



COOLING COSTS

Tips to help
you save

It's simple: to reduce your summer cooling costs, you must reduce the amount of time that your air conditioner runs. For starters, make sure your system is running properly with good maintenance and service. Next, increase your thermostat setting either manually or automatically. And you should try to employ low-cost cooling methods, like using ceiling fans.

Here are some more tips to help you stay cool for less this summer:

1. Set the thermostat as high as comfortably possible in the summer. The less difference between the indoor and outdoor temperatures, the lower your cooling bill will be. Keep your house warmer when you aren't home during the day, but cooler when you come home at night.
2. Use a programmable thermostat, which saves you money by consistently turning up the thermostat when you're away. You may set different temperatures for your home depending on whether you're at work, at home, or in bed at night.
3. Clean your system's filters and coils periodically. A dirty system deteriorates air conditioning performance and increases operating time. Filters should be changed every one to three months and the outdoor coil should be cleaned every year.
4. Install compact fluorescent lamps in the fixtures you use most. Incandescent lamps produce 10% light and 90% heat.
5. Keep cooled air inside the home. Caulk and weather strip around doors and windows, close the fireplace damper and fill holes and gaps where wiring and pipes enter the house.
6. Insulate your attic to the maximum practical depth of insulation.
7. Use kitchen, bath and other ventilation fans only as long as needed. In just one hour, these fans can pull out a houseful of cooled air.
8. Don't use your oven on hot days.
9. Line dry your clothes when possible
10. Install shades, blinds, awnings, sun screens or window films on your sunny-side windows.

Certain telltale signs indicate it's time to replace cooling equipment or improve parts of your system to enhance performance. It may be time to call a professional contractor to help you make a change if:

1. Your cooling equipment is 10 years old or more. New Energy Star labeled equipment uses 25 to 40 percent less energy than typical 10-year-old models.
2. Your equipment needs frequent repairs and your bills are increasing.
3. Your system turns on and off frequently. This can indicate that your cooling system is not the right size leading to poor dehumidification and less comfort.
4. Some of your rooms are too hot or too cold. Improper equipment operation or duct problems could be the cause.
5. Your home has humidity problems.



To help with cooling cost, circulate air with ceiling fans. Fans don't actually cool a room—they just cool you—so be sure to switch the fan off when you're not in the room.

Energy Star

Visit www.energystar.gov/coolchange to see if there are special deals or financing on Energy Star labeled products available from retailers, utilities or manufacturers in your area.

Maintenance

Make sure your contractor completes the following 10-point maintenance checklist:

1. Check thermostat settings to ensure the cooling system turns on and off at the right temperature.
2. Clean evaporator and condenser air conditioning coils. Dirty coils reduce the system's ability to cool your home and cause the system to run longer, costing you more and decreasing the life of the equipment.
3. Check refrigerant pressures and adjust charge if necessary.
4. Clean and adjust blower components.
5. Measure airflow over the coils. With inadequate airflow, your system can lose up to 15 percent of its efficiency.
6. Lubricate all moving parts.
7. Tighten all electrical connections and measure voltage and current on motors.
8. Check and inspect the condensate drain.
9. Check controls of the system to ensure proper and safe operation.
10. Ask your service technician how to change filters and how to clean your outdoor coil. The filters should be changed every one to three months and the outdoor coil should be cleaned every year.

Sources

www.energystar.gov

John Krigger, Saturn Resource Management. www.srmi.biz. Author of numerous energy efficiency books including *Surviving the Seasons* and *Residential Energy: Cost Savings and Comfort for Existing Buildings*