

Energy Efficiency

A PDF user guide



The ins and outs of...

Being savvy with your energy

We want you to spend less with us. Bit odd we know, coming from an energy company. But it's true, we really do. Because using less energy not only cuts your bills (better for you) – it also cuts emissions (better for the planet).

The best way to use less energy and cheapen those bills is to make sure your home and all your electrical appliances are working as efficiently as possible.

If you insulate your roof and walls, improve your heating system and generally be a bit more careful, you can save around £300 a year. Not to mention cutting your home's carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions by around 1.5 tonnes. Now that's not a bad start!

What's in this guide?

Lots of good stuff to help you save energy at home. It'll cover:

- Walls, roofs, windows and doors
- Heating and hot water
- Washing machines, tumble driers and dishwashers
- Appliances – from kettles to radios
- Lighting – from bulbs to bedside lamps
- Fridges and freezers
- A round-up of our top energy saving tips
- Get in touch
- Handy contacts for more info

If you'd like us to send you a copy of this guide in large print, Braille or another language, please get in touch.

Walls, roofs, windows and doors

The (cold, hard) facts

Of all the things you can do to save energy, improving your home's insulation will have the greatest impact – by a country mile.

If your home isn't insulated...

- 26% of heat is lost through the roof
- 33% seeps out through the walls
- 18% whistles through the windows
- 11% lets itself out through the door and the floor
- 12% wafts away due to draughts and essential ventilation.

How can I be more energy efficient?

Just like this:

- Fill that cavity! Cavity wall insulation is one of the best ways to keep heat in and save money. It can cut around £115 off your heating bill each year.
- Get some draught excluders for doors (that open outside), windows and letterboxes – this'll help stop warm air from escaping. It's also worth tackling those cheeky gaps between skirting boards and floorboards.
- Double-glazing keeps the heat in – and also reduces noise and condensation. If you went round your whole house and replaced old single glazing with Energy Saving Recommended double glazing, you could save around £135 each year.
- Close your curtains as soon as it starts to get dark, to lock in the heat to make your home feel warm and snug.

Heating and hot water

The (cold, hard) facts

- The older your boiler, the less efficient it's likely to be. In fact, if it's been around 15 years or older, it's done a great job – but you should definitely think about changing it.
- On average, heating and hot water make up around 60% of the average fuel bill and, unless your home is newly built, your heating system's unlikely to be running as efficiently as it could be.

How can I be more energy efficient?

Like this:

- Chop up to a quarter off your heating bills by replacing an old G-rated boiler with a lovely, new A-rated condensing boiler and a full set of heating controls.
- Slip an insulating jacket on your hot water tank (it won't mind what colour). You'll find your water stays hot longer, and you'll waste less energy heating it. And you could save around £35 a year!
- Hot water pipes lose heat if they're out in the open between the boiler and hot water tank – so if you spot them, insulate them. This could save you around £10 a year on your fuel bills.
- Turning your heating thermostat down by 1°C can cut up to 10% off your heating costs. For a gas-heated, three-bed semi-detached property, this could save you around £55 a year!
- In fact, there's no need to set the thermostat on your hot water tank any higher than 60°C or 140°F. Be cool(er), guys.

Washing machines, tumble driers and dishwashers

The (cold, hard) facts

- Washing machines, tumble dryers and dishwashers use about £2 billion worth of electricity each year, and produce around eight million tonnes of CO₂. That's the same as the CO₂ emissions from about two and a half million cars.
- The average washing machine is used for 274 cycles a year, a dishwasher for 246 cycles and a tumble dryer 148 times.

How can I be more energy efficient?

Just like this:

- Wash your clothes at a cool 30°C. Modern washing powders and detergents work just as well at lower temperatures, so unless you've got a very dirty load to do, don't go higher than 30°C. It'll use around 40% less electricity (saving you about £10 a year).
- Replace your old dishwasher with a new Energy Saving Recommended model. It'll use around 20% less energy than a typical old model, produce about 48kg less of CO₂ – and will save your pocket about £12 a year.
- Hang on until your dishwasher or washing machine are full before you hit start – and use the economy cycle too (if you have one). Both tricks'll save you energy.

