

# Energy Saving Tips from The Guide to the Green life

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The easiest way to start changing your energy habits is to determine how you are using the most energy, and minimize it. Typically, 56 percent of an energy bill goes to heating and cooling, so the biggest energy user in your home is your furnace. The second biggest energy user is the hot water heater, and another big energy-user that is often ignored is the refrigerator. With this in mind, The Green Life has put together some hype-free simple suggestions based on three main components of home energy efficiency : heat efficiently, manage water use, and contain refrigeration.

## Heat Efficiently:

\* Keep your thermostat constant and as low as comfortable. Frequently turning the thermostat up and down again to heat the house quickly usually overheats it, and can often use more resources than keeping a constant temperature. Keep it on a moderate temperature like 68F, and turn it down to 55F or off when you leave the house for the day or while sleeping.

\* Clean your furnace filters once a month. Dirty filters restrict air flow and increase energy use. They also increase indoor air pollution, which can cause health problems.

\* Check for window and door leaks and seal them up. Put a foam door stopper in front of the doors, and get some thick winter curtains to keep the cold out.

\* During a sunny cold day, keep the shades open to let the sun in, and close them at night.

## Manage Water Use:

\* Set your water heater to the "normal" setting or 120F. This is as hot as you will reasonably need it, but doesn't use excess energy to heat. In addition to saving energy with this setting, your water

heater will have a longer lifetime and need less maintenance.

\* Insulate your water heater and the first five feet of pipe coming out of the water heater, or the whole length until the wall if less than five feet. This way, your heater doesn't have to work as hard to reach the desired temperature.

\* Limit your hot showers to ten minutes. Get a timer or waterproof clock for the bathroom so you can keep track. This also helps make sure you leave the house on time.

## Contain Refrigeration:

\* Don't hold the fridge or freezer open. Think about what you want before you open the door.

\* If you have an industrial sized unit, consider a strip curtain that will let you see in without letting as much cold air out.

\* Turn your settings down to mid-range if you open it often, low if you don't.

\* Check the molding on the door to make sure it closes completely and is airtight.

## Think Long Term:

\* Consider upgrading your furnace, replacing it with an energy efficient furnace, replacing your windows with energy efficient windows, or a host of other remodels.

\* Visit these websites for more information on long term remodels:

The Alliance to Save Energy

EPA's ENERGY STAR program