

Energy Saving Tips

EnergieHuis Slim Wonen



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smart savings and free information



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Energy saving tips for heating

1. Wear a warm jumper, turn the heating down

If you lower your thermostat by just 1 degree, you can save about 7% on your yearly gas bill. You don't need to be cold – wear a jumper, warm socks, and use a blanket instead. In a well-insulated home, heating usually uses around 5 m³ of gas per day in winter, but in older or larger houses, it can be much more.

2. Turn your boiler temperature down

Most boilers have two temperature settings – one for heating water (for radiators or floor heating) and one for tap water. The heating water is often set at 80°C, but 60°C is enough for most homes. This makes your boiler more efficient and saves about 8% on gas. You can easily set the temperature yourself. Visit the website zetmop60.nl for instructions. Make sure that the temperature for tap water is not lower than 60 degrees to prevent bacteria.

3. Don't let your home get too cold

If your home is not well insulated, prevent it from cooling down too much inside. Do not set the heating temperature too low. The savings do not outweigh the energy it takes to bring your home back up to temperature. This is certainly true for underfloor heating; if the floor cools down too much, it will take a long time for the temperature to return to a comfortable level.

4. Turn down the thermostat at night

Many people nowadays set their thermostat to 19 °C during the day and 15 °C at night. If you do this and have radiators, you can save up to 12% on your gas bill. Even when you leave the house, for example to go to work or do some shopping, it is advisable to set the thermostat to 15 °C. If you are going away for a longer period of time, the thermostat can be set even lower. It is not recommended to lower it below 10 °C to prevent excessive humidity and mould growth.

5. Ventilate your home

Ventilate your home for 5 minutes in the morning before turning on the heating. This replaces humid air with dry air. Dry air heats up faster, saving you heating costs.

6. Only heat the room you are in

Only heat the room you are in, whether it is your study, bedroom or kitchen. There is no need to heat the entire house if you are only using a small part of it. Divide your house into closed-off areas. Close all doors in the house, especially those leading to the attic or upper floors, to reduce heat loss. If doors are missing, consider installing heavy curtains.

7. Take advantage of the sun

When the sun is shining, open your curtains. The sun will warm up your home, and you will benefit from this until the evening. Don't forget to air your home at this time. Close your windows and curtains in time to keep the heat inside. Make sure the curtains do not cover the radiators.

8. Install curtains in front of doors

Consider hanging heavy curtains on both the front and back doors. Many doors in the Netherlands are poorly insulated, causing a significant amount of heat to be lost. Installing curtains can reduce heat loss.

9. Give radiators enough space

Make sure there is space around the radiators so that they can release their heat properly. Do not place sofas, long curtains or other objects in front of the radiators. If there is no other option, place the sofa at least 15 cm away from the radiator. Depending on the situation, this can save up to 50 m³ of gas.

10. Bleed the central heating boiler and radiators

Bleeding the central heating boiler makes it more energy-efficient. If there is air in the pipes, it makes it difficult or impossible for water to flow to and into the radiator. The heating then has to work harder to heat up, which increases gas usage. Bleed the radiators as well, as this will allow them to give off more heat.

11. Be economical in your use of electric heaters

Heating your entire home with electric heaters instead of a gas boiler costs almost three times as much. Use electric heaters as little as possible, as they are real energy eaters. If you still want to heat specific rooms, such as a cold study, consider other alternatives such as an (electric) heated blanket, a hot water bottle, or infrared panels as effective additional heating.

12. Do not use candles or tea lights under flower pots

A tea light produces 30 watts of heat. To heat a small room to 20 degrees when it is freezing outside, you need around 2500 watts of power. That is more than 80 tea lights. Not only is this a fire hazard, it is also bad for the indoor climate and your health. It is also expensive, as 80 tea lights can easily cost more than €4.



Energy saving tips for cooling

1. Use a fan instead of a portable air conditioner

It is best not to use portable air conditioners. They are not very efficient and consume a lot of energy. It is better to use a fan, as it consumes less power.

2. Close the curtains on sunny days

On hot and sunny days, close the curtains and blinds if you have them. This will keep the heat out. If you do not have blinds, you can also place a shade cloth or parasol in front of the window.

