

25 Great Energy Habits to Adopt

1. Lower your thermostat at night and when you're not home. Use a programmable thermostat so it's automatic. Every degree lower can take 2 percent off your power bill.
2. Make it a habit to shut off lights, computers, and other appliances when you're not using them.
3. Switch to compact fluorescent bulbs. They use a quarter of the energy used by regular bulbs.
4. Replace halogen lamps in torchieres with compact fluorescent torchieres. They use about 70 percent less energy and produce more light.
5. Use motion detectors to turn on outdoor lights rather than leaving them on all night.
6. Close your fireplace damper when there's no fire. Leaving it open is like having a 48-inch-square hole in your house.
7. Close off and don't heat unoccupied rooms.
8. Take showers with low-flow showerheads (they use 50 percent less hot water) instead of baths.
9. Set your water heater at 115 degrees (F), which is comfortable for most uses. Turn your water heater off when you go on vacation.
10. Wrap your water heater in R11 insulated wrap, but don't cover the thermostat.
11. Run only full loads in your dishwashers and clothes washers and wash in warm or cold water.
12. Wash and dry clothes on weekends when energy use isn't as high.
13. Air dry your dishes. In nicer weather or in a warm basement, air dry your clothes.
14. Clean your furnace and heat pump filters to keep them operating efficiently.
15. Limit use of kitchen and bathroom fans since they pull heat out of the house.
16. Open south-facing drapes and blinds during the day to let heat in. Cover all windows at night in winter.
17. Weatherstrip around your doors and windows and anywhere you feel a draft.
18. Set your refrigerator between 37 and 40 degrees (F).
19. Keep your refrigerator well stocked. It takes more energy to cool an empty fridge.
20. Clean lint out of refrigerator coils and out of dryers.
21. Use a microwave or toaster oven for cooking and heating small portions.
22. Check ceilings and crawl spaces to ensure there's adequate insulation.
23. Seal or fix broken basement windows.
24. Fix broken ducts and replace cracked or peeling tape on ducts. Use tape with the UL (Underwriters Laboratories) logo.
25. For long-term savings, choose and use energy-efficient appliances. Compare energy rating labels before you buy.

For more information, call your local utility or go to www.bpa.gov where you can get the U.S. Department of Energy's "Energy Savers" tips on saving energy and money at home.

Top Ten Valentine's Day Gifts

from giftideacenter.com

1. **Give Something Personal**
Make a card, write down reasons that you love him or her, write a poem, embarrass yourself because you love them!
2. **Roses or a Floral Arrangement**
You can place your order and make sure your flowers arrive on Valentine's Day.
3. **Spend Time Together**
Nothing means more than being together with your sweetheart, kids, and the ones you love, so make the time to be together.
4. **Dinner**
Romantic, casual, or fun and entertaining – enjoy a dinner that's different from the norm.
5. **Chocolates**
This may be the sweetest gift you can give on this holiday – most notably Godiva.
6. **Jewelry – Pendants**
Earrings, necklaces, bracelets – something that sparkles and shines can add special meaning



to Valentine's Day. Other jewelry sites: First Jewelry or Zales.com.

7. **Fragrances**
Perfume for her, cologne for him
8. **Gifts of Relaxation**
A gift of comfort, peace, and tranquility will make your time together much more stress free. Check into a spa or look into aromatherapy candles.
9. **Weekend Together**
Plan a weekend together at a bed-n-breakfast for Valentine's weekend.

10. **Read the Gift Giving Stories**
Come up with your own unique and creative gift. You'll find suggestions to fit any budget.

For more great ideas go to www.giftideacenter.com.

Tips for Lower Heating Bills

- Check for air leaks around all windows and doors. Using a burning candle or incense stick, go around all windows and doors. If the smoke blows away from the entrance, there is a leak. Seal the area with plastic secured by tape or stuff cracks with newspaper. For cracks under doors, seal the area with rolled-up newspapers filled with sand or old towels.

