



Version 1.0, Feb 2008

Ideas for Saving Energy in Homes and Offices

(From 'Better Places, Better Planet' from the Community Development Foundation)

These actions will save you energy and money. Most of them cost very little.

1. Stop the drafts! Spaces around windows and doors (including letter boxes) let cold air in and warm air out. Get draft-excluders from d-i-y stores (or make them).
2. Use low-energy light bulbs. These can save you up to £10 a year and they last up to nine years. Community centres may save hundreds of pounds a year this way.
3. Close the curtains at night (and open them wide during the day to get as much heat from the sun as possible).
4. Check the thermostats for hot water and central heating. There's no need to have hot water above 60C – any higher and you may get scalded, and will need to add cold water to cool down the water you've just paid to heat. Don't heat rooms to more than 21C.
5. Stop using 'stand-by'! People in the UK spend hundreds of millions of pounds every year on energy (and produce unnecessary CO₂) because they leave appliances on stand-by. Turn off computers, TVs, DVDs, set-top boxes etc. Similarly many phone chargers draw power even when they are not in use so unplug them.
6. Put tinfoil sheets or 'radiator reflectors' behind your radiators to reflect the heat back into your rooms. 35% of heat goes straight out through uninsulated walls. And don't cover radiators with curtains or furniture. Shelves above the radiation will help push hot air into the room.
7. Think long-term as well. Install the recommended 270mm of insulation in your loft if you have one (this may pay for itself in a year). If you have a hot water tank make sure it has an 80mm insulating jacket – this can pay for itself in six months. Fit double glazing where you can afford it. You can get light plastic double glazing sheets from d-i-y stores. If you have a cavity wall for your house then insulating here is a very good investment.
8. Think! Don't fill kettles too full, cook with pans covered, switch unnecessary lights off, and don't use the washing machine until you have a full load. Every little helps you save money!