# Smart ways to save

Energy efficiency tips you can use around the home

# Contents


| | |
|---|---|
| **Smart ways to save** | **4** |
| Understanding your energy use | 4 |
| Heating and cooling | 5 |
| Lighting | 6 |
| Appliances | 7 |
| Hot water | 8 |
| **Your energy saving action plan** | **10** |
| Investing in big energy savings | 15 |
| **Ways to track your energy use** | **17** |
| Origin app | 17 |
| My Account | 17 |
| Your bill | 17 |
| **Help when you need it** | **18** |
| Concessions and rebates | 18 |
| **Want more energy saving tips?** | **19** |
| **Energy efficient contacts** | **20** |
| **Sources** | **22** |

# Smart ways to save

You don’t have to give up on comfort to keep your energy bills down. We’ll show you how making small changes can make a big difference.

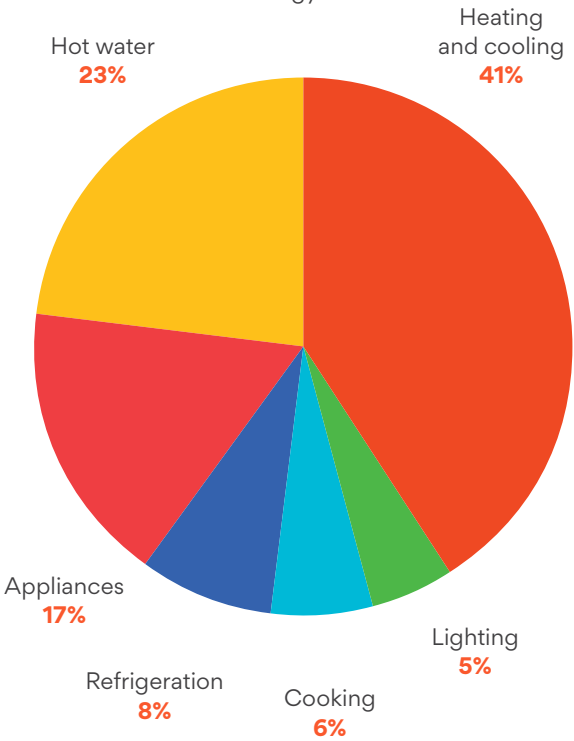
Throughout this guide, you'll find a range of tips to help you save energy around the home and some easy ways to monitor your energy use.

There’s also an energy saving action plan to get everyone in your household onboard with simple steps you can take right now.

## Understanding your energy use

Knowing how much energy you use and where you use it most can help you work out the best ways to save energy.

Here’s a snapshot of how and where the average Australian home uses energy+.




+ See page 22 for more details.

# Heating and Cooling

The average Australian home uses about 40%[+] of its energy on heating and cooling – even small changes to the way you warm and cool your home can lead to big savings.

When it's chilly, use a heated electric throw instead of a portable heater – it'll keep you cosy and save energy.

## Handy heating hints

- Only heat the rooms you use most.
- Keep your doors and windows closed when the heater is on or when it's cold outside.
- Stop drafts coming in under the door by using a draft stopper.
- Seal up gaps and cracks in walls, doors, windows and floors.
- Install curtains or blinds to reduce heat loss through glass.
- Get a professional to check your ceiling insulation in case it needs replacing. (Old insulation can compress over time and lose effectiveness.)

## Use your heater efficiently

- Keep your thermostat between 18–20°C. Each degree over 20°C uses about 5–10% more energy[+].
- Switch your ceiling fan on when using the heater – hot air rises and the fan will push it back down. Remember to change it to winter mode, which means it will spin clockwise to draw the warm air up to redistribute it.
- If you have central heating with zoning, use it to heat different areas of your home at different times.

Choose a heating or cooling appliance that's correctly sized for your needs. Buying a system that's too big or too small means you'll use more energy than you need to, and you'll pay more in the long run.

+ See page 22 for more details.

### Tips for keeping cool

- After a hot day, open your windows or use ventilation fans to let the hot air out.
- Keep the areas you're cooling to a minimum by shutting doors to unused rooms.
- On hot days try keeping your air con around 25°C. Every extra degree cooler uses about 5–10% more energy+.
- Use a shade cloth, external blinds or awnings to keep the heat out.

