Energy & Water Ombudsman NSW
Free, fair and independent

Saving energy & water around the home

The kitchen

Refrigeration

Fridges and freezers work 24 hours, seven days a week! They operate most efficiently if they're cleaned regularly, frost free and tightly sealed.

Help keep your fridge in good condition by putting it in a cool, ventilated position with space around it.

A second fridge or freezer can add $300 a year to your energy bill. Fridges work best when they're full so putting your perishables into one and turning the other one off makes sense.

Dishwashing

Always run your dishwasher with a full load, on economy mode or fast wash cycles and clean the filters regularly. Use a plug when you wash the dishes by hand. Cleaning under a running tap is like pouring money down the drain!

Cooking

Only use the amount of water you need in cooking pots and put the lid on to heat the water faster and help prevent evaporation. It's even more efficient to boil water in your kettle first then put it in a pot for cooking. When it's time to make a cup of tea don't overfill your kettle - save energy and water and only boil the amount of water you need. Wash vegetables in a bucket or bowl and then reuse the water on your plants.

Living areas

Appliances

Leaving appliances on standby (when the light is on) wastes energy and can add up to 7% or $170 to your electricity bill. Turn off computers and game consoles at the wall when they're not being used.

Compare products and calculate the cost of running appliances with the Energy Rating calculator at **energyrating.gov.au/calculator** The more stars the more savings.

ENERGY RATING

Cooling and heating

Fans are the most energy efficient type of powered cooling costing 3-5 cents per hour. If you use an air conditioner set the temperature to 24-26°C in summer and 18-21°C in winter. Every degree outside this range can add up to 10% to your heating or cooling costs.

Insulate then heat! Around a third of your home's heat escapes through draughts. Keep the heat in with door snakes, curtains and draught-proof strips. Using a large heater for just six hours per day can add around $360 a quarter to your energy bill. Select a heater that turns off when it reaches a set temperature and only heat the rooms you're using. Some heaters cost less to buy, but more to run. For heater reviews free of commercial bias, visit **choice.com.au/home-and-living/heating**

Lighting

Reduce your bills by switching to low-energy LED lighting. The bulbs cost more initially, but they last longer. Consider sensor lighting for outdoor areas, which switch on when you're near them and off after you've left the area. When you're decorating for the festive season or house parties, choose LED lighting and don't leave the lights on all night.
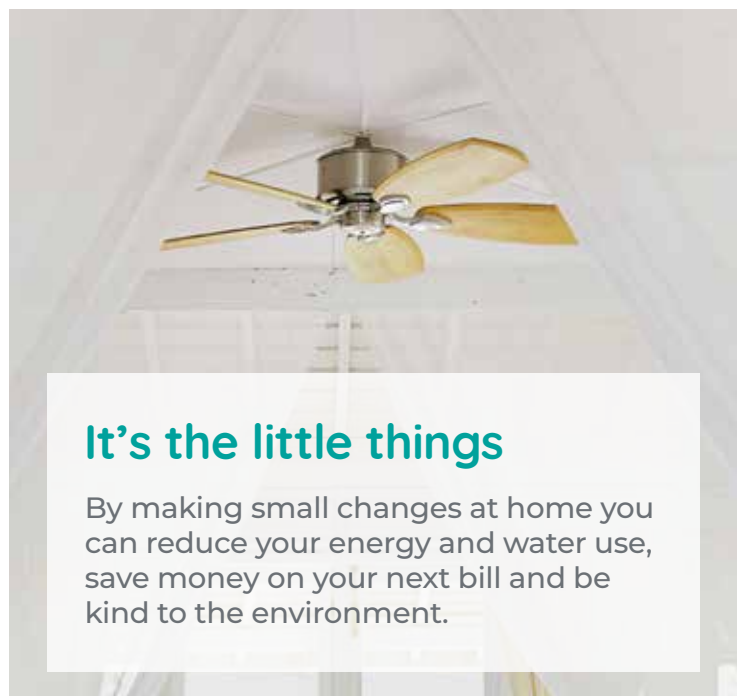
It's the little things

By making small changes at home you can reduce your energy and water use, save money on your next bill and be kind to the environment.

Bathroom & laundry

Clothes washing

Save water and energy by choosing an energy efficient washing machine and a water efficient tap. Check how products compare at **waterrating.gov.au**. Hot or warm wash cycles use a lot of extra energy. Switch to cold water to save up to $124 a year and try to only wash full loads.

Drying

If the sun's shining use nature's dryer – fresh air! If you do use a dryer, spin dry your load in the washing machine first to remove as much water as possible. Also make sure your dryer runs efficiently by cleaning the lint filter after every cycle and don't overload it or leave it on longer than necessary.

Plumbing

Fix leaking toilets and taps. A tap dripping 45 times per minute wastes around 2,000 litres a month. If it's a hot water tap energy is also wasted. Check the toilet's cistern isn't leaking by watching for water flowing after you flush.

Toilets use a lot of water. Older models can use up to 12 litres of water per flush, while dual-flush toilets use only three litres on a half-flush.

Water heating accounts for about 21% of household energy use. Make sure your system suits your household's size and consumption and consider the switch to renewable energy - solar hot water system makes the most of our climate. Learn more about your hot water options at **yourhome.gov.au/energy/hot-water-service**

Keeping clean

Reduce water use by using water efficient showerheads and taps. Check and compare water flow rates on labels. Showers use less water than baths, as long as you keep them to 10 minutes or less. Shorter showers save water and the energy used to heat the water.

Outdoors

Cleaning

Wash your car at a car wash that recycles water or give your grass a drink by washing it on the lawn rather than in the driveway.

Give the hose (and water) a break by using a broom or rake to clean driveways and footpaths.

Gardening

Using mulch helps reduce weeds and retain water in your garden's soil - without it up to 70% of water is lost due to evaporation.

Use recycled household water on your plants and watering cans or trigger nozzles to make sure you only use water in areas where it's needed.

Consider planting your garden or balcony with native plants that are used to our climate and can flourish on very little water. The best times to water are in the morning or evening and remember to water the roots, not the leaves.

Pools

Keeping your pool covered prevents evaporation and can save 30,000L of water a year. Use the most energy efficient pump for your pool or spa's size and check for leaks.

Make a complaint or enquiry

Freecall	1800 246 545* Mon - Fri, 9am - 5pm
Freefax	1800 812 291
Freepost	Reply Paid 86550 Sydney South NSW 1234
Interpreter	131 450
TTY/Voice	133 677
Online	ewon.com.au
In person	By appointment only Level 11, 133 Castlereagh St, Sydney, NSW 2000

* If you are calling from a mobile phone, let us know and we will call you back.