

# In the Home

## What you can do today

Make one change or buy one less item today! Refill your empty water bottle with tap water and put that in your bag along with a carrier bag - that's two items on the list ticked off already.

## Some things you can do right now!

Think about:

Fitting energy saving light bulbs into your home. They can last up to 10 times longer than ordinary bulbs and use up to 80% less energy

Buying a water butt to save water in the garden (lots of councils and local authorities offer discounts.

Buying a compost bin (as above).

Recycling. Are you doing enough?

Turn the heating thermostat down. Reducing temperature by 1°C could cut your heating bills by up to 10%. Same applies to the thermostat on the boiler.

Cost saving per year : £50 - £125

CO2 saving per year : 1-2.5 tons

Do a home energy check and find out where you could be making savings plus what grants and offers are available

Cost saving per year: £30

CO2 saving per year : 1 -2.5 tonnes

[www.energysavingtrust.org.uk](http://www.energysavingtrust.org.uk)

Turn lights off as you leave a room. However, if you have low-energy compact fluorescent bulbs, turning them off and on at frequent intervals can shorten their lifespan by as much as 75%\*. So, if you'll be using the room again shortly, best to leave the light on.

Cost saving per year: £20

CO2 saving per year: 125kg

\*Study by the Electric Power Research Institute in Palo Alto, California

Close curtains/blinds at dusk to stop heat escaping through windows.

Only boil as much water as you need

Check for draughts. Gaps in floorboards, skirting boards, around doors and windows – these all let warm air out and cool air in. Fill with newspaper, beading or sealant. Check keyholes and your letterbox too. Keyhole covers start at £6, a nylon brush seal for the letterbox costs about £10.

Appliances left on standby use 85% of the energy they use when switched on. So, make sure they are switched off.

Cost saving per year: £37

CO2 saving per year : 133kg

([www.energysavingtrust.org](http://www.energysavingtrust.org))

For efficiency, use pan lids when cooking and use the right pan for the food and the cooker – the base should just cover an electrical cooking ring or the gas flames.

([www.energysavingtrust.org](http://www.energysavingtrust.org))

Washing machine and dishwasher: use low temperature programmes (30°), only wash a full load or use the eco-cycle. Or try out the new washing gels that clean at temperatures as low as 15°c.

Cost saving per year: £15

CO2 saving per year : 90kg

Shower instead of bath. A five-minute shower will generally use around a third to a half the water and energy of a full bath.

Cost saving per year: £40

CO2 saving per year : 350kg

Hang clothes out to dry on the line in good weather and/or air them indoors rather than using a tumble dryer.

Think about:

Gift cards, concert tickets, spa treatments, restaurant and cinema vouchers are great alternatives to presents wrapped in hard-to-recycle wrapping paper and ribbons. Or re-use paper and use string, raffia and paper or cotton ribbon. Order gifts online to save driving. Buy gifts that have been made locally or make them yourself.

Energy-saving light bulbs:

If one million households changed four light bulbs each with CFLs, 900 000 tonnes of greenhouse gases would be eliminated. For every bulb you replace, you save £35 of electricity over its life.

225kg is the equivalent amount of coal burned when you choose an incandescent bulb over a compact fluorescent, over its lifetime.

Lighting uses more energy globally than is generated by nuclear or hydro-power.

(p18, The Live Earth Global Warming Survival Handbook)

## Within the year...

Recycle - as much as you can, from tins and bottles to clothing and paper. Some countries recycle more than 90% of their container glass waste, in the UK, it's 34%.

Don't leave the tap running while you're brushing your teeth. Up to six litres per minute disappears down the plughole if you do. You waste 2.2kg of CO2 every minute of running water.

Buy a water butt, especially if you are on a water meter. Rainwater is better for your lawn and plants as well as the environment. Local councils, garden centres and water companies often sell them at a discount.

Buy a compost bin. Over 30% of an average household bin can be composted, reducing the waste that is collected and put into landfill as well as making wonderful, nutrient-rich compost for the garden. Again, local councils and garden centres often sell compost bins at a reduced price.  
[www.recyclenow.com](http://www.recyclenow.com)

Put a Hippo in your toilet cistern – if your loo was installed before 2001. You can save up to 3ltrs of water per flush. Costs just £8 for three.

Install separate thermostats for each room if you don't already have them.

If you have a hot water cylinder, fitting a jacket is straight forward so long as pipes are accessible. They cost about £12 from DIY stores.

Cost saving per year: £30

CO2 saving per year: 200kg

Insulation – cavity wall, solid wall (internal and external), loft and double-glazing. Do some research, find out if you're entitled to any grants or discounts.

Cost saving per year: £130 - £170

CO2 saving per year: 800kg

## Within the next five years...

Many of these solutions are eligible for substantial grants from the government. Visit <http://www.warmfront.co.uk/index.htm> for more details.

Cavity wall insulation reduces heating loss by up to 15%. On average it takes about four years to pay back the installation cost.

In a three bedroom semi-detached house:

Cost saving per year: £130 - £170

CO2 saving per year: 1363kg

Solid wall insulation. Solid walls lose more heat than cavity walls. External wall insulation is expensive but if you're planning to stay where you are, it could pay for itself in around 12 years and save you £380 a year. Internal wall insulation is cheaper and you would make savings almost immediately. In a three bedroom semi-detached house:

Cost savings per year: £360 - £380

CO2 savings per year: 2400kg

Loft insulation. Without it, you could be losing 15% of your heating costs through the roof. If you have no insulation and you install the recommended depth you could save around £155 a year on heating bills as well as around 1 tonne of CO2. If you already have loft insulation, consider topping it up.

In a three bedroom semi-detached house, with no insulation:

Cost saving per year: £390

CO2 saving per year: 3046kg

Double glazing can halve the amount of heat lost through windows (about 18%) and save between 10 and 15% on heating bills. In a three bedroom semi-detached house, with no insulation:

Cost saving per year: £230

CO2 saving per year: 1.8 tonnes

*Also think about:*

- Solar panels, or photovoltaics to use the technical term, are expensive to install but do make huge savings on electricity bills. Solar water heating systems can provide a third of your hot water needs.

There are grants available.

[www.energysavingtrust.org](http://www.energysavingtrust.org)

[www.lowcarbonbuildings.org.uk/home/](http://www.lowcarbonbuildings.org.uk/home/)

- Old boilers are one of the biggest causes of high fuel bills and today's boilers are much more efficient, the best being a condensing boiler, which 30-40% decrease in energy use and fuel bill. For larger homes, a micro-CHP boiler can result in CO2 savings of 5-10% and provides the additional bonus of generating electricity. You may be eligible for a grant: [www.warmfront.co.uk](http://www.warmfront.co.uk)