

Handy Hints from Ian Williams



SAVE ENERGY AND CUT FUEL BILLS

Did you know that almost half of all the UK's carbon dioxide emissions come from our buildings and homes? That's a lot of lost energy and a lot of cost in fuel bills. Here are some top energy saving tips to help you save energy and money.

Heating and Hot Water

1. Turning the thermostat down by 1°C could cut your heating bills by up to 10%
2. In one day, a dripping hot water tap can waste enough energy and water to fill a bath. Always make sure your taps are turned off properly
3. Always put the plug in when you use the sink
4. Water needs to be hot but not scalding. Don't set your cylinder thermostat too high

Lights

1. Always turn off the lights when you don't need them, and when you leave a room
2. Pull your curtains or blinds to let in as much light as possible during the day
3. Use energy saving light bulbs. They will save you a lot of money in the long run - they use only about a quarter of the electricity of normal light bulbs and last 10 times longer



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Washing machines, tumble dryers and dishwashers

1. When you buy a new appliance, read the energy label and buy the most efficient - these are cheaper to run and use less energy
2. Always try to wash a full load - and if you can't, choose a half load or economy programme. A low temperature programme will usually wash clothes just as well with modern powders

TVs and small electrical items

Avoid wasting energy. Don't leave appliances like TVs, videos, DVD players, computers or cordless phones on standby or charge them for longer than you need to. (**NB** Check manuals first to make sure turning off the item does not reset the memory)

Cooking

1. Choose the right sized pan for the food and the cooker - and keep the lids on when cooking. (With electrical hobs, the pan base should just cover the ring. With gas, the flames only need to heat up the bottom of the pan.) Pressure cookers and microwave ovens are cheaper to run than a conventional oven or hob
2. Only heat the amount of water you need. If you're using an electric kettle, make sure you cover the element.

Fridges and Freezers

1. Stand your fridge or freezer in the coolest place. If you must have it next to a cooker, leave a good gap between them.
2. Don't leave the door open for longer than you need
3. Avoid putting hot or warm food straight into the fridge
4. Defrost your fridge regularly to keep it running efficiently and cheaply. If it frosts up quickly, check the door seal