

Energy Efficiency Tips for Renters

How to Talk to Your Landlord About Energy Improvements

For renters, some changes to a property need landlord permission. Changes that would require landlord sign-off include anything done by a contractor, like appliance switching (electrification), wiring (thermostat change), and plumbing (installing new toilet).

When talking to your landlord about implementing upgrades to the home, through DIY or a program with contractors, you can use some of the following points for energy efficiency measure

- Energy efficiency makes buildings cheaper to operate, which helps their bottom line.
- Home upgrades raise a building's property value.
- These measures help make a rental unit more attractive to retain current, reliable tenants, and attract new tenants.

The nonprofit Rewiring America has a great guide [here](#) on how to talk to your landlord about electrification, which includes a savings calculator, a draft email to your landlord, and more!

Renter's No-Cost Energy Saving Checklist

Living Room and Temperature Control

- **Adjust the Thermostat:** Set your AC to 78°F (in summer and your heater to 68°F in winter when you are home.
- **Use "Away" Settings:** Turn the AC up or heating down by 7–10 degrees when leaving for more than two hours.
- **Spin Fans Counterclockwise:** Run ceiling fans counterclockwise in summer to create a breeze. Turn them off when you leave the room.
- **Lock All Windows:** Flip the window latches shut completely. Locking creates a tight, airtight seal that blocks outside drafts.
- **Block Door Gaps:** Roll up a bath towel and press it firmly against the bottom of your front door to stop hallway drafts.
- **Unplug "Vampire" Electronics:** Disconnect gaming consoles, streaming devices, and chargers when they are not actively in use.

Kitchen & Cooking

- **Skip the Big Oven:** Use a microwave, toaster oven, or air fryer instead of the main oven to keep your living space cooler.
- **Fill Extra Space with Jugs of Water:** If you have a lot of space in your refrigerator, fill jugs with water and place in fridge to help keep cold air inside when you open the door.
- **Turn Off Dishwasher Heat:** Press the "Air Dry" button or crack the machine door open after the final rinse to skip the heating cycle.
- **Decide Before You Open:** Don't stand with the refrigerator door open. Grab what you need quickly so the cold air doesn't escape.
- **Unplug Countertop Appliances:** Pull the plugs on your microwave, toaster, and coffee maker when you are done using them.
- **Test Your Fridge Seal:** Close the fridge door on a dollar bill. If it pulls out easily, your landlord needs to replace the worn gasket.

Bathroom & Laundry

- **Wash Clothes in Cold:** Always select the cold water cycle. This eliminates the massive amount of energy needed to heat the water.
- **Hang Dry on Racks:** Skip the dryer. Hang wet clothes on a folding rack or use plastic hangers over your bathroom shower rod.
- **Take 5-Minute Showers:** Shortening your shower directly reduces the hot water your apartment tank has to constantly reheat.
- **Report Leaks Immediately:** Notify your landlord right away about a running toilet or dripping faucet. A single leak can skyrocket a water bill.