TV, stereo, computer, microwave, and other equipment when you're not using them -- or plug a bunch of things into a power strip that you keep turned off unless you're using one of the items. And make sure to unplug your cell-phone and MP3 chargers as soon as the devices are powered up.

Day 2: Wash Clothes Efficiently

When it comes to laundry, there's lots of room for savings. Ninety percent of the energy used in clothes washing goes to heat the water, so washing in cold is a simple way to cut energy use drastically. **Wash only full loads.** When it comes time to dry, make sure to check the lint screen before every load and clean it afterward. And if you want to take efficiency a step further, hang some or all items and let them air-dry instead of running them through the dryer.

Day 3: Turn Down the Heat

Here's a quick, easy solution that will save you money and save energy: turn down your thermostat. Lowering your heat in winter by just 2 degrees can cut your energy bill by 10 percent. Get an automatic or programmable thermostat to make it easy to save on heating; set it to turn down when you're away from home or sleeping, and to turn back up half an hour before you'll be up and about.

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Day 4: Start Small at Home

Pick one small project you can do around the house to cut energy use. **Here are a few ideas:** Replace regular light bulbs with compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs use about one-fifth as much energy as regular bulbs, and last about 12 times longer). Install a low-flow showerhead, which will save on water heating and use. Lower the temperature of your water heater to 120 degrees, and insulate the tank. If you're feeling ambitious, undertake a home energy audit to identify projects for the future.

Day 5: Mind Your Fridge

Keep your refrigerator in the right place: away from the stove or sunny windows. **And remember to check its thermostat.** Optimum temperatures for victual safety and energy efficiency are between 36 and 38 degrees Fahrenheit for the main compartment and between 0 and 5 degrees Fahrenheit for the freezer. Freezer temps even five degrees colder than that can increase energy consumption by nearly 20 percent.

Day 6: Green Your Yard Work

Tool around in the yard without products made from vinyl. Sure, you won't be licking your rake, but the manufacture of its leaf-grabbing PVC fingers spews gunk like cancer-causing dioxins into the air. And once it's raked its last leaf, it releases more chemicals when incinerated (since PVC ain't easily recyclable). Instead, get a quality, long-lasting garden buddy made from aluminum or steel. The hose knows this problem too, but rubber alternatives to PVC hoses will last longer, and soaker hoses are even made out of recycled material.

Day 7: Green Your Washing Up

There are two good ways to wash the dishes. The first is via full loads of an Energy Star (aka water-and-energy saving) dishwasher. The other is using a bucket or a stopped-up sink, with minimal water usage and an aerated faucet. Dishwashers have been proven, again and again, to be more efficient than the typical hand-washer. And whichever method you choose, you will need to do some conservative pre-washing. Pre-rinse your dishes in one of two ways: Either keep a rubber spatula at the sink and squeegee off each dish, or keep a little bowl of water handy and sponge off each dish.

Simple household changes can save you money and help save the environment

Learn More

More tips on how to green your home at www.grist.org/kingdom/living-green

Tell us how you're doing on your energy savings. Go to www.1sky.org/energysavings and fill in your savings.

1Sky is a collaborative national campaign for bold climate policy. 1Sky's allies include 425 organizations from all sectors of society and more than 164,000 committed climate advocates who support policies in line with the 1Sky policy platform. 1Sky has organizers in 18 states, and has recruited thousands of volunteer Climate Precinct Captains covering Congressional districts coast-to-coast.



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