

Saving energy is easier than you think

Contents

Insulate your home.....	2
How to save gas	3
How to save electricity	5
Heating your home on Economy 7.....	6
More ways to reduce your energy bills	7
Our commitment to energy efficiency	7
Useful contacts	7
If you have a complaint	8

When you save energy, you save money and help the environment. This guide provides practical ways to help you reduce your energy bills and your carbon footprint.

Please see the last page for all our contact details.

Energy savings that soon add up. Annual saving on energy costs

Boiler and controls	around £200
Cavity wall insulation	around £145
Loft insulation	around £130
Draught proofing	around £35
Hot water tank insulation (From uninsulated) (25mm topped up to 80mm)	around £80 £20
A+++ rated fridge freezer	up to £16
Primary pipework insulation	£3 to £7
Top-up loft insulation	around £12
A+++ rated dishwasher	up to £6
A+++ rated tumble dryer	£38

Source: Energy Saving Trust. The savings shown are approximate, provided for illustrative purposes only and based on a typical three-bedroom semi detached gas heated house, with an 84% efficient gas boiler and average gas tariff of 3.63p/kWh and electricity tariff of 14.37p/kWh; correct as of April 2018.

Insulate your home

Insulating your home could make big savings on your energy bill. Loft installation could save you around £135 a year and cavity wall insulation around £150 a year.

Insulate your hot water cylinder If you have a hot water cylinder, check that it's fully insulated. If not, invest in an insulating jacket that is at least 75mm (3" thick).

Insulate your pipe work Hot water pipes should also be insulated to prevent heat loss. Pre-formed pipe insulation is available from most DIY shops.

Put foil behind your radiators Putting reflective foil behind your radiators can reflect heat back into your room and increase radiator efficiency.

Preventing heat loss

Draw your curtains at night – heavy lined curtains, especially those with heat-reflective, insulated linings will help reduce heat loss.

Don't put furniture in front of radiators as it absorbs the heat and stops it from heating.*

If you don't have double glazing, stretch a roll of clear film across your window frames in winter – available from most DIY shops.

Leave ventilation grilles uncovered.

How to save gas

Upgrade your boiler New gas condensing boilers are much more efficient than old ones. If your boiler is over 15 years old, consider replacing it with a new gas condensing boiler with heating controls.

Adjust your thermostat Reduce the temperature in your home by just 1°C and reduce your heating bill by up to 10%. Keep turning it down until you reach the lowest temperature you feel comfortable with – the recommended temperature is between 18°C – 21°C.

Only use your central heating when you need it

- Set your central heating timer to turn on 15 minutes before you get up or arrive home, and turn off 30 minutes before you leave for work or go to bed
- When the property is empty, turn the room thermostat low, as near to 5°C as possible and leave the heating on to protect against frost and burst pipes. It will only come on if the house gets too cold

Check your water temperature If you have a thermostat on your hot water system, it may be heating your water more than necessary. The normal level for hot water is 60°C (140°F).

Use a hot water thermostat Have a separate clamp-on thermostat and control valve fitted to your hot water cylinder and set the temperature to 60°C.

Draught proof your home Fit draught proofing around windows, outside doors and skylights. Fill gaps between windows and door frames, taking care not to block any ventilation. You can do this yourself or use a professional installer.

Install a shower A shower uses around a third** of the water needed for a bath – but power showers use more energy than standard showers.

Boiler thermostat This controls how hot the water is that goes to your taps/ radiators/under floor pipes. If you also have a room thermostat, the boiler turns off when it reaches the temperature on the room thermostat. Most boilers and water cylinders have a minimum temperature of 40°C and a maximum of 80°C. The recommended setting is 60°C.

Where is my boiler thermostat?

Condensing Combination boiler

The thermostat is located on the front of the boiler and should be set as follows. Set the dial or controller based on the number of radiators:

- 0-5: Just above halfway (60–65°C)
- 6-9: Three quarters (70–75°C).
- 10+: Maximum (75–80°C)

Back boiler with a fire

This thermostat is located under the fire or at the side of the boiler and should be set at maximum in winter and half way in summer.

Conventional boiler with separate water cylinder

This thermostat is located on the front of the boiler and cylinder. It should be set the same as the combination boiler controls above. The hot water cylinder's thermostat should be set to 60°C.

Room thermostat

If you have one, it should be set between 18–21°C. Every degree above 18°C will add up to 5–10% to your consumption.

Extra thermostats

If you have more than one main thermostat, adjust the temperature in the other rooms as low as 10–15°C if you don't need to keep them as warm.

Thermostatic radiator valves (TRV)

TRVs allow you to control the temperature in different rooms separately. Lowering them in lesser used rooms will reduce usage, but don't turn them off completely as a little heat helps prevent damp. If your room thermostat is in a room with radiators that have TRVs, make sure these are set to maximum to prevent the radiator shutting down before you reach the temperature on the room thermostat.

No thermostat

If you don't have a room thermostat, the boiler thermostat controls the temperature of your property. So, find a setting that you find comfortable.

The lower this is, the less gas it will use but the longer it will take to get warm. Having room thermostats fitted is also important if you're considering big improvements, such as insulation or new windows – you could see less benefits from installing them.

