



FOR BOOSTING YOUR HOME'S ENERGY EFFICIENCY

As temperatures rise during the dog days of summer, maintaining a cool living space becomes a high priority. But fighting the heat just by keeping the air conditioner running will result in high energy usage and even higher utility bills.

There are several simple strategies you can implement to significantly reduce your home's temperature and energy consumption. Here's a checklist to get you started.

✓ OPTIMIZE YOUR AIR CONDITIONING

Air conditioners can be a real lifeline when the summer heat is beating down on you—but they can also be a significant energy drain. Here are a few ways to make the most of your usage:

- Set your thermostat to a reasonable temperature that won't make your home cooler than needed.
- If you have a programmable thermostat, remember to pre-set the temperature according to your schedule. For example, if you're gone for work during the day, have the air conditioner preprogrammed to turn off when you leave and resume few minutes before returning home.
- Clean or replace your air filters to ensure optimal airflow and energy efficiency.
- Use ceiling fans in conjunction with your air conditioner to circulate cool air. This will allow you to raise the thermostat a few degrees without sacrificing comfort.

✓ CHECK FOR AIR LEAKS

Air leaks around windows, doors, and other openings often results in warm air infiltrating your home while cool air escapes. Try these tips if your windows or doors aren't properly sealed:

- Apply weatherstripping to seal gaps around windows and doors.
- Use caulk or foam sealant to fill any cracks or holes in walls.
- Add insulation to your walls, attic, and crawl space to reduce heat transfer.

✓ MINIMIZE EXCESS HEAT GENERATION

Appliances, electronics, and direct sunlight can all make the air inside of your living space warmer than it needs to be. Here are some ways to minimize the excess heat:

- Restrict the use of heat-generating appliances, such as ovens, dryers, and dishwashers to the cooler morning or evening hours.
- Keep the blinds drawn during the hottest times of day.
- Unplug electronics that aren't in use.
- Install reflective film on east- and west-facing windows.

✓ TAKE ADVANTAGE OF NATURAL VENTILATION

Natural ventilation can fill your home with fresh air that helps keep temperatures manageable. Try implementing the following techniques to make the most of breezy days and cool nights:

- Strategically open windows during the times of day when the outdoor temperature is lowest.
- Add vents or louvers to the outside of your residence to facilitate additional airflow.
- Consider installing an awning on the side of your home. This will provide extra indoor shade (thus reducing the need for artificial ventilation) while also directing outdoor wind inward to your living space.
- Use a ceiling fan to boost the effectiveness of natural ventilation.

✓ UPGRADE YOUR LIGHTING

Using incandescent lightbulbs indoors can produce a significant amount of heat while simultaneously consuming more energy. Here are some more energy-efficient alternatives:

- Replace traditional incandescent bulbs with energy-saving LED or CFL bulbs.
- Make the most of natural lighting during the day by opening curtains and blinds.
- Install motion sensors or timers to automatically turn off lights in unoccupied rooms.

BEAT THE HEAT

The strategies listed above can help you create a comfortable living space while saving on energy consumption and utility bills.

So consider embracing these energy-saving practices this summer to make a positive impact on your wallet!

Minos, Scott. "Stay Cool in the Dog Days of Summer." *U.S. Department of Energy*, 2022

"12 Expert Tips to Boost A/C Efficiency." *Fetch-a-tech*, 2023

"Air Sealing Your Home." *U.S. Department of Energy*, 2021

"The Benefits of Natural Ventilation: Improved Indoor Air Quality, Cost Savings, and Sustainability." *Ugreen*, 2023

"Lighting Choices to Save You Money." *U.S. Department of Energy*, 2021

"How Natural Light Can Help You Become More Energy Efficient." *Star Energy Partners*, 2021

Brown, Sasha. "15 Ways to Reduce Heat Inside Your Home Without Using Electricity." *LifeHack*, 2016