

SAVE ENERGY AND MONEY

Do you dread the arrival of your monthly energy bill but find yourself unwilling - or unable - to spend the money required to transform your home into a self-sustainable dwelling? Good news: There are some simple, more convenient ways to save energy - and money. You can even put them into practice starting today.

1. REPLACE YOUR INCANDESCENT LIGHTBULBS WITH CFL'S

One of the easiest ways to save energy is by ditching your incandescent lightbulbs. According to Lesley Chilcott, founder of Unscrew America and film director of documentary *An Inconvenient Truth*, CFL's use 80 percent less energy, last 10 to 15 times longer, and will pay for themselves in five months.

2. USE POWER STRIPS

Plug your electronic devices into power strips and flip the switch at night when the electronics are not in use. This applies to computers, printers, TVs, DVD players and stereos as well as lights and other appliances. Nancy H. Taylor, author of *Go Green: How to Build an Earth-Friendly Community*, says turning your electronics off at night with a power strip can save up to 10 percent on your energy bill.

3. TURN DOWN YOUR WATER HEATER

Taylor also suggests turning down the temperature of your water heater to 120 degrees F. Additionally, if your water heater is not insulated, wrap an insulating blanket around it.

4. ADJUST YOUR HEATING AND COOLING

In her book *The Green Year*, Jodi Helmer recommends setting your thermostat to 68 degrees F. when you're home and 55 degrees F. at night. Put on a sweater during the day and use an extra blanket at night.

5. KEEP YOUR FREEZER FULL

Another suggestion from Helmer, a full freezer runs more efficiently than one with only a few items in it. Buy in season fruits and vegetables and freeze them for use all year round. Make an extra casserole or batch of stew and keep it in the freezer for a convenient meal later.

6. USE SOLAR CONTROL WINDOW FILM

Replacing your windows with energy-efficient windows carries a high cost. An inexpensive alternative is solar window film – don't worry, you'll still have a view. Solar window film is easy to apply, reduces your energy bill, and blocks harmful ultraviolet rays, which can fade your home décor.

7. FLIP THE SWITCH

Don't leave the lights on. Though it may be convenient to have the garage light on when you open the door, it doesn't take that much effort to turn it on. Every time you leave a room, turn the lights off.

8. LOVE YOUR LEFTOVERS

When making dinner, make extra so you can enjoy a few no-cook or low-cook meals. Leftover meats, poultry and fish can be added to salads or used for sandwiches. Extra vegetables can be added to eggs for a quick omelet or to cooked rice for a light lunch.

9. WASH ONLY WHEN FULL

Instead of doing small loads of dishes or laundry, wait until the washer is full. Doing fewer loads will cut down on energy and water costs.

10. INSTALL WEATHER STRIPPING

Make sure your doors and windows are properly sealed. This will save energy by not letting hot air (in winter) or cool air (in summer) escape.

Source: <http://www.sheknows.com/living/articles/807941/10-simple-ways-to-save-energy-in-your-home>