### Cool it on the air con

These simple tips could help you save energy:

- ✓ Use your air con for an hour less on hot days.
- ✓ Use your ceiling fans for twice as long as your air con on days when it hits 28°C or more.
- ✓ Set some ground rules – try just using your air con when the temperature goes over 28°C.

## Lighting

Did you know that about 5%+ of the average home's energy bill comes from lighting?

Try these bright ideas:

- During the day, use natural lighting if you can.
- Get into the habit of turning off the lights when you leave a room.
- If you don't need much light, use lamps or spotlights instead of lighting the whole room.
- Use timers and sensors to control outdoor and security lighting.

If you have halogen or compact fluorescent lights in your home, switching to LEDs is a simple way to save energy and cut your lighting costs. LED bulbs use less power and last longer.

+ See page 22 for more details.

# Appliances

Electrical appliances, including refrigeration and cooking, can account for around 30%+ of an average home's energy bill.

Standby power makes up 3%> of total energy use in the average home and can cost more than $100 a year.

To reduce this, try switching some of these off at the wall when you're not using them:

- ✓ TV, DVD player, set-top box and game console
- ✓ home office equipment; eg. desktop computer, modem and printer
- ✓ microwave, washing machine and clothes dryer

Even better, why not pull out the plug when they're not in use? Many appliances draw standby power even when they're switched off. The biggest culprits are air conditioners, TVs, home entertainment equipment and computers>.

Fridges and freezers make up around 8%> of household energy use.

Fridges should be set between 3-4°C and freezers between -15°C and -18°C#. Check that your fridge and freezer aren't too cold. Every extra degree colder uses 5%# more energy.

Did you know that fridges work better when there's airflow, while freezers are more efficient when you limit it?

To minimise freezer airflow, add some bottles of water to fill it up. To maximise airflow in your fridge, leave a bit of space.

+ >< # See page 22 for more details.

## Cooking

Try these simple ideas:

- Match your pot size to your stove element.
- Keep a lid on simmering pots – it can reduce your energy use by up to 70%[<].
- Turn off the hotplate early and use the residual heat to finish cooking.
- Fill the kettle with only the amount of water you need.
- Need toast? Choose your toaster over your grill.

Make sure the seals on your oven are in good condition to prevent heat escaping.

# Hot Water

About 23%[+] of an average home's energy is used to heat water, so here are some areas where it's easy to save.

Save energy by washing your clothes in cold water. If your machine needs both hot and cold, set it to 60°C.

## Washing clothes

- Set the washing machine's water level to suit the size of your load and reduce your hot water use.
- A full load of washing uses as much energy as a half load, so plan ahead for a full load.
- Dry your clothes on a washing line instead of using your dryer, or on an indoor clothes rack in winter. If you only do this once a week instead of using your dryer, you'll save energy.
- When using a dryer, avoid overloading it and clean the lint filter afterwards.

< + See page 22 for more details.

## Washing dishes

- Scrape dishes instead of rinsing – if you have to rinse, use cold water before washing or using the dishwasher.
- If you use a dishwasher, wait until it's full before turning it on.
- Select the cycle with the lowest temperature or shortest running time to get the job done.
- Use economy drying options if available – or try switching off the dishwasher before the drying cycle starts and let the dishes air dry.

## In the bathroom

- Use a timer to halve your shower time from 8 to 4 minutes.
- Replace your standard showerhead with a 3-star water-efficient showerhead.
- Turn off your hot water system or change it to 'vacation' when you go on holiday.

# Your energy saving action plan

There are many low-cost steps you can take right now to reduce your household energy use with minimal effort. Give it a go and see how small changes in habits can save you money without sacrificing comfort.

- Get everyone in your household involved and tick the actions you agree to commit to on the following pages.
- Compare your energy use with the same time in the previous year to see the difference your changes are making in each season.

You can also find an A4 easy-print version of this **Energy saving action plan** at **originenergy.com.au/energytips**

# Energy saving action plan

Keep this list where everyone can see it and remind each other until your saving actions become habits.