How to save electricity

Choose energy efficient lighting

- When you're not using lights, remember to switch them off
- Replace traditional bulbs with energy-saving ones or LEDs – they use 90% less energy
- Install solar lights outdoors – they'll charge during the day for use at night.
- Use motion sensor for security lights. It prevents the lights being on longer than needed

Use smarter washes

- Use shorter cycles and only run your dishwasher and washing machine when they're full
- Use your washer at 30°C. This will save around a third compared to a 40°C wash
- Spin your clothes then hang them out to dry instead of using a tumble dryer. Tumble dryers use a large amount of electricity

Check your fridge settings

- Set your fridge temperature to between 3 and 5°C. Freezers work best at -18°C
- Avoid putting hot food in your fridge, but do defrost items in it overnight. This will help lower the fridge temperature rather than raise it
- Make sure cold air isn't escaping by checking the fridge seal fits correctly

Cook more efficiently

- Put lids on pans to keep heat in and use less water – your pans will also heat up faster
- Switch your oven off a few minutes early and let your cooking finish as it cools
- Microwaves, steamers and slow cookers use less energy than a conventional oven – aim to use them if you can

Reduce unnecessary water heating

- Choose showers over baths – they can save a lot of hot water
- Make sure taps are fully turned off so your boiler isn't heating water unnecessarily
- Try adding a magnetic filter to immersion tanks and prevent the build-up of scale – just 1mm can reduce your heating efficiency by 10%
- Try not to overfill your kettle. Heating more water than you need wastes energy

Switch off rather than standby

- Appliances like your TV, computer and hi-fi continue to use electricity when on standby mode, which can add up to 6% to your bill. So, it makes sense to switch off and save

Choose A+ rated appliances

- They are more efficient so save energy

Heating your home with Economy 7

Storage heater settings Storage heaters should have a separate on and off switch on the wall next to it. The switch should be left in the on position throughout the heating season. Its special wiring will ensure the heater only uses cheaper 'low-rate' electricity. You can control storage heaters individually which means you can choose different heat settings for different rooms.

Manual or Automatic input (charge) This controls how much heat you store overnight. The higher the input, the more heat you will store and the more electricity you will use. You should only need to adjust the input control setting when the outside temperature changes.

- Spring, summer, autumn: Experiment with which one(s) meet your needs. If you don't need them at all, turn them off at the switch
- Winter: During winter, set the input to maximum in your main living area so the heater has enough stored heat to last all day. You may also want to do as above in other rooms depending on how much they are used

Manual output (boost) This controls how much of the stored heat is released. The higher the value, the more stored heat is released but with no more electricity being used.

During the day To run your heater economically, set the output to the lowest setting when you're leaving the house, and put it back up when you return.

Overnight Set to a minimum overnight. This will give you more stored heat to use during the day, and prevent unnecessary heat loss at night, saving you money.

Automatic output (boost) Allows you to pre-set the room temperature for each heater. Adjust the output for the first few days until your ideal room temperature is found.

Immersion tanks These are timed to heat up for seven hours during the off-peak rate, providing a full tank of hot water (depending on the tank size) to last you the day. Most immersion heaters have a boost function that heats 1/3 of the tank in 1 hour (some controls give more options). It's designed to be used during peak rate when you run out of hot water, but is more expensive and should be used sparingly.

More ways to reduce your energy bills

Choose a cheaper electricity tariff

At British Gas we offer two billing types for electricity. Our Single Rate charges the same unit price around the clock and is best if you don't use much electricity at night.

Two Rate Economy 7 charges a cheaper unit price for electricity used in off-peak hours., usually around midnight to 7am, please contact us for your area timings. If you use appliances at night, such as night storage heaters, it's a great way to save money.

You don't have any exit fees on your British Gas Evolve tariff so you can leave if you find a cheaper energy deal elsewhere.

Our commitment to energy efficiency

At British Gas, we install the most efficient gas condensing boilers with heating controls to make homes more energy efficient and cost less to run.

Expert guidance

Our highly trained Energy Efficiency Advisors can give you free advice about the best use of appliances, setting your heating controls and practical ways to reduce heat loss. Call our Energy Efficiency Advice Line on 0800 072 8629 between 8am and 5pm, Monday to Friday.

Useful contacts

British Gas Energy Efficiency Advice Line 0800 072 8629

Or write to us at: British Gas, Energy Efficiency Advice, FREEPOST SCE 11607, Southampton SO14 0UA

For ECO grants to households claiming Government benefits:

NEA (National Energy Action)0191 261 5677
nea.org.uk

For impartial advice about reducing energy costs and consumption –

Energy Action Scotland0141 226 3064

For impartial advice about reducing energy costs and consumption –

Energy Saving Trust 0800 512 012

For information about grants to improve your home’s energy efficiency

Impartial advice about reducing energy and availability of Carbon Trust grants
..... 020 3944 0968

For general advice and assistance for small and medium businesses, including energy reduction

Gas Safety Advice (Health and Safety Executive)0800 408 5500

Energy Action Scotland (Scotland)0141 226 3064

NEST Scheme (Wales) 0808 808 2244

For advice about safely using gas

Council of Registered Gas Installers0800 408 5500

National Emergency Provider0800 111 999

If you have a complaint about your energy account

We’re committed to giving you the highest quality service. If you’re unhappy with the service we’ve provided, and would like to make a complaint, our ‘We’re Listening’ complaints handling leaflet gives you all the information you need to know. To see a copy, go to britishgasevolve.co.uk/contact-us.



* Source: Energy Saving Trust. The savings shown are approximate, provided for illustrative purposes only and based on a gas heated semi-detached house with three bedrooms.

** www.energysavingtrust.org.uk

† Always make sure food is cooked through before eating it.

We may record calls to help improve our service to you. Calls to 0800 and 0333 numbers are free.

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