



WHAT RENTERS CAN DO

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As a renter, you usually have fewer options for long-term energy savings than consumers who own their home. Typically, renters occupy a unit for a limited period of time and have little input on the types of appliances and materials used in the unit. Therefore, whether you are renting a house or an apartment, your primary goal should be to reduce energy costs immediately and inexpensively so that you can recover your investment in a shorter period of time.

8 WAYS TO SAVE ENERGY

1. Adjust the thermostat

Closely managing your thermostat is an easy way to increase your energy savings.

- In summer, set the thermostat between 75°F and 78°F. Consider supplementing air conditioning with high efficiency fans, which will enable you to be more comfortable at higher temperatures.
- In winter, keep the thermostat set around 68°F while at home during the day, and lower at night.
- For heating and cooling systems other than heat pumps, if you will be away from the house or apartment for an hour or more, set the temperature even higher in summer (to 78°F) and lower in winter (to 65°F). It will not take long to heat or cool your house or apartment back to your preferred temperature, and less energy is used in reheating or recooling than in maintaining a constant temperature.
- If your home or apartment does not have a programmable thermostat, talk to your landlord about installing one. A programmable thermostat will allow you to schedule different temperatures at different times of the day, giving you greater control over energy usage.

2. Change filters regularly

- As part of the preventative maintenance program, ask your landlord to inspect the furnace or air conditioning units and to clean or replace the air filters at least every three months. You can suggest the use of 1-inch electrostatically-enhanced panel filters, which are inexpensive and can effectively trap large particles such as pollen and dust.

3. Manage exposure to the sun

- During the summer, use shades, blinds, or curtains on windows during the day to prevent the sunlight from heating your home. Lightly colored materials are most effective in reflecting sunlight.
- When it's hot outside, keep windows closed during the day to prevent outside air from blowing into your apartment. If you do not have air conditioning and the outside air is cooler than the air in your apartment in the morning and evening, open the windows to let the heat escape.
- During the winter, keep window shades, blinds, or curtains open during the day to let in sunlight, and close them in the evening to keep the heat in.



In addition to these recommendations, discuss energy savings with your landlord. Your landlord may be willing to invest in energy saving upgrades with long-term savings potential.

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4. Replace incandescent bulbs with compact fluorescent lamps

Use Energy Star® qualified lighting such as compact fluorescent lamps (CFLs) instead of incandescent light bulbs in frequently-used light fixtures. While CFLs cost more than regular incandescent bulbs (but are becoming more affordable), they last substantially longer, consume much less energy, and produce less heat for the same amount of light.

When you move, take your compact fluorescent bulbs with you, replacing them with the incandescent bulbs that you initially removed from the fixtures.

Compact fluorescent lamps contain small amounts of mercury, a toxic substance. Follow your community's guidelines for recycling or disposing of CFLs. If there are no special procedures in your community, place the used bulb in a sealable plastic bag, wrap it in newspaper, label it MERCURY WASTE, and put it in the garbage.



5. Talk to your landlord about weatherization

Weatherizing is an inexpensive way to lower your energy bills. Talk to your landlord about undertaking these simple measures, which include applying weather stripping and caulking cracks around doors and windows. Consult your lease and get written consent from your landlord before undertaking any weatherization measures yourself.

The U.S. Department of Energy funds a Weatherization Program administered in Georgia by the Georgia Environmental Facilities Authority (GEFA). Through this program, qualifying low-income households can receive weatherization assistance from local community action agencies. Those living in rental properties may be eligible **if they have the landlord's written consent**. Contact the Weatherization Program Manager at GEFA for more information about this program:

Division of Energy Resources
Phone (404) 584-1000

Find your community action agency at: www.gefa.org/weather/weather2.html

6. Manage water heaters and leaky faucets

- If you have access to the water heater, turn the temperature setting down from High (140°F) to Normal (120°F). If the dishwasher does not have a booster heater, set the water heater between 130°F and 140°F.
- Turn down your water heater if you will be away on vacation; maintaining hot water that you will not use wastes energy and costs more.
- Have your landlord fix any leaky faucets. Leaky hot water faucets are especially wasteful and costly.

7. Choose an efficient room air conditioner and use it efficiently

If your lease does not provide for air conditioning but you are allowed to add your own window unit air conditioner, select an efficient model that is correctly sized for your needs.

- Look for the Energy Star® logo and buy a model with an Energy Efficiency Ratio (EER) of at least 10.7.
- Picking the right size for your room air conditioner is important. You can find information on how to choose the right size at www.energystar.gov.
- If practical, put the unit in a window that faces north.
- Keep the fresh air vent closed most of the time the unit is on (vent control in the "exhaust" position), opening it occasionally to let in fresh air (vent control in the "fresh air" position).

8. Look for Energy Star® qualified home electronics

When purchasing a TV, VCR, CD, or DVD player, look for the Energy Star® logo to find a model that consumes less energy, which can often save you money in the long run.



Sources:

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"For Renters Only: Saving Energy in Your Apartment," U.S. Department of Energy, available at <http://www.eere.energy.gov/buildings/info/homes/homerenters.html>.

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