A guide to

TOP TIPS ON SAVING ENERGY

severn wye

Ready, set, save!

This guide takes you through some simple but effective ways to reduce your energy use, saving you money and giving you back some control over your energy.

Heating

Programme your heating
Make sure you have a programmable thermostat and are using it! If you're not sure how to do this, you should be able to find manuals for most thermostats online, or ask our energy advisors to help.

Turn down your thermostat
Turning down your heating by just one degree could cut your heating bill by up to 10%. Avoid using plug in heaters if possible, they are expensive to run.

Reduce the flow temperature of your boiler
If you have a post-2005 combination or a condensing boiler, this is the temperature of the water that goes to your radiators, and it's often set higher than it needs to be. 55°C or point '3' on your boiler's dial is a good place to start.

Put reflective foil behind your radiators
This is especially important for radiators on external walls. This will reflect heat back into room, rather than letting it escape through the walls.

Set your thermostatic radiator valves (TRVs)
Set the TRVs on your radiators to be lower in rooms you don't use often (bathrooms, hallways, bedrooms) and make sure they're not covered. You could try only fully heating one room (your main living space).

Keep furniture away from radiators
This will allow the warm air to circulate around the room. If you need to dry clothes on them, make sure you remove them as soon as they're dry.

If you have storage heaters check the next day forecast
This will ensure you can set the input appropriately. Make sure units in unused rooms stay off.

Guide to optimising your boiler:
warmandwell.co.uk/flow

Guide to wet central heating:
warmandwell.co.uk/guides/wet-central-heating-systems

Guide to heaters and fires:
warmandwell.co.uk/guides/a-guide-to-heaters-and-fires

Insulation

Keep the heat in and the cold out
Draft-proof your home wherever you can feel coldspots. Gaps around old or aging windows, around your loft hatch and between exposed floorboards are all good places to start.

Insulate your loft
It is recommended that you have 400mm of loft insulation installed, but anything over 150mm is adequate.

Insulate your hot water tank
If your home has a hot water cylinder you can insulate the tank to keep your water warm for longer.

Shut that door
If you have a composite or UPVC door, make sure you always have the double locking mechanism engaged (once the door is closed, lift the handle so the door locks tighter).

Guide to insulation:
warmandwell.co.uk/resources/a-guide-to-insulation

Water

Save in the kitchen
Dishwashers are normally more efficient than washing up by hand (but make sure you're putting on a full load). Get used to boiling only as much water as you need.

Make your shower and taps more efficient
Water efficient, 'aerated' shower heads can be fitted to most mains showers and give the same experience while using less water and energy. You'll save on your water bill and you'll save on the amount of energy you're using to heat your water. You can fit flow restrictors or aerators to taps too.

Try to reduce your shower time by 30–60 seconds
It's easy to zone out in the shower, but long showers use a lot of energy. If you're a fan of baths, consider either having less or ditching them altogether (for now), as showers cost significantly less.

Guide to reducing water use:
warmandwell.co.uk/guides/reducing-water-use

Lighting and appliances

Use low-energy lightbulbs
Replacing your lightbulbs with low-energy equivalents can make a huge difference to your energy bill. LEDs can use 90% less energy than standard lightbulbs. Low energy bulbs don't cost extra to warm up so even if you're out of the room for a few minutes, get into the habit of turning them off.

Check your outdoor security lights
Make sure they only come on when you want them to and adjust any timers throughout the year to match daylight hours.

Check for vampire devices
These are devices (or appliances) that are draining energy even when you're not using them. Prioritise anything that feels hot to the touch (such as printers), appliances with a digital display or standby light. Some appliances have hidden transformers so if in doubt, switch it off at the wall.

Shrink your bills, not your clothes
Ninety percent of a washing machine's energy is spent heating the water, so wash your clothes at 30–40°C instead. This will help look after your clothes for longer and save you money.

Get smart
Smart meters are offered free of charge by most energy companies. You can use them to watch in real time what you are using and spending, and they can stop you being under or overcharged by estimated bills.

Use timer plugs
Timer plugs can help you manage the amount of energy that goes to gadgets and appliances (or seasonal decorations such as Christmas lights). You can get 'smart' timer plugs that you can set to switch off and on at sunrise and sunset, to automatically save more energy as the days get longer.

Guide to buying and using appliances:
warmandwell.co.uk/guides/using-and-buying-appliances

Heating the person, not the home

If you're struggling to keep your home warm or you're at home for long periods during the day (you could be unwell or working from home), you could consider investing in a heated blanket or other personal warming device (such as hand warmers or a heated bodywarmer). If you're not using your heating, make sure you keep an eye out for any signs of damp and clean any mould that appears.

Guide to heating the person:
warmandwell.co.uk/articles/heating-the-person-not-the-home

Speak to Warm and Well

There is often grant funding available to help you make your home more energy efficient, including improving insulation, upgrading windows and installing central or low-carbon heating. Speak to an Energy Advisor on 0800 500 3076, where you can also arrange a free home visit to look at specific ways you can save energy at home.

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Severn Wye Energy Agency is a non-profit company (company no: 03830608) and registered charity (charity no: 1083812) primarily operating throughout Wales and its English border counties, supporting communities, residents and businesses to create a sustainable, affordable, low carbon future.

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