

Beat the Heat: ENERGY STAR® Offers Tips to Keep Cool, Save Energy and Help the Environment



Keep cool, save energy and save money by following these simple recommendations from the ENERGY STAR program at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. By using energy more efficiently in your home, you do the right thing for the environment by helping prevent air pollution from power plants. For complete information on keeping your home comfortable year-round, get the ENERGY STAR Guide to Energy-Efficient Cooling and Heating at www.energystar.gov/hvacguide or 1-888-STAR-YES (1-888-782-7937).

- 1 Save while you're away** – Programmable thermostats that have earned the ENERGY STAR save you energy and money while you're asleep or away, without sacrificing comfort when you're home. By automatically adjusting among four different temperature settings, you can save up to \$100 per year on energy costs.
- 2 Keep cool and save with your ceiling fan** – Ceiling fans help keep you cool and allow you to adjust your thermostat for more energy savings. ENERGY STAR qualified ceiling fans have optimized fan blades and motors; those with qualified light kits are 50 percent more energy efficient than standard models. Make sure to turn your fan off when you leave the room, though. A ceiling fan doesn't cool a room—it only cools you, through a wind-chill effect against your skin.
- 3 Find problems before they occur** – If your central air system needs frequent repairs, or your energy bills are significantly increasing, your equipment could be growing old and less efficient. EPA recommends an annual tune-up from a certified technician. Dirt and neglect are the #1 causes of system failure.
- 4 Out with the old, in with the new** – It may be time for a more energy-efficient replacement if your air conditioning equipment is more than 10 years old. ENERGY STAR qualified air conditioners and heat pumps offer significant long-term energy savings compared with 10-year-old units and use at least 20 percent less energy than new standard models.
- 5 Make a smart purchase** – When buying a new air conditioner, make sure it is properly sized and installed – bigger is not always better. Units with too large a capacity will cost you more and may decrease your home's comfort. Hire a qualified, licensed contractor who uses Manual J or an equivalent size-calculation tool.
- 6 Consult a professional** – Find an experienced, licensed contractor before embarking on any heating or cooling overhaul. Visit www.natex.org to find a contractor whose technicians are certified by NATE (North American Technician Excellence), the leading industry-supported testing and certification program.
- 7 Save energy, one room at a time** – If your room air conditioner is getting old and needs replacing, consider purchasing an ENERGY STAR qualified model – it will be at least 10 percent more energy-efficient. Room air conditioners offer you the opportunity to cool your home in “zones.” If there are rooms that do not need to remain cool consistently, keep the doors closed and the air conditioner off to save more energy.
- 8 Take advantage of special offers** – Many contractors, utility companies, retailers and manufacturers offer rebates or incentives toward the purchase of energy-efficient products. Visit www.energystar.gov to find special offers available across the nation. Watch local advertisements and utility bill stuffers for more options.
- 9 Find and seal air leaks** – Hidden gaps and cracks in a home can add up to as much airflow as an open window and can cause your cooling system to work harder. Home Sealing your home “envelope” – the outer walls, ceiling, windows and floors -- can save up to 10 percent in energy costs. Start by sealing air leaks and adding insulation, and be sure to pay special attention to your attic and basement.
- 10 Tighten your ducts** – It is common to find gaps between duct joints in a home, whether new or old. Have your ducts inspected, sealed and insulated to increase indoor air quality, maximize the movement of cooled air to all rooms of the home, and prevent loss of cooled air to areas between walls, ceilings and floors. A typical homeowner could save up to 10 percent on energy bills each year by having his or her ducts sealed.

Products that earn the ENERGY STAR prevent greenhouse gas emissions by meeting strict energy efficiency guidelines set by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Department of Energy.
www.energystar.gov



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