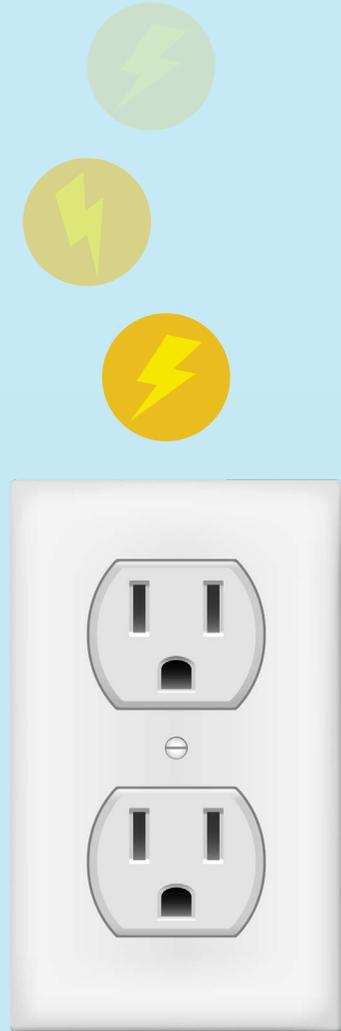


# **Energy Efficiency Hacks for Busy Lifestyles**



**99+** Hacks Inside!

# Introduction

In the hustle and bustle of our modern lives, it's easy to feel overwhelmed by the need for energy efficiency. However, the importance of energy efficiency cannot be overstated, not only for reducing our impact on the planet but also for saving money and living more comfortably. But here's the good news: You can make a significant impact on the environment without adding stress to your already busy days. We're excited to show you how to effortlessly integrate energy-saving strategies into your daily routines. This guide is your friendly companion on a journey to a greener, more sustainable lifestyle, offering you practical tips, inspiring ideas, and a sense of hope that you can make a real difference in your home and daily routine.

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**Chapter 8:** For Your Outdoor Space



**Chapter 9:** Quick Wins for Busy Individuals



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# Chapter 1: Hacks For Energy Efficient Heating and Cooling

Implementing hacks for heating and cooling is pivotal in creating a more energy-efficient home even if you have a busy lifestyle. Incorporating these hacks not only ensures a comfortable indoor climate but also minimizes the strain on heating and cooling systems, leading to lower energy bills and a more sustainable living space. Read below to find out more:

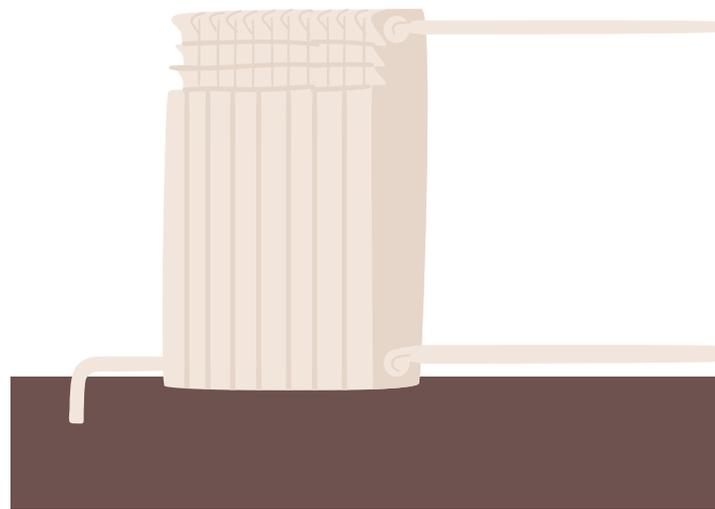
**1. Invest in a Programmable Thermostat:** These powerful smart devices allow you to set specific temperature schedules, ensuring that your HVAC system operates only when needed.

**2. Identify and Seal Any Air Gaps:** Air leaks are a significant source of wasted energy in your home. According to Energy.gov, air leaks waste 20% - 30% of your energy<sup>1</sup>. Look for air leaks by windows, walls, and doors and seal by caulking or weatherstripping.

**3. Insulate Your Home:** Adequate insulation in walls, ceilings, and floors helps maintain a consistent temperature and reduce the workload on your HVAC system.

**4. Utilize Ceiling Fans:** Use ceiling fans to distribute the air in your home more effectively.

**5. Schedule Annual Maintenance for Your Heating and Cooling Systems:** Regular servicing by professionals helps identify and address issues that



<sup>1</sup>. <https://www.energy.gov>

might be causing your systems to work harder than necessary. A good rule of thumb is to schedule a cleaning at least once a year.<sup>2</sup>

**6. Replace or Clean Your Air Filters:** Cleaning or replacing your air filter can ensure good airflow to your home. According to the EPA, a clean air system can remove many sources of pollutants and can ventilate air quality.<sup>3</sup>

**7. Use Window Coverings:** Thick window coverings can be a cost-effective source to block out the sun in the summer and retain heat in the winter.

