

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT

Top 10 List

Here are ten items that you can do that will bring you a quick return on your energy efficiency upgrade dollar.

1. **Air seal.** Use caulk and weather stripping to close any cracks near your baseboards, ceilings, around window and door openings, and foundation. The goal is to reduce the amount of air leaking into, or out of, your home. This saves energy and improves comfort levels.
2. **Adjust your thermostat.** When heating, turn it to 68°F (or lower) during the day when no one is home and to 65°F at night. For AC, set the thermostat no lower than 78°F. Install a programmable thermostat to manage this automatically.
3. **HVAC tune up.** Maintain your heating and cooling systems so that they can run efficiently and make sure the air filters are clean. Depending on the age of the unit and its efficiency rating, you may want to consider replacing it for a higher efficiency model.
4. **Turn your water heater thermostat down.** Many water heaters are set to 140°F, which is warmer than most people need. Turning it down to 120°F can save you between 6% and 10%. While you're at it, consider giving your water heater an insulating jacket.
5. **Close the curtains.** In winter, use insulated curtains, blinds, shades, or shutters (or a combination of these) at night to keep heat in your room. In the summer, close them during the day to keep out the hot sun.
6. **Insulate that attic space.** Don't forget to air seal first.
7. **Seal and insulate your heating ducts.**
8. **Close fireplace damper and/or use an inflatable device that fills the flue opening** when fireplace is not being used in winter.
9. **Insulate hot water pipes.**
10. **Tune up and weatherize your historic windows.** Well-maintained windows will work well and keep you more comfortable. Adding weather stripping will also reduce drafts. In many climates, **storm windows**, will reduce heating and cooling loads. If they are already in place, make sure that they are in good repair. If your storm windows are no longer performing well, consider replacing them with more efficient models or ones that are more compatible with the historic character of your home.