3. Open the windows when it cools down

During the day, it is best to keep the windows and doors closed. This will keep the heat out. Late at night, during the night or early in the morning, the temperature is lower. Open all the windows so that there is a good airflow and the cool air cools down your heated house.

4. Add more greenery

Plants against the façade and trees around the house keep your home cooler. The plants act as sun blinds and reduce the amount of sunlight that shines directly on your house. This makes it more pleasant inside. In addition, adding more greenery is also good for the environment.



Energy saving tips for showering

1. Take shorter showers

The average shower lasts about 7.4 minutes. If you shower for 7.4 minutes every day, this comes down to a gas consumption of about 90 m³ per person. If you shower for only 5 minutes instead of 7.4 minutes, this comes down to a saving of around 30 m³ of gas per person. With a household of 4 people, this means a total saving of 120 m³ of gas, which translates into a saving of no less than €160 per year at a gas price of €1.40.

2. Use a shower timer

Use a timer on your mobile phone, an egg timer or an hourglass to time your shower. Every reminder of the “5-minute rule” is a bonus. This is especially true for teenagers, who are known for their long showers. Of course, shorter showers are also allowed.

3. Shower less hot

In addition to showering for less time, you can easily save money by showering less hot. This saves a lot of gas and is also better for your skin. Pleasant shower water has a temperature of around 38 degrees. If you shower about 10 degrees colder, this saves about 20 m³ of gas per year for a 5-minute shower per person.

4. Wet shaving

For both men and women who wet shave, do not use hot running water for minutes on end, but use water from the kettle or turn off the tap in between.

5. Switch your central heating boiler to eco-mode

Some central heating boilers have an eco-mode for tap water in addition to the normal mode. Make sure you switch it on, as this saves an average of 10 m³ of gas per year. You will use more water because you have to wait a while for the water to reach the right temperature.

6. Take fewer baths

Taking a bath can be relaxing, but it often uses 4 to 5 times as much water and energy as taking a shower. So try to limit the number of baths you take.



Energy saving tips for fridge and freezer

1. Replace your old fridge and freezer

Consider replacing your old fridge and freezer with a newer model with a better energy rating. Newer models are often much more energy efficient and will help you save on your energy bill. An average fridge uses 160 kWh per year (at an electricity price of €0.40, that's €64 per year). Old refrigerators use significantly more, up to three times as much for a 25-year-old model. That costs €130 more per year.

2. Choose the right size fridge and freezer

When buying a refrigerator, it is wise to choose the right size for your needs. A refrigerator that is larger than you need consumes more energy than necessary. Therefore, carefully consider which size best suits your lifestyle and household.

3. Place your fridge and freezer in the right spot

Make sure that the fridge or freezer is not in a warm place and ideally not right next to a radiator, heater or cooker. Also, ensure that the appliance is not placed directly against the wall, but slightly away from it (at least 8 cm, standard 10 cm or even better slightly more). This allows the fridge or freezer to cool better and reduces electricity consumption. Make sure that the cooling grilles at the back are clean. For built-in appliances, check the ventilation grilles regularly to ensure they do not become blocked.

4. Level your fridge and freezer

Simply check to see if the refrigerator and freezer are level. If they are not, the door may not close properly. This costs extra electricity to cool.

5. Let food cool down

Made a pot of soup? If you want to store it in the fridge, let it cool down first. This goes for all hot products, of course. If you put them in the fridge while they are still hot, the fridge will have to work hard to lower the temperature. That costs you extra electricity!

6. Use the cold from frozen products

Are you taking something out of the freezer to defrost? Then put it in your fridge. There, it will act as a cooling element, making it easier for your fridge and using less electricity. And your product will still defrost.

7. Clean your fridge and freezer

Keep your refrigerator and freezer clean. Make sure you also clean the back of the fridge properly. Check the rubber seals on the doors. If they are dirty, the door will not close properly and the fridge will consume more energy.

8. Check the temperature of your fridge/freezer

Your fridge does not need to be ice-cold. According to the Nutrition Centre, a temperature of 4 °C is ideal for keeping products fresh for a long time. If you do not set the fridge any colder, you will save electricity. The temperature of your freezer should be no higher than -18 °C.

