

Checklist for Saving Energy



saving energy

Top uses of energy in the home are typically:

- heating and cooling
- water heating
- refrigerator and appliances
- lighting
- clothes washer and dryer

Whether you're a renter, landlord, or homeowner, there's a wide range of actions that you can take to reduce energy use. Pick from the tips below.

Free and Easy Ways to Save Energy (and Money)

- Turn down the thermostat on your water heater to 120 degrees, or 140 if you use a dishwasher.
- Minimizing heating and air conditioning is the single most effective way to save energy in the home. Simple practices like putting on a sweater when cold and opening a window when warm have an impact.
- Turn up the thermostats on your refrigerator and freezer.
- Wait until you have a full load before running the dishwasher. Open the door to air dry your dishes and skip the heated drying cycle.
- Wash your clothes in cold whenever possible, make sure it's a full load, and hang them up to dry on a clothesline or drying rack.
- Unplug appliances when not in use. Televisions, printers, and other appliances draw a surprising amount of electricity even when they're switched

off. Use a power strip to switch them all off at once.

- You save energy when you save water. A shorter shower makes a big difference. Turning off the kitchen tap in between dishloads or the bathroom tap while brushing your teeth will add up.
- Use a toaster oven or stovetop to reheat rather than the oven. If you are a microwave user you'll save quite a bit of energy over a regular oven.

Small Investments, Big Results

- Still have incandescent light bulbs? Replace them with compact fluorescent bulbs to use 75% less electricity for lighting. Use dimmer switches and timers as well.
- Pick up an insulating blanket for your hot water heater at the hardware store.
- Caulk and weather-strip leaks around doors and windows.
- Purchase a programmable thermostat to make sure the setting goes down overnight and when people are away.
- Save water and energy by using drought tolerant plants in your yard. Keep a mulch cover on the ground to prevent water from evaporating quickly.
- Save more water by installing low-flow shower heads and faucet aerators.
- Change the air filter on your heater every three months to keep it running efficiently. Clean the coils and filter on your refrigerator as well.

factsheet

Checklist for Saving Energy (continued)

Bigger Investments, More Energy Savings

- ❑ Replace old appliances with energy-efficient models, (see energystar.gov). A new refrigerator usually makes the biggest difference especially if yours is 10 years old or more. If you're still using an old CRT computer monitor or television, replace it with an LCD version – they're three times as energy-efficient. Replacing a conventional water heater with an on-demand unit can offer remarkable savings, too. Rebates are often available from power companies such as PG&E.
- ❑ Use ceiling fans instead of turning on air conditioning.
- ❑ Seal up the air leaks in your house—around doors, pipe cut-outs, lighting cut-outs, inside cupboards, and all the cracks and holes where cold or hot air may come in.
- ❑ Insulate. Adding attic insulation and blowing in wall insulation dramatically reduces energy consumption for heating and cooling. Wrapping heater ducts and water pipes contributes, too.
- ❑ Leaky windows? Replacing them with energy-efficient models is expensive, but the energy savings repay your investment in the long run.
- ❑ Install greywater, rainwater, and other water conservation methods and dramatically lower the amount of water used for your landscaping.

Resources

- The EnergyStar website (www.energystar.gov) provides energy efficiency ratings for appliances by model, and provides vendor listings to help you locate a local store. Very helpful when comparing appliances.
- Build It Green has an Ask an Expert service for information on green materials, energy efficiency, and more for your construction or renovation project, www.builditgreen.org
- The Building Education Center, in Berkeley, provides classes on home energy efficiency, remodeling, and solar power: (510) 525-7610, www.bldgeductr.org
- The Pacific Energy Center provides builders and individuals with classes and advanced information on energy-efficient building design, lighting, HVAC, and more: (415) 973-2277, www.pge.com/pec
- The American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy (ACEEE) and their [Consumer Guide to Home Energy Savings](#) is a great resource, www.aceee.org.
- PG&E's Smart Energy Line has on-call energy efficiency advisors who can answer questions about window replacement, appliance rebates, and programs for low-income residents for free or reduced-cost weatherization and other services: (800) 933-9555. Their website has an energy calculator and other energy saving resources: www.pge.com
- The Ecology Center's Info Desk and library has many resources to share and our online EcoDirectory lists local stores, products, vendors, and builders to help with your small and large projects. Visit the Ecology Center, call, or email.