



ENERGY

Energy Checklist for Renters

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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 sun exposure, use compact fluorescent 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.

As a renter, you have fewer options for energy savings than homeowners. However, 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 high efficiency 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.

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 Exposure to the Sun

- 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.

Use Compact Fluorescent Lamps

- Use Energy Star qualified lighting such as compact fluorescent lamps (CFLs) instead of incandescent light bulbs in frequently-used light fixtures. While CFLs cost more than incandescent bulbs, they last much longer and consume less energy.

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- When you move, take your CFLs with you, replacing them with the incandescent bulbs that you initially removed from the fixtures.

- Turn off lights when not in use.

Weatherize

- Weatherizing is an inexpensive way to lower your energy bills. Talk to your landlord about these simple measures, which include weather stripping and caulking cracks around doors and windows. Get written consent from your landlord before doing any weatherization yourself.

Manage the Water Heater and Leaky Faucets

- If you have access to the water heater, turn the temperature setting down to normal (120 degrees F). If the dishwasher does not have a booster heater, set the water heater at 140 degrees F.

- Turn down your water heater if you will be away for an extended period of time.

- Have your landlord fix any leaky faucets. Leaky hot water faucets are especially wasteful and costly.

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 a Energy Star model that is correctly sized for your needs.

- If practical, put the unit in a window that faces north.

Buy Energy Star Home Electronics

- When purchasing a TV, CD player, DVD player, or computer 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.

References

Amann, J.T., Wilson, A., & Ackerly, K. (2007). *Consumer guide to home energy savings*. Gabriola Island, Canada: New Society Publishers.

Consumer Reports. (2006). *Reducing energy costs*. Washington, DC: Consumers Union.

Energy Star, www.energystar.gov

U.S. Department of Energy, www.energy.gov/energyefficiency/buildings.htm

Xcel, www.xcelenergy.com/residential/saveenergy_money

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