- Get in the swing of summer with a washing line! When it's warm outside, peg your clothes to it and let the glorious sunshine do the rest. It'll save you around £15 a year on your electricity bill (and 65kg of CO₂) compared to what you'd spend tumble drying. Actually, if everyone in the UK with a tumble drier dried their washing outside during the summer, we'd save around £180million a year. And we'd reduce our CO₂ footprint (a big footprint that equates to taking 240,000 cars off our roads).

Appliances – from kettles to radios

The (cold, hard) facts

- UK homes waste around £33 each year just by leaving appliances on standby. That's roughly 8% of an electricity bill spent (what a waste!). Altogether, this wastes as much energy as the yearly output of two 700MW power stations!

How can I be more energy efficient?

Like this:

- Remember to turn appliances off at the wall instead of leaving them on standby.
- Look out for the distinctive blue Energy Efficiency Recommended logo when you're buying any new appliance – it means that it's of the most efficient in its category (so it'll use less power and will be cheaper to run).
- Only boil the amount of water you need in the kettle. If everyone did that, in a year we could save enough electricity to run the UK's street lighting for nearly seven months.

Lighting – from bulbs to bedside lamps

The (cold, hard) facts

- In most houses, lighting takes up roughly 20% of the electricity bill.
- UK homes spend around £2.3 billion every year on electricity to power their lighting.

How can I be more energy efficient?

Like this:

- Fit your home with energy-saving light bulbs – they use up to 80% less electricity than standard bulbs and last around ten times as long (win, win).

- Depending on how long you keep your lights on every day, an energy-saving light bulb can save you around £2.50 per year – or around £6 for brighter bulbs or any you use for more than a few hours a day.
- By replacing all the old-style bulbs in your home with energy-saving bulbs you could cut around £37 a year off your energy bill and save 135kg of carbon dioxide. Over the lifetime of all the bulbs, this could save you a satisfying £590 on your energy bills and bulb costs – and three tonnes of CO₂.

Fridges and freezers

The (*freezing cold, hard*) facts

- Every year UK homes use around £2 billion worth of electricity on cooling and freezing tasty food and drinks.
- Fridges and freezers in UK homes use as much electricity in a year as four 700MW power stations produce in that time.

How can I be more energy efficient?

Like this:

- If you replace your old fridge freezer with one that has an Energy Saving Recommended stamp, it could cut your home's CO₂ emissions by about 140kg a year. That's because it uses around 60% less energy to do the same job as a typical old model – saving you around £36 a year.

A round-up of our top energy saving tips

In a nutshell, here are our favourite ways to start saving energy right away.

1. When you boil a kettle, use only as much water as you need.
2. Cover pots and pans when you're cooking – they'll boil a lot faster.
3. Defrost your freezer regularly – and don't put in food that's still hot.
4. If you've only got a small amount of food to heat up, using a microwave rather than a conventional oven could save you energy.
5. Wash your clothes at 30°C – it can be just as effective unless you've got a very dirty load.
6. Only run your washing machine or dishwasher with full loads.
7. Avoid tumble drying – dry clothes outdoors or on indoor dryers (when it's possible).
8. Turn your central heating down by 1°C – it could cut your heating bills by up to 10%.

9. Turn down your immersion heater by 1°C – you'll save energy (and you probably won't feel any colder).
10. Use energy efficient light bulbs – if every UK home installed three of them, it would save enough energy to power all the UK's street lights.

Get in touch

If you have any questions about what's in this guide, just shout. Our friendly, Bristol-based bunch are ready and waiting to hear from you.

Email us: hello@ovoenergy.com

Call us: 0800 5999 440

Handy contacts for more info

Age UK

www.ageuk.org.uk

0800 169 6565

Citizens Advice

www.citizensadvice.org.uk/index/getadvice/consumer_service.htm

08454 04 05 06 (Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm)

Want a Welsh-speaking adviser? Just call 08454 04 05 05.

Energy Savings Trust

www.energysavingtrust.org.uk

0300 123 1234

Energy Supply Ombudsman

www.energy-ombudsman.org.uk

enquiries@energy-ombudsman.org.uk

0330 440 1624

0330 440 1600 (textphone)

Po Box 966, Warrington, WA4 9DF



ovoenergy.com
hello@ovoenergy.com

0800 5999 440

Lines open Monday to Thursday 9am -5:30pm and Friday 9am-5pm