



ENERGY SAVINGS TIPS AT HOME

Provided by Gridmates

Sharing energy doesn't have to cost a single penny extra. Offset your energy donations by making some easy changes around the house to save hundreds and even thousands of dollars a year.

- Replace old appliances (manufactured before 2000) with new, more efficient models. Older units can cost as much as 40 percent more in energy than newer models. Energy efficient refrigerators, washing machines, dryers, air conditioners can dramatically reduce your costs.
- Use multi-socket plugs to prevent computers, TVs, phone chargers and electrical kitchen appliances from consuming energy when not in use, saving up to \$10 per appliance every year. Use the energy saving mode for another \$20 savings per gadget annually.
- Control heating and cooling throughout the house to save as much as \$165 a year. Set the heat at a maximum of 68 degrees and the A/C no lower than 78 degrees. When not at home, in winter, set heat 10 degrees lower and, in summer, put the A/C at 10 degrees higher.
- In summer, when possible, use fans – which cool specific area versus the entire house – instead of A/C to save up to \$65 annually.
- Shades can save up to \$75 a year. Shades on west and south windows prevent a residence from heating up in the summer, which requires more cooling. In winter, raise shades so sunlight streaming in through windows can naturally help with heating.
- Maintain heating and air conditioning units to potentially save \$65 every year. Change and/or clean filters and conduct annual check-ups to ensure efficient functioning.
- Install high quality, double glazed windows and frames to keep excess heat out during summer and cold air from entering during winter.
- Seal air leaks to reduce energy loss and hold down heating and cooling costs, saving as much as \$170/year.
- Hire an expert to assess your home insulation. Upgrade it, if necessary, to prevent significant heat loss through walls, floors and the roof and conserve up to \$170 a year.
- Wash clothes in cold instead of hot water and save as much as \$40 a year. Instead of using a dryer, hang clothes to dry and cut energy spending by about \$120 per year.
- Trade out old light bulbs for today's more efficient LEDs and use up to 80 percent less energy without reducing the luminance of your lamps and ceiling fixtures.
- Use task lighting – lighting focused on smaller areas -- for desk work, reading, cooking and other activities instead of illuminating an entire room.

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- Use dimmers to control light brightness which reduces electricity consumption and can trim yearly costs by as much as \$35.
- Outdoor lights for the home's exterior, yard, garden, patios, balconies, etc. should be solar-powered. These lights are inexpensive, install easily and cost nothing to use once installed.
- Power the house with a solar photovoltaic system. Sell extra energy to the local electricity provider and even make some money. A 30 percent federal tax credit for product purchase and installation is available through December 31, 2016.

Sources: "Estimated energy savings are Gridmates estimates based on information available from the [U.S. Department of Energy](#), [Austin Energy](#) and [Energy Star](#).

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Media contact:

Susan Tull, susantull@aol.com, 512.577.2956

Gridmates contact:

Dr. George Koutitas (CEO & Cofounder), george@gridmates.com, 512.632.4363