

How to have a greener home: a quick guide

Energy used at home is responsible for over a quarter of the UK's carbon emissions, contributing to climate change - so taking steps to save energy can make a real difference. You can also help at home by saving water, choosing greener appliances, furniture and fittings, and much more.



1. Improve your insulation

Around half the heat lost in your home escapes through the walls and roof. Installing loft and cavity wall insulation will not only stop heat loss - it could also reduce your bills by up to £180 a year. There is help available to make insulation affordable.

2. Use labels to buy energy and water efficient appliances

Look for the Energy Saving Recommended logo to save money and energy when buying a product. The Energy Saving Recommended logo can only be used by the most energy efficient products, usually the top 20 per cent of those available. Many appliances also have a European Energy Label which rates energy efficiency on a scale of A (best) to G (worst), and provides information on water use.



3. Use timers and thermostats

Take control of your heating and you could save energy and money. Reducing the temperature on your thermostat by 1 degree could save up to 10 per cent on heating bills

4. Switch to energy-saving bulbs

An energy-saving light bulb can save £60 over its lifetime. Choosing energy-saving light bulbs is one of the easiest ways of cutting your energy use. An energy-saving light bulb can last up to 10 times longer than a non-efficient version. Just one 20 watt energy-saving bulb can save you £60 over its lifetime, compared to a standard 100 watt bulb.



5. Buy sustainable wood

Try to choose furniture and DIY materials made from sustainably-produced wood - look for labels from the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification schemes (PEFC) or other schemes that certify sustainable timber.

6. Wash clothes at 30 degrees, and in full loads

Your washing machine uses energy and water more efficiently when it's full, and washing at lower temperatures saves energy too.

7. Keep the VOCs low

Volatile organic compounds (VOCs), which are found in paints, finishes and preservatives, can be harmful to humans, wildlife and plants. Most of these products carry a label showing their VOC content, so try choosing the ones with lower VOCs.

8. Turn off appliances instead of leaving them on standby

Electrical appliances left on standby waste six to ten per cent of all energy used in the average home. Electrical appliances left on standby waste six to ten per cent of all energy used in the average home. Switch TVs, stereos, mobile phone chargers and other gadgets off at the switch or the plug when you're not using them.



9. Install water-saving products

Low-flush-volume toilet cisterns, water efficient shower heads and aerating heads on washbasin taps help reduce your water use significantly.

10. Fix dripping taps

A dripping tap can waste up to 15 litres of water a day, or almost 5,500 litres per year. Fitting a new washer is a cheap way of saving water and takes only a few minutes.