

Saving Energy in the Home

Now that the days are starting to get cooler and darker, our use of electricity and other fuels will increase. We'll be heating our homes, turning on more lights and instead of salads we will be cooking more food. It is important not to waste energy. It is very expensive to produce and in many cases it comes from sources that cannot be renewed. Producing energy can also have an impact on our environment, whether it is burning coal or oil to create electricity or burning wood in the fire. Here are some energy saving tips that will help you conserve energy in your home.

1. Use low energy lighting

Low energy light bulbs (Compact Fluorescent Lights) use 80% less electricity than ordinary bulbs and last 8 times as long.



2. Switch off appliances

Switch off appliances, such as the TV or stereo, when you are not using them. A television in standby mode can use up to half the electricity as when it is switched on.



3. Turn off the lights

When you leave a room and don't plan on returning soon, switch off the light. Save the electricity for when you are IN the room.



4. Pull the curtains at night

Heat escapes through windows so as soon as it gets dark outside, pull the curtains. It also helps if the curtains have a heavy lining.



5. Turn down the thermostat

Often the heater or heating is set higher than you need it in certain in rooms, e.g. those that are not used often. Try turning it down a notch or two and you might be surprised to find the room is still warm enough.



6. Be more energy-efficient when cooking or using appliances

If you need to make a cup of tea, only boil the minimum amount rather than a full kettle. Use the toaster instead of the grill. The grill uses a lot more energy. Bake more than one thing at a time in the oven. Microwave ovens are energy efficient for thawing, reheating and cook food.



7. Cut Down on your Hot Water Use

It takes a lot of energy to heat water. Do you need the water hot all day? Take a shower instead of a bath (using less energy and less water!). Use the "economy" programme on the washing machine when you help out with the washing and even use a "cool wash" for some fabrics.



Bigger Jobs!

Insulate your Attic and Hot Water Tank

It's worth asking your parents if the attic is insulated. If it is insulated then that extra insulation could pay for itself within 2 years. Up to one-third of heat lost in the home goes through the roof.

Wrap up the Hot Water Tank

Wrap the hot water tank in insulation, as well as the hot water pipes. Insulating them keeps the water inside hotter for longer and it means you use less energy by not continuously heating the water.

Seal the Draughts

Up to 15% of heat can escape through external doors and windows, if they aren't fitted properly. Seal them with draught-excluding tape, brush-like strips or help make a snake for the bottom of the door. This is a really inexpensive way of saving energy.

Energy-efficient appliances

You might not be using your own money to buy the next washing machine or fridge but you can help your parents make an informed decision. Check out the energy ratings for appliances. The nearer to "A" the more energy efficient the appliance is. These appliances may be more expensive but your parents will save this money in the long-run because these appliance will use less electricity and may also be more efficient in other ways e.g. using less water etc..



Double-glazing

Double-glazed windows cut down on the amount of heat lost through them and they also reduce condensation and noise.