9. Keep your fridge full

A full fridge cools down more easily and quickly and stays at the right temperature. A handy and inexpensive way to keep your fridge full is to fill bottles with water and put them in your fridge. An added bonus is that you can always grab a cool glass of water.

10. Close the fridge and freezer door immediately

When you take something out of the fridge, don't leave the door open. This causes the temperature in the fridge to rise instantly, forcing it to work harder to cool down again. The same applies to the freezer, of course.

11. Organise your groceries smartly

Organise the contents and placement of your groceries in the fridge smartly. That way, you know where everything is and you can easily access the items you need most often. Then you only need to open the door briefly, which saves energy.

12. Defrost the freezer area

Many modern freezers now have a no-frost system. This means you no longer have to defrost them regularly. Cheaper or older freezers do not have this system and therefore need to be defrosted regularly to remove ice build-up. When ice forms on the elements, the freezer has to work harder to reach a low temperature, which costs extra energy.



Energy saving tips for washing dishes

1. Replace your old dishwasher

Think about replacing your old dishwasher with a newer model that has a better energy rating. Newer models are often much more energy efficient and can help you save on your energy bills. The standard dishwasher uses 250 kWh per year (at an electricity price of €0.40, that's about €100 per year). Old dishwashers consume much more, up to three times as much for a 25-year-old model. That costs €200 more per year.

2. Set your dishwasher to eco-mode

Your dishwasher has an eco-mode, which uses less electricity and water. And your dishes will still come out of the machine clean. The eco-mode may take a little longer, but you will save a lot of electricity.

3. Load your dishwasher well

Only turn on the dishwasher when it is full, or use the half-load programme if available. This way, you make optimal use of your dishwasher and minimise energy consumption.

4. Plan your dishwasher use

Modern dishwashers have a timer that you can set to run during off-peak electricity hours. This won't save you energy, but it will save you money. If you have solar panels, use the dishwasher as much as possible when the sun is shining.

5. No need to pre-rinse

It is usually not necessary to pre-rinse dishes by hand before putting them in the dishwasher. You can wipe away food scraps with a knife or paper towel before putting the dishes in the dishwasher. Not pre-rinsing saves a lot of water and energy (if you use hot water): about a third of both. If you still want to pre-rinse, use cold water.

6. Machine maintenance

Clean the dishwasher filters regularly. Food and grease can easily get stuck in them. It is also a good idea to run the dishwasher once a month on a high-temperature programme (a "pan wash") to remove grease. Or run a special machine cleaner in an empty dishwasher at a high temperature from time to time. You can buy this cleaner at any supermarket. It helps against grease, chalk deposits and unpleasant odours. It also keeps the dishwasher working properly throughout its lifetime and can prevent expensive repairs.

7. Washing dishes by hand

The biggest savings on washing dishes can be achieved by washing them by hand. Make sure you use water efficiently by not leaving the tap running all the time. Washing up by hand uses half as much energy as using a dishwasher.



Energy saving tips for cooking

1. A cooling oven heats your home

Many (gas) ovens need to cool down after use. You can help your oven by leaving it open for a while. In winter, this is a nice bonus, as the heat released helps to warm your home.

2. Turn off the extractor hood

Finished cooking? Turn off the extractor hood immediately. It also sucks away heat and expels it outside. In addition, the extractor hood itself uses electricity. So, no more food on the cooker? Turn off the extractor hood.

3. Use the right pans

Whether you're frying an egg or cooking a pan of green beans, make sure you use the right size pan. If you fry an egg in the largest frying pan, you're heating the whole pan when you're only using a small part of it. That's a waste of electricity or gas. The same applies to boiling water. Make sure you don't boil too much water. This will save you a lot of electricity or gas per year without you even noticing.

4. Turn off the cooker earlier

Your cooker or hob stays hot for quite a long time. Letting your meal simmer or keep warm on the residual heat saves you gas or electricity every day.

5. Boil water in the right amount and use a thermos flask

Whether you use an electric kettle or a whistling kettle to boil water for making tea, for example, do not use more water than you need. If you boil too much water, you will use unnecessary energy that you do not use but still have to pay for. If you have boiled too much water, pour the leftover water into a thermos flask. This will keep the water at the right temperature for longer than an electric kettle or whistling kettle.



