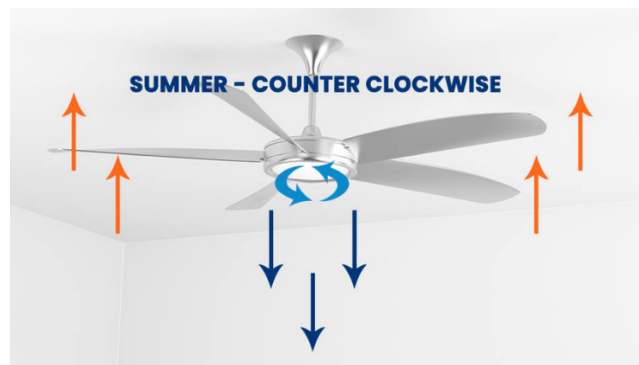


No Cost Tips to Save Energy & Money

There are many things we can do to reduce our energy use and lower our bills that don't cost us anything. Scroll through the energy efficiency tips below for steps you can take once or on an ongoing basis with changes to how you manage your home's temperature, appliances, and lighting.

Tips for the Summer

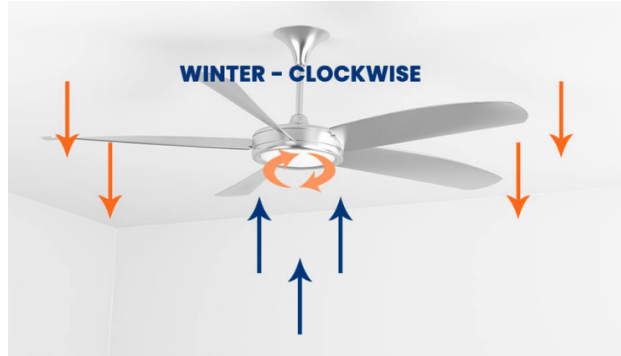
- **Increase Your Thermostat:** In the summertime, you can increase your thermostat to a higher temperature when the home is occupied during the day, based on your household member's comfort. Increase it by three more degrees when you are gone for longer periods, like the work day.
- **Use Fans:** When you're in the home, fans can help occupants feel much cooler than the temperature set on the thermostat by creating a breeze, while not requiring much energy use in comparison to Air Conditioning. Stand-alone fans like box fans, table fans, and pedestal fans are all great options. When using a ceiling fan in the summer, make sure it is switched to turn *counter-clockwise* using the switch near the base of the blades. Fans cool people, not rooms, though, so remember to turn fans off when you leave a room.



- **Close South-Facing Curtains:** You can help your cooling system by closing window curtains and blinds during hot summer days to block solar heat, especially from south-facing windows.
- **Block drafty areas:** Roll up towels and place them at the base of exterior doors to prevent cool air from escaping.
- **Lock the windows:** Flip window latches shut completely rather than just pushing windows down; locking creates a tighter, airtight seal against drafts.
- **Keep vents clear:** Move furniture, rugs, and curtains away from registers so air circulates freely without making your system work harder.
- **Close unused room vents:** Shut the air registers in empty guest rooms or storage areas to redirect climate control to active spaces.

Tips for the Winter

- **Use Ceiling Fans:** In the winter, ceiling fans should rotate *clockwise* when viewed from below. There is a switch near the base of the blades. This creates a gentle updraft that pulls cooler air from the floor and pushes the warm air trapped near the ceiling down, redistributing heat throughout the room. Use the lowest setting to avoid creating a breeze.



- **Lower Your Thermostat:** You can reduce your thermostat temperature to 68 degrees when the home is occupied during the day, and lower it by three degrees when you are gone or asleep.
- **Open South-Facing Curtains:** To help your thermostat even further, you can open curtains (especially on south-facing windows) during winter days to absorb free solar heat, and close them at night to limit the cold coming inside through window panes.
- **Hang temporary blankets:** In extremely cold weather, drape thick blankets or sheets over sunny window curtain rods to act as makeshift thermal insulation layers.
- **Block drafty areas:** Roll up towels and place them at the base of exterior doors to prevent warm air from escaping.
- **Lock the windows:** Flip window latches shut completely rather than just pushing windows down; locking creates a tighter, airtight seal against drafts.
- **Keep vents clear:** Move furniture, rugs, and curtains away from registers so air circulates freely without making your system work harder.
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- [This video](#) has good tips for other ways to stay cozy and cut costs in your home during wintertime.

Water Use & Laundry Tips

Water heating is typically the second-largest energy expense in a home! When you use hot water, you're paying for the water as well as the electricity or gas used to heat it. To reduce energy used related to water and laundry, you can:

- **Conserve Water:** Shortening your shower (5 minutes is a good goal) directly reduces the hot water your apartment tank has to constantly reheat. Try turning off the tap while you wash your dishes and turning it on only to rinse them.
- **Wash full loads with cold water:** Washing your laundry in cold water whenever possible reduces your energy bill by eliminating the energy needed to heat the water.
- **Air Dry:** Changing how you dry your laundry can help reduce your costs, too. Air-drying your laundry on a line or a rack will reduce the average home's energy use by about \$50-\$200 per year. If you don't have a rack or line, you can hang wet clothes on plastic hangers over the shower rod.
- **Use Dryer Balls:** When using a dryer, make sure it runs efficiently and limit fire risk by cleaning the lint filter after each use. You can also purchase wool dryer balls for under \$10, which help to reduce drying times and associated energy use by 20% or more.

Kitchen Tips

- **Use micro-appliances:** "Micro-appliances," such as microwaves, air fryers, toasters ovens and crock pots are more efficient than gas or electric stoves and large ovens. Use these when possible, especially when cooking small amounts of food, to maximize energy efficiency.
- **Air-dry your dishes:** Turn off the "heated dry" setting on your dishwasher and let your plates air-dry inside the rack instead.
- **Clean refrigerator coils:** Twice a year, carefully move your refrigerator to gently just the coils. See more in-depth directions on the page "DIY: Cleaning Refrigerator Coils"
- **Check the fridge seal:** Trap a dollar bill in the refrigerator door; if it pulls out easily without resistance, ask the landlord to fix the worn gasket.

The Full Fridge Trick: Every time you open the refrigerator door, cold air spills out, and warm room air rushes inside. The appliance then has to use electricity to cool that new warm air back down. Solid objects and liquids hold onto cold temperatures much better than open air does. Once food and liquids are chilled or frozen solid, they take up the empty space where warm air would normally enter. This means less warm air gets inside when you open the door, keeping the appliance naturally colder and saving energy.

To help reduce the energy that your refrigerator requires, fill clean, leftover plastic jugs or bottles with tap water and place them in the empty spots of your fridge or freezer. Place the jugs away from the small plastic vents inside the back and top of the fridge or freezer, since blocking these vents stops cold air from circulating, forcing the appliance to work harder and waste energy.

Make sure you leave at least a two-inch gap of empty air at the top before freezing, because water expands as it turns to ice and will crack the plastic.

Bonus benefit: If you ever lose power, those frozen and chilled water jugs will act like ice packs, keeping your milk, eggs, and groceries safe from spoiling for a much longer time.

Daily Tips

- **Use PowerStrips and unplug standby electronics:** Disconnect chargers, computers and monitors, coffee makers, gaming consoles, and other small appliances when not in use to stop standby power draw.
- **Turn off lights:** Switch off every light bulb when exiting a room to save electricity and prevent extra heat buildup from older bulbs.
- **Utilize daylight:** When the weather is moderate, rely on natural sunlight through windows for daytime tasks instead of flipping on overhead light fixtures.