



Do-it-Yourself Energy Checklist for Renters

Fact Sheet 10.622

Consumer Series | Energy

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Although renters may not have as many options for energy savings as homeowners, there are some simple measures that you can take to cut your energy use and costs. The priority is to reduce energy costs quickly and inexpensively. Below are eight ways to save energy in your rental home.

Adjust the Thermostat

- In winter, keep the thermostat set around 68 degrees F while at home during the day, and 60 degrees F at night.
- In summer, set the thermostat around 78 degrees F. Also, you might use room or ceiling fans to help you be more comfortable at higher temperatures.
- For most heating and cooling systems, if you will be away from your home for an extended period of time set the temperature even higher in summer and lower in winter. It does not take long to heat or cool your home back to your preferred temperature.
- If your home does not have a programmable thermostat, talk to your landlord about installing one. A programmable thermostat allows you to program different temperatures at different times of the day, giving you greater control over energy use and comfort.
- Make sure heating registers are not blocked or closed (as closed registers add pressure to ducts and can make them leak).

Regularly Change Filters

- Ask your landlord to inspect the furnace or air conditioning units and to clean or replace the air filters at least every three months.

Manage Windows

- During the winter, keep window shades, blinds, or curtains open during the day to let in sunlight, and close them in the evening to keep the heat in.
- During the summer, use shades, blinds,

or curtains on windows during the day to prevent sunlight from heating your home. Lightly colored materials are most effective.

- When it is hot outside, keep windows closed during the day to prevent outside air from entering into your home. Open windows on cool summer nights.
- Consider installing plastic film window kits over single pane windows in the winter.

Light Efficiently

- Turn off lights when not in use.
- Use dimmer switches as appropriate.
- Use task lighting whenever possible instead of lighting an entire room.
- Install LED lamps.
- String LED lights during the holidays.

Weatherize

- Weatherizing is an inexpensive way to lower your energy bills. Talk to your landlord about these simple measures, which include weatherstripping and caulking cracks around doors and windows. Get written consent from your landlord before doing any weatherization yourself.
- Close your fireplace damper and make sure the opening is sealed when the fireplace is not being used.

Manage the Water Heater and Leaky Faucets

- If you have access to the water heater, turn the temperature setting down to 120 degrees F. Consider measuring the temperature at the faucet closest to the water heater to get an accurate reading of your water heater temperature.
- Have your landlord fix any leaky faucets. Leaky hot water faucets are especially wasteful and costly.



Quick Facts

Just because you rent, do not think that you are helpless in reducing your home energy costs.

Simple things that can be done to save energy include: manage windows, use LED lamps, lower the water heater temperature, select an efficient room air conditioner, and buy Energy Star electronics.

Talk to your landlord about installing a programmable thermostat, replacing filters, and weatherization.

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Select an Efficient Room Air Conditioner

- If your lease does not provide for air conditioning but you are allowed to add your own window unit air conditioner, select an Energy Star model that is correctly sized for your needs.

Buy Efficient Electronics & Appliances and Use Them Wisely

- When purchasing a TV, computer, or other electronic device, look for the Energy Star logo to find a model that uses less energy, which can save you money in the long run.
- Turn electronics off when not in use.
- Maintain your refrigerator at 35-40 degrees F and freezer at 0-5 degrees F.
- Maintain a stand alone freezer at 0 F.
- Keep your refrigerator door closed whenever possible.
- Use microwave ovens for cooking small meals.
- Wash clothes in cold water, except for special loads such as diapers

and stained clothes, and use the appropriate water setting for the load.

- If you have a newer dishwasher, skip pre-rinsing the dishes.
- Run the dishwasher only with a full load.
- Air dry dishes in your dishwasher.
- Regularly clean the lint filter on your dryer and inspect the dryer vent to make sure it is not blocked.
- Do not overload your dryer as it takes clothes longer to dry.
- Shut down home computers or put them on sleep mode when not in use.
- Plug small electronics into a power strip so you can turn them off at the same time.