

1. Leaving the lights on in empty rooms

This is one of the most common energy-wasting habits. It is also one that is easy to fix. By simply turning off lights when you leave a room, you'll save energy and help your bulbs last longer. To save even more, install energy-efficient LEDs. They use 75% less energy than conventional incandescent bulbs and last a lot longer.

2. Not adjusting your thermostat

Adjusting the temperature of your home at night or when you are away is the most cost-effective way to save energy. Programmable thermostats optimize savings by automatically adjusting temperatures based on your schedule. Today's smart models provide advanced features, such as remote control and self-programming.

3. Falling asleep watching TV

Click the off button if you're feeling drowsy. If your set is older, upgrade to an ENERGY STAR TV. ENERGY STAR models use less energy than standard sets while still providing a great viewing (or sleeping) experience.

4. Taking long showers

Did you know that standard showerheads use 2.5 to 3.0 gallons per minute? Just think of all the water and energy those 20-minute showers are sending down the drain. Everyone likes a hot shower, but keep it to 10 minutes or less.

5. Running partial loads

Operating your dishwasher or clothes washer with just a few dishes or a small amount of clothes may sometimes be convenient, but it's a big waste of energy. Wait until your appliance is fully loaded according to manufacturer's guidelines before you flip the switch.

6. Forgetting to change your furnace filter

A dirty air filter forces your heating or cooling system to work harder to keep you comfortable. Change your furnace filter regularly according to manufacturer's guidelines.

7. Browsing in front of an open refrigerator

The time you spend deciding between lunch meat and leftover pizza can cost you cold cash. Every year, the average person spends about 10 hours looking at an open refrigerator or freezer, according to the Alliance to Save Energy. That's a lot of time for cold air to escape. Decide what you want and close the door quickly.