Pull this out & stick it on your fridge

| Heating | Cost* | Effort* | Savings* | ✓ |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Only heat the rooms you're using – shut doors to other rooms | - | ★ | ☺ ☺ | |
| Turn the heater off overnight & when you're out | - | ★ | ☺ ☺ ☺ | |
| When it gets chilly, use a heated electric throw instead of a portable heater | $ | ★ | ☺ ☺ ☺ | |
| Keep your thermostat below 20°C – each degree higher uses about 5–10% more energy | - | ★ | ☺ ☺ | |
| Use a draft stopper & seal up gaps to keep out the cold | $ | ★ | ☺ ☺ | |
| Install curtains or blinds to reduce heat loss through glass | $$ | ★ ★ | ☺ ☺ ☺ | |
| Check if your ceiling insulation needs replacing – if so, ensure it has the right rating & is installed correctly | $$$ | ★ ★ | ☺ ☺ ☺ | |
| **Cooling** | **Cost*** | **Effort*** | **Savings*** | ✓ |
| On hot days, close curtains or blinds to keep heat out | - | ★ | ☺ | |
| Use air con for an hour less on hot days | - | ★ | ☺ ☺ | |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| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Use ceiling fans instead of your air con on days when it hits 28°C or more | - | ★ | ☺☺ | |
| Set some ground rules – try using air con only when the temperature goes over 28°C | - | ★ | ☺☺ | |
| Avoid using air con at night (unless you need to for medical reasons) & use a fan instead | - | ★ | ☺☺ | |
| Keep your thermostat on or above 25°C – every degree cooler uses about 5–10% more energy | - | ★ | ☺☺ | |
| Open doors & windows to ventilate your house at night when the outside temperature drops | - | ★ | ☺☺ | |
| Install external blinds or awnings to keep out the heat | $$ | ★★ | ☺☺ | |
| **Lighting** | **Cost*** | **Effort*** | **Savings*** | ✓ |
| Use natural lighting where possible | - | ★ | ☺ | |
| Turn off lights when you leave a room | - | ★ | ☺ | |
| Use a couple of lamps with LEDs instead of your downlights | $ | ★ | ☺☺ | |
| **Appliances** | **Cost*** | **Effort*** | **Savings*** | ✓ |
| Ditch the dryer & dry your clothes on a washing line or clothes rack instead | - | ★ | ☺☺☺ | |
| Switch off appliances at the wall when not in use to avoid paying for standby power | - | ★★ | ☺☺ | |
| Use a radio instead of the TV for background noise | - | ★ | ☺ | |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Try not to open the fridge door too often or for too long | - | ★ | ☺ | |
| Check your fridge & freezer seals & clean or replace them if needed | $ | ★ | ☺☺ | |
| Add bottles of water to the freezer to minimise airflow & leave space in your fridge to maximise it | - | ★ | ☺☺ | |
| If you have a second fridge, turn it off when it's not needed | - | ★ | ☺☺☺ | |
| If you're making a cup of tea, only heat the amount of water you need | - | ★ | ☺ | |
| Use the toaster for toast, not the grill | - | ★ | ☺ | |
| Keep a lid on simmering pots when cooking | - | ★ | ☺ | |
| When buying new appliances, check the energy rating label to choose the most energy-efficient model that suits your needs – the more stars, the less energy the product will use | $$ | ★★ | ☺☺☺ | |
| **Hot water** | **Cost*** | **Effort*** | **Savings*** | ✓ |
| Wash your clothes in cold water if you can – if your machine needs both hot & cold, set it to 60°C | - | ★ | ☺☺☺ | |
| Only run the washing machine when there's a full load, or set the water level to the amount of washing | - | ★ | ☺☺☺ | |
| Only run the dishwasher when it's full | - | ★ | ☺☺☺ | |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Take shorter showers – aim for 4 mins using a timer | - | ★ | ☺☺ |
| Turn off your hot water system or change it to 'vacation' when you go on holiday | - | ★ | ☺☺ |
| Replace your standard showerhead with a 3-star water-efficient showerhead | $ | ★ | ☺☺ |
| Fix dripping taps, especially hot water taps | $ | ★★ | ☺☺ |
| Install a heat pump or solar hot water system | $$$ | ★★★ | ☺☺☺ |

| Key | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Cost** | **Effort** | **Savings** |
| - = none | | |
| $ = low | ★ = low | ☺ = low |
| $$ = med | ★★ = med | ☺☺ = med |
| $$$ = high | ★★★ = high | ☺☺☺ = high |

*The cost, effort and savings shown in the tables above are an indication only and will vary depending on a number of factors, including which state you live in, your network distributor, your energy pricing and the cost and energy efficiency of your appliances.