Energy saving tips for washing and drying

1. Replace your old washing machine

Consider replacing your old washing machine with a newer model with a better energy label. Newer models are often much more energy efficient and help you save on your energy bill. The average washing machine uses 150 kWh per year (at an electricity price of €0.40, that's about €60 per year). Old models consume up to 2.5 times as much for a 10-year-old model and even older models sometimes use up to almost 4 times as much. That costs an average of €120 per year more for a 15-year-old machine.

2. Replace your old dryer

There are many different types of tumble dryers: vented dryers (with air venting to the outside, which are very inefficient and aren't manufactured anymore), condenser dryers (usually less efficient) and heat pump dryers. An average dryer uses about 200 kWh per year (at an electricity price of €0.40, that's about €80 per year). An average 10-year-old dryer uses as much as 2.5 times as much. That costs an average of €120 more per year.

3. Drying laundry? Spin well

If you use a tumble dryer, make sure the laundry is spun well in the washing machine. Of course, this also uses electricity, but you will save electricity overall by making the tumble dryer's job a little easier.

4. Only run a full washing machine

Always wash with a full drum. This means you don't have to wash as often, so you use less energy per kilo of laundry. Don't overfill your washing machine, though, or your laundry won't get clean.

5. Wash on the eco-mode

Use the eco mode on your washing machine. This will save electricity and water. Most washing machines have an eco-mode. The wash cycle takes longer but requires less hot water and so less energy. Every wash cycle on the eco-mode saves around €0.25 per cycle. On average, we do 190 - 220 wash cycles per year, so that saves around $200 \times €0.25 = €50$ per year.

6. Wash at a lower temperature

It is usually not needed to wash at high temperatures. The laundry will also get clean at lower temperatures. If you would wash at 40 degrees, try it at 30 degrees. Or wash the laundry you usually wash at 60 degrees at 40 degrees. That will save you a lot of energy while your laundry still gets clean. Washing at 30 degrees is 2 to 3 times cheaper than washing at 40 degrees. And 3 to 4 times cheaper than washing at 60 degrees.

7. Plan your washing and drying cycles

Modern washing machines and dryers have a timer that you can set to the time when a low electricity rate applies. This does not save you energy, but it does save you energy costs. If you have solar panels, use the washing machine and dryer as much as possible when the sun is shining.

8. Dry on the washing line or rotary dryer

If possible, try to dry your clothes or bedding on the washing line. All the work the sun can do for you saves you electricity. It's also good for the humidity in your home!



General saving tips

1. Be aware of energy guzzlers

Every home has appliances that consume a lot of energy, known as energy guzzlers. It is important to know which appliances these are so that you can use them more efficiently or replace them. Generally speaking, the older an appliance is, the less energy-efficient it is. Check the energy labels to see which appliances are worth replacing.

We often don't know exactly how much electricity each appliance uses. You can find this out by searching for the appliance's user manual on the internet using the brand and model number. If that doesn't work, you can buy (from around £15) or borrow an energy meter. This allows you to measure the energy use of each appliance over a certain period of time. This way, you can calculate how much the appliance uses on an annual basis. You can also get free information from the internet about power consumption at different times in the past, using so-called P4 consumption meters. By being conscious of how you use your appliances, you can save around 2 percent on your electricity use and 2 to 4 percent on your gas use, even if you continue to use the same appliances.

2. Be aware of standby power consumption

Be aware of standby power consumption and switch off appliances completely when you are not using them. Many electronic devices still consume energy even when they appear to be switched off. This so-called standby power consumption can add up over time, especially if you have a lot of appliances. For example, use a power strip with an on/off switch to turn off multiple devices at once. Or buy a smart socket that you can switch off with a timer. Some types can even be controlled remotely via an app.

3. Be mindful of unnecessary charging of devices

Do not charge electrical devices longer than necessary. Think, for example, of electric toothbrushes or smartphones, but also the battery of your electric bicycle. It is also safer, as some devices with lithium batteries can spontaneously catch fire if they are overcharged.

4. Work with your laptop or tablet as much as possible

Work on a laptop or, even better, a tablet as much as possible. These are much more energy efficient than desktop computers.

5. Be mindful of how you use your television

Do not use your television as a radio. A television uses much more energy than a radio. Also, do not use your television as a nice moving background (e.g. a video of a fireplace) or painting. This often uses just as much energy as watching regular television and also shortens the lifespan of the television.

