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## An Energy Efficient House

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Moving into a new house offers you the perfect chance to create an energy-efficient home. Home energy efficiency helps you do your part to protect the environment - and saves you money.

These inexpensive ideas can help boost your home energy conservation. Many of these projects can be completed in a matter of hours, cost next to nothing, and require no special tools or know-how.

### Install Ceiling Fans

If you don't already have fans, installing them helps save energy and beautifies your home, which ultimately adds value.

[Ceiling fans](#) save energy since they allow you to adjust your thermostat accordingly when they're running. Use fans year-round to save energy.

In the summer, fan blades should revolve in a counterclockwise direction. Using ceiling fans in the summer allows you to raise the thermostat temperature, reducing the workload of your air conditioner.

In the winter, set your ceiling fan to revolve in a clockwise direction. Set it at its slowest speed in order to gently push warm air down from the ceiling without generating a breeze. Then lower the thermostat temperature, reducing the workload of your heating unit.

### Invest in Energy-Saving Gadgets

[Programmable thermostats](#) improve home energy efficiency by lowering energy use during those times when you are away from home or asleep.

### Insulate Your Water Heater

Insulate your water heater with a water heater blanket. For a small investment, you can significantly reduce the amount of heat lost by the unit, particularly if it is located in an unheated area.

Lower your water heater's thermostat setting to 120° F. Timers are also available which help water heaters adjust to your water usage schedule.

### Wrap Pipes

Do your water pipes pass through an unheated area? Wrapping your pipes is another inexpensive way to conserve energy.

Insulating your hot water pipes keeps them from losing heat. Insulating cold water pipes can prevent them from sweating and dripping in heated areas, or freezing in unheated areas.

### Replace Furnace Filters

Changing furnace filters conserves energy. Most furnace filters are inexpensive, disposable and easy to replace.

For optimal performance replace your furnace filter monthly. If you use the more expensive disposable filters designed to filter out allergens and extremely small particles, replace at least every three months.

Self-charging electrostatic filters that require no electricity are also available. Clean these filters by rinsing once a month.

### Cover Windows and Seal Doors

Heat lost through windows and doors represents a significant chunk of most heating bills. Loss through windows alone could account for up to 35 percent of heating bills. Put that money back in your pocket:

[Caulk](#) around the doorway to keep out drafts.

Check windows and doors on a windy day with a candle or a light piece of thread to determine where drafts are and what areas need immediate attention.

Remove and replace damaged caulk and [weatherstripping](#). Self-stick foam and rolled rubber weatherstripping are easy to install, and help create an energy-efficient house.

Consider using inexpensive window weatherizing kits consisting of thin, clear plastic film and two-sided tape. After film is attached to two-sided tape, film is then stretched taut using heat from a blow dryer to remove wrinkles and creases.

Use energy efficient [window treatments](#) - closed shutters, window shades, blinds, curtains, and lined draperies contribute to energy savings by helping to insulate windows.

For maximum energy efficiency consider energy efficient replacement [windows](#), or storm windows and [doors](#).

### Install Fireplace Dampers and Doors

A fireplace can rob your house of heat. Fortunately, there are energy efficient solutions that allow you to enjoy your fireplace while minimizing heat loss. Here are some energy-saving tips:

Consider adding a well-designed fireplace heater insert. These units come with blowers and thermostats. They are designed to significantly increase the heating efficiency while maintaining the classic fireplace atmosphere.

Check to make sure that your damper is in good working order.

Add [glass doors](#) to reduce heat loss as the fire dies down.

### Develop Habits for Practical Energy Conservation

Reduce your energy costs by following these suggestions:

Install water-saving showerheads to reduce water consumption.

Use heat-generating appliances such as washers, dryers and ovens during the cooler hours of the morning or evening. This reduces the load on your air conditioner in the summer, and helps heat the house in the winter.

Wash full loads of clothes when possible and clean your dryer's lint filter after every load.

Replace incandescent bulbs with compact fluorescent (CFL) bulbs. Fluorescent bulbs also last about ten times as long!

In the summer, keep drapes and curtains closed on the sunny side of the house. In the winter, open those drapes and curtains on sunny days to take advantage of the sun's heating power. Close all drapes, blinds or shades on winter nights to use your window treatments' insulating properties.

Set thermostats at 68° F in the winter and 78° F in the summer.

Learn more in either the [Energy Efficiency](#) or [Energy Center](#) sections of Lowes.com.

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