Household energy consumption varies depending on type, size, age and usage of appliances, the size, insulation and layout of the home and the number of people living in the home. This means the savings will vary from household to household.

$ Whether you do something big or work your way through a bunch of small changes, these tips aim to give you an idea of how investing in energy efficient items can help to reduce your energy bills over time.

## Investing in big energy savings

Many of the tips in this guide will cost you little or nothing at all. If you're about to replace an appliance or improve your home, here are some areas worth considering that could return big energy savings on the dollars you spend.

- **Check your insulation** – good quality roof and ceiling insulation that's correctly installed can save you up to 45%~ on your heating and cooling bills.
- **Add a pergola or other shading device** to keep direct sunlight off your home to keep it cooler. Planting the right tree in the right spot is another option if you have space in your garden.
- **Install a skylight** – they look great and you won't need to use your lights as much.
- **Install a heat pump or solar hot water system** – they cost more to buy but save energy^ and can reduce bills and greenhouse gas emissions.
- **Invest in a solar system** for your home to generate your own electricity and reduce your bills. Before you start, check whether there are any government rebates to help with costs.
- **Add double glazing to windows and doors** to help keep the house warmer in winter and cooler in summer. For a cheaper option, look up insulation hacks like using bubble wrap on windows.
- **Always look for the energy efficiency label** when buying appliances. The more stars it has, the more efficient it is. For example, if you're replacing your washing machine, a front loader uses less energy than a top loader.
- **If you're adding a swimming pool**, know that running a pool pump is a one of the largest users of energy in a home (up to 18%> of energy use in homes with a pool). Choose your pool pump wisely – variable speed pumps are the most energy efficient though they may be more expensive to buy. If heating your pool, consider solar heating in combination with a pool blanket that traps heat.

~ ^ > See page 22 for more details.

# Ways to track your energy use

Monitoring your progress towards reducing energy use can be fun and rewarding. Use these tools to check out the difference all your efforts make.

## Origin app

Our app makes it easy to track your energy use and costs, see when your next bill is due and make a payment on the go.

If you have a smart meter, you can even see daily and hourly breakdowns of your use.

Find out more and download at **originenergy.com.au/app**

## My Account

If you don't have a smart phone, you can still monitor your energy use and manage your bills in My Account.

Register and log in at **originenergy.com.au/myaccount**

## Your bill

You'll find details about your energy use on each bill, including your average daily usage and comparisons to the same time in the previous year – so you'll know if you're heading in the right direction.

spike

Get rewards for saving energy by joining Origin Spike. Our program makes it fun to lower your electricity use during peak demand periods. You'll save money on your bills and earn Spike currency, called Watts, to redeem for PayPal cash or gift cards when you meet your energy saving goals. It's a great way to save energy, be kind to the planet and get rewarded.

**Learn more at originenergy.com.au/spike**

## Help when you need it

If you're having trouble paying your bills, please contact us as soon as possible. We've got a range of financial assistance options to help.

You can find out more about payment plans and other ways we can help at **originenergy.com.au/financial-support**