**8. Close Off Unused Rooms:** When you seal off these spaces, your heating or cooling system doesn't have to work as hard to maintain the desired temperature throughout the entire house. This targeted approach allows you to direct the conditioned air where it's needed most.

**9. Know Whether Your Heat is Gas or Electric:** Understanding the type of heating you have allows you to choose the most appropriate methods to control and adjust the temperature, ensuring that you use your energy resources wisely. Knowing if your heat is gas or electric can also help you choose a heating system for your home.<sup>4</sup>

**10. Turn Your Thermostat to Eco-Friendly Temperatures:** You can save as much as 10% a year on heating and cooling by simply turning your thermostat back 7°-10°F for 8 hours a day from its normal setting.<sup>5</sup> We recommend setting your temperature in the summer to 78° and in the winter to between 68-70 degrees for ultimate eco-friendliness!<sup>6</sup>

2. <https://www.hannabery.com/how-often-should-i-have-my-hvac-system-serviced-air-conditioning-heating-equipment-maintenance.shtml>

3. <https://www.epa.gov/indoor-air-quality-iaq/air-cleaners-and-air-filters-home>

4. <https://santannaenergyservices.com/gas-or-electric-heat/>

5. <https://www.energy.gov/energysaver/programmable-thermostats>

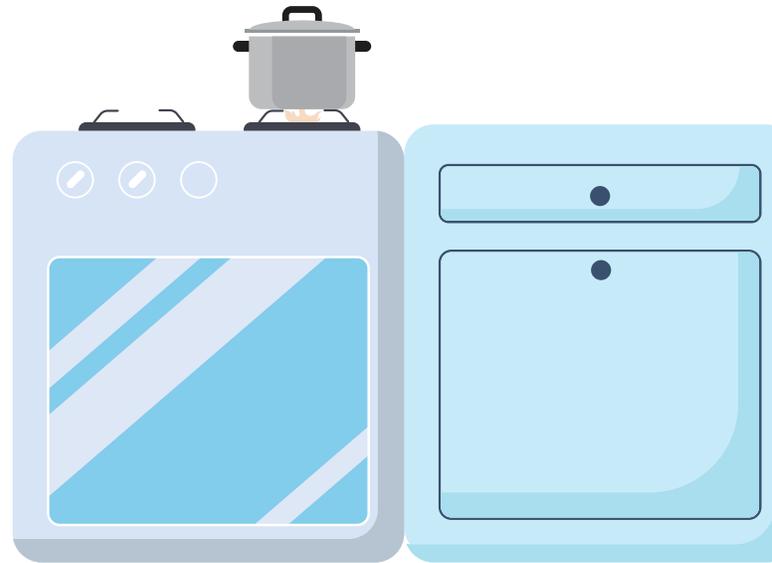
6. <https://santannaenergyservices.com/ideal-thermostat-temperature-settings/>



# Chapter 2: Hacks For an Energy Efficient Kitchen

Employing kitchen hacks can greatly enhance the energy efficiency of your home. Upgrading to energy-efficient appliances and practicing mindful cooking techniques can significantly reduce energy consumption in the kitchen. Read below to find out more:

- 1. Optimize Fridge and Freezer Settings:** Setting these appliances at recommended temperature levels not only ensures the safety of your food but also minimizes unnecessary energy consumption.
- 2. Fill the Freezer, But Give Your Fridge Some Air:** The freezer works most efficiently when packed as full as possible.<sup>7</sup> Refrigerators need air circulation to keep food at an even temperature. Packing a refrigerator too tightly may lead to food becoming too cold.<sup>8</sup>
- 3. Cook With Lids On:** Lids trap heat within the cookware, reducing the risk of heat loss and the dissipation of heat into the kitchen environment.
- 4. Match Pot Size to Burner:** When pots are appropriately sized for the burners, more heat is transferred directly to the cookware, maximizing the efficiency of the cooking process. Using a smaller pot on a large burner or vice versa results in heat loss and inefficiency, as excess heat escapes around the sides.



7. <https://www.goodhousekeeping.com/food-recipes/cooking/tips/a25212/freezer-mistakes/>

8. <https://www.ajmadison.com/learn/refrigeration/how-to/important-refrigerator-measurements-you-need-to-know>

**5. Use Pressure Cookers and Slow Cookers:** Pressure cookers utilize high pressure and steam to cook food swiftly, reducing the time and energy required compared to traditional cooking methods. On the other hand, slow cookers operate at low temperatures over an extended period, allowing for energy-efficient, all-day simmering. Both methods eliminate the need for natural gas use which can lead to lower energy bills.

**6. Cook Multiple Dishes Together:** When preparing several items simultaneously, you maximize the available cooking space and utilize the appliance's capacity more efficiently. Turning your stove off and on can decrease the efficiency of your appliance so cooking in one swoop can increase the life of your appliance.

