



Consumer Federation of America



It's Energy Efficiency Day 2020!

**Want to lower your home energy bills and be more environmentally friendly?
Here are 10 simple ways to reduce energy waste, at home and at work:**

1. Heat and Cool Efficiently

Don't waste money heating or cooling an empty home. Install a programmable thermostat and in colder weather schedule your home's heat to lower when you are away or asleep, and increase when you are returning home or waking-up. In warm weather, schedule the thermostat to raise the temperature when you are away or asleep, and lower it at other times.

Tip: Follow the U.S. Department of Energy [recommended temperatures](#) and be energy-efficient all year.

2. Maintain Your HVAC (Heating and Cooling) System

Make sure to [clean or change your furnace filters regularly](#). A dirty furnace filter will slow down air flow, making the system work harder to keep you warm (or cool) and costing you more money.

Tip: Consider getting a winter tune-up. Just as a tune-up for your car can improve your gas mileage, a semi-annual or yearly tune-up of your heating and cooling system can be vital to improve efficiency, saving you money and making your home more comfortable.

3. Seal Those Leaks

On average, heating and cooling account for almost half of a home's energy consumption. In fact, all the little leaks can be equivalent to leaving open a 3-foot-by-3-foot window.

Tip: Take simple steps like caulking windows, sealing leaks around chimneys and recessed lighting, and sliding draft guards under your doors to save up to 20% on heating costs.

4. Wash Your Clothes Efficiently

A washing machine spends 90% of its energy to heat water. There are a number of ways to use it efficiently.

Tip: Consider using cold water instead. In addition, try to run full loads as much as possible, because the machine uses roughly the same amount of energy regardless of the load size. Also, consider air-drying.

5. Clean Your Dishes Efficiently

Dishwashers certainly make life easier—and on top of that, you can [use your dishwasher](#) efficiently to save energy dollars.

Tip: Avoid the “rinse hold” cycle and skip heated drying – simply open the door at the end of the washing cycle and let the dishes air dry!

6. Turn the Electronics Off

It’s all too easy to forget and leave electronics plugged in that are not in use.

Tip: Turn off unnecessary/idle lights, appliances and electronics. A power strip can help turn off multiple items at once and avoid ‘phantom loads’. (Sometimes the simplest things are really effective!)

7. Make the switch to LEDs

LED light bulbs are a great example of how innovation and technology can make your life easier. They last up to 25 times longer and consume up to 90 percent less electricity than incandescent bulbs. And it’s great not having to change bulbs as often. You pay a little more up-front, but shop around, prices are dropping.

Tip: By [switching five](#) of your home’s most frequently used bulbs with ENERGY STAR® certified LEDs, you can save \$75 on energy costs annually. To match the soft, yellow-white light of your old bulbs, choose LEDs between 2700-3000 kelvin. Bulbs with a cooler or bluish light will be between 4000-6500 kelvin.

8. Winter Tip: Invite the Sun In

Don’t forget to take advantage of the sun during the cooler shorter days.

Tip: Open curtains/shade on your west-and south-facing windows during the day to allow sunlight to naturally heat your home, and save [2%-12%](#).

9. Summer Tip: Close Blinds and Shades

Excess, warm summer sunlight makes it harder to keep your home cool and comfortable.

Tip: During the day, keep your [blinds and shades](#) closed to prevent warm air from building up in your home.

10. Look for the ENERGY STAR® Label

Consider this: Clothes washers and dryers that have earned the ENERGY STAR® label provide superior energy efficiency by incorporating advanced features that deliver on performance while being gentler on your clothes. You can save \$380 over the lifetime of an ENERGY STAR® certified clothes washer. They use 25% less energy and approximately 33% less water than standard models. Learn more at: www.energystar.gov.

Tip: If you are undertaking a major home remodel or new build, consider installing ENERGY STAR® qualified HVAC equipment and appliances.