### Concessions and rebates

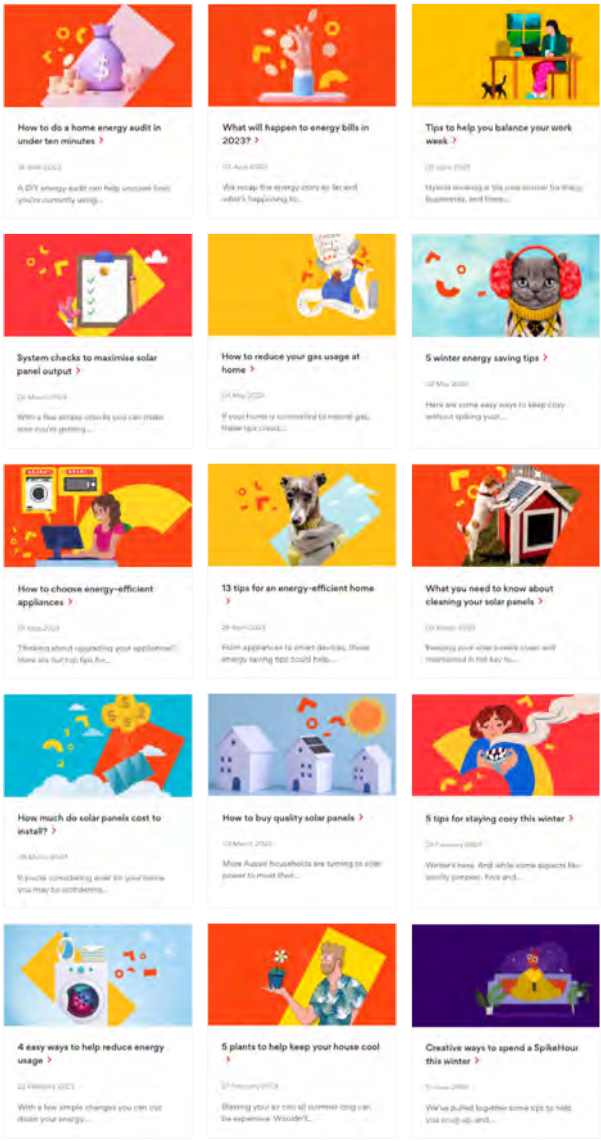
Check whether you're eligible for any government concessions, rebates or grants available in your state.

Go to **originenergy.com.au/concessions-rebates** and click on the tab for your state, or contact us and we'll help you.

# Want more energy saving tips?

We know how saving energy can be addictive once you get started.

Head over to our blog for more topics – there's sure to be something to interest you at **originenergy.com.au/efficiencytips**



# Energy efficiency contacts

For more information about energy efficiency, please contact us or an energy advisor in your state.

## Origin

Message us at **originenergy.com.au/contact**

Email: **hello@origin.com.au**

Electricity and natural gas: **13 24 61**

LPG: **13 35 74**

Solar or battery: **1300 791 468**

**originenergy.com.au/energytips**

**originenergy.com.au/efficiencytips**

## Other useful contacts

**energy.gov.au**

**yourhome.gov.au**

**energyrating.gov.au**

**energymadeeasy.gov.au** (NSW, ACT, SA, QLD)

**compare.energy.vic.gov.au** (VIC)

## VIC

Dept of Environment, Land, Water & Planning: **136 186**

**delwp.vic.gov.au/our-department/contact-us**

**energy.vic.gov.au**

## NSW

NSW Climate and Energy Action

Email: **hello@energysaver.nsw.gov.au**

**energy.nsw.gov.au**

## SA

Energy Advisory Service: (08) 8204 1888 or

1800 671 907 (free call from fixed lines)

Email: **energyadvice@sa.gov.au**

**sa.gov.au/energy**

## QLD

Department of Energy and Public Works: **13 74 68**

**epw.qld.gov.au/services/energy**

## WA

Energy Policy WA: (08) 6551 4600

Email: **EPWA-info@dmirs.wa.gov.au**

**energy.wa.gov.au**

# Sources

+ www.yourhome.gov.au/energy/heating-and-cooling

  Average household energy use (Energy Consult 2022 Residential energy baseline study: Australia 2000-2040)

  Note: these percentages represent an average and are indicative only as the amount of time heating or cooling is required varies according to local climate and other factors such as insulation levels and personal thermal comfort expectations.

> www.yourhome.gov.au/energy/appliances

# www.energy.gov.au/households/appliances

< www.climatechoices.act.gov.au/energy/energy-efficiency/energy-efficient-appliances

~ www.yourhome.gov.au/passive-design/insulation

^ www.yourhome.gov.au/energy/hot-water-systems

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ABN 11 086 013 283 • Origin Energy Electricity Limited ABN 33 071 052 287
Origin Energy LPG Limited ABN 77 000 508 369 • OC Energy Pty Ltd
ABN 62 144 655 514 • Sun Retail Pty Limited ABN 97 078 848 549
100 Waymouth Street, Adelaide SA 5000 • Telephone 13 24 61
Facsimile 1800 132 463 • Web enquiries originenergy.com.au/contactus

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