6. Open doors: close them!

Literally and figuratively an open door. We have already mentioned the refrigerator and freezer. No matter what room you are in, always close the door behind you.

7. Lights off

Of course, you don't have to sit in the dark, but you don't need to have all the lights on either. Especially not in rooms in the house where no one is at that moment. Every little bit helps.

8. Pay attention to dimmers

Do you have a lot of dimmable lights in your home? If so, make sure you buy lights with a lower wattage. A light that is dimmed by half (50%) still uses about 75% of its power. In such cases, it would be better to use a light with half the wattage without dimming it.



Affordable saving tools

There are several options for saving energy with a small investment. These usually cost a few euros. The savings on your energy bill will be greater, especially if you count them over several years. These are small adjustments you can make in your home.

1. Install a thermostatic tap

By using a thermostatic tap instead of a regular mixer tap, the shower quickly reaches the right temperature. This means that the water doesn't need to run for as long before it's hot. Thermostatic taps come in all shapes and sizes, from a few euros to a few hundred euros. You'll save gas and water, which can be up to a thousand litres a year.

2. Install a water-saving shower head

Check if you have a water-saving shower head. These allow less water to pass through. With less water, the boiler does not have to work as hard to heat the water to the right temperature. The average shower head uses 8 litres of water per minute. A water-saving shower head uses about 5 litres per minute. That is no less than 35% less water and gas to heat all that water. A 5-minute shower per day using 8 litres of water per minute uses around 60 m³ of gas per person (if you have a combi boiler) and therefore costs around €72 per person per year at a gas price of €1.40. With a water-saving shower head, this is only around €48 per person per year. The investment pays for itself quickly.

3. Install a letterbox brush

Install a letterbox brush to reduce heat loss and prevent draughts in your home. This closes the opening of the letterbox, keeping cold air out and reducing heat loss. By doing this, you can save up to 25 m³ of gas per year. In addition, the brush strip and flap prevent wind, dust and pests from entering.

4. Use draught strips and stoppers

A draught strip or stopper is a simple way to save energy. Even small gaps can cause a lot of heat to be lost without you noticing. By sealing all the openings in your home, you can save around 70 m³ of gas in an average corner house. That saves 70 x €1.40 = almost €100.00 per year. Also, you won't need to heat your home as much and you won't have to deal with cold draughts anymore! You can easily install draught strips yourself.

5. Install secondary glazing for single glazing

Secondary glazing improves the comfort of your home by creating an insulating layer of air between the existing single glazing and the new secondary glazing. This functions as a kind of double glazing, providing better heat and sound insulation. A major advantage of secondary glazing is that no modifications are required to your existing window frames and glass. The insulation value of secondary glazing is comparable to standard double glazing. If you have 20 m² of glass in a standard family home, you can save up to €140 per year in heating costs.

6. Use radiator foil

By placing radiator foil on the back of your radiators, the foil reflects the heat back into the room instead of it disappearing into the wall. This heats the room up faster and keeps it warm for longer. On average, radiator foil saves around 10 m³ of gas per year per m² of radiator foil (when the wall is not additionally insulated). An average house has around 6 m² of radiator surface area against the exterior walls. This means a saving of 60 m³ of gas. With a gas price of €1.40 per m³ of gas, this is a saving of €84 per year. Radiator foil pays for itself quickly.

7. Insulate heating pipes

Another simple measure is to insulate the heating pipes. This can be done with plastic foam tubes or bandage foil. This prevents them from losing heat. Only do this for pipes that run through unheated areas, such as an attic or crawl space.

8. Use LED bulbs

LED bulbs are more energy efficient than other bulbs. They consume up to 90% less electricity than incandescent or halogen bulbs and last 30 to 50 times longer. This saves energy. For example, if you replace three 60-watt incandescent bulbs with three 8-watt LED bulbs that have the same light output and colour, you will save almost 170 kWh per year. At an electricity price of €0.40, that saves €67 per year.

9. Install a flow restrictor

A flow restrictor is easy to install on your own tap. Unscrew the spout of the tap or shower head, insert the flow restrictor, and screw the spout back onto the tap. It's that simple! It helps you save energy and water.

Sources: ANWB, Milieu Centraal