**7. Regularly Clean Stove Burners and Oven:** Accumulated grease and debris on burners can impede heat transfer, forcing the appliances to work harder to achieve the desired temperature. A dirty oven or stove top is a safety hazard and can lead to a gas fire. <sup>9</sup>

**8. Clean the Door Seal:** Using a kitchen degreaser and cleaning the seal of your oven door can help your oven as a whole to retain the maximum amount of heat. <sup>10</sup>

**9. Compost Food Scraps:** Composting your food scrapes can divert organic waste from landfills where it would decompose anaerobically, producing methane. <sup>11</sup>

**10. Keep Your Oven Door Closed:** When the oven door is open, heat escapes rapidly, causing the appliance to work harder to maintain the desired temperature and results in heat loss. Energy.gov reports that every time you open your oven door, your oven temperature can drop 25 degrees. <sup>10</sup>

9. <https://santannaenergyservices.com/how-to-prevent-a-gas-fire/>

10. <https://www.energy.gov/energysaver/articles/saving-energy-kitchen-during-summer>

11. <https://calrecycle.ca.gov/climate/organics/>



# Chapter 3: Hacks For an Energy Efficient Family Room

Implementing energy-efficient hacks in your family room can significantly contribute to a greener home. Simple steps such as using energy-saving LED bulbs and utilizing power strips can reduce electricity usage. Read below to find out more:

- 1. Replace Incandescent Bulbs in Lamps and Fixtures:** LED light bulbs on average have a longer lifespan and use up to 90% less energy than incandescent bulbs. <sup>12</sup>
- 2. Install Dimmer Switches:** Dimmer switches provide flexibility, enabling you to set a lower light level when full brightness is unnecessary. Dimming your lights an average of 50 percent can cut your electric use by 40 percent. <sup>13</sup>
- 3. Consider Carpets in Your Space:** Carpets act as thermal insulators, providing additional insulation to the floor and helping to retain heat in the room. In the same way, carpets reduce heat transfer between floors and room air space; this can result in energy savings because this prevents air from leaking into unused rooms. <sup>14</sup>
- 4. Be Conscious of Your Furniture Position:** For maximum energy-efficiency, position your furniture away from heating events. When furniture obstructs air vents, it



<sup>12</sup> <https://www.energy.gov/energysaver/lighting-choices-save-you-money>

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.lampspus.com/ideas-and-advice/how-dimmers-save-energy/>

<sup>14</sup> <http://www.carpetcushion.org/r-value.cfm>

disrupts the natural airflow of the heating and cooling systems.

**5. Turn Off or Unplug Entertainment Devices:** Even when they're not in use, game consoles, televisions and laptops still waste energy when they're plugged in.

**6. Upgrade to Energy-Efficient TVs and Home Theater Systems:** Energy-efficient electronic devices consume less electricity during operation, contributing to reduced energy bills. Consider a switch to ENERGY STAR-certified devices for a smaller environmental footprint. <sup>15</sup>

**7. Bundle & Organize Your Cords and Cables:** Tangled and disorganized cords can lead to electrical inefficiencies, causing energy loss through resistance and interference.<sup>16</sup> This can lead to your cords and cables working harder than they have to and increased clutter.

**8. Use Smart Plugs:** Smart plugs allow you to remotely control the power supply to electronic devices, preventing energy wastage from standby power consumption.

**9. Consider Draft Stoppers:** Draft stoppers, typically placed at the bottom of doors and windows, act as barriers against cold air infiltration during the winter and hot air during the summer. By preventing drafts, these simple devices help maintain a more stable indoor temperature.

**10. Reduce Clutter:** Reducing clutter in your family room can lead to a more energy-efficient space by facilitating better air circulation and allowing for optimized use of heating and cooling systems. <sup>17</sup> A clutter-free environment ensures that air vents and radiators remain unobstructed.

15. <https://www.energystar.gov/productfinder/product/certified-televisions/results>

16. <https://utilitiesone.com/reducing-cable-clutter-with-innovative-coax-cable-drop-management-systems>

17. <https://www.yourstoragesolutions.com/the-health-benefits-of-decluttering-your-home>



# Chapter 4: Hacks For Energy Efficient Transportation

Implementing energy efficient transportation hacks into your busy lifestyle can save you more energy and time than you might think! Prioritizing walking, biking, or using public transportation reduces fuel consumption and carbon emissions. Read below to find out more:

**1. Share Rides:** Carpooling or ridesharing reduces the number of individual vehicles on the road, decreasing overall fuel consumption and greenhouse gas emissions.<sup>18</sup> By maximizing the occupancy of each vehicle, the energy expended per passenger mile is significantly lowered, making transportation more sustainable.

**2. Plan Your Trips:** By strategically planning and choosing the most direct paths, you minimize the fuel consumption and emissions associated with your journeys.

**3. Combine Multiple Errands Into One Trip:** By consolidating tasks and minimizing the number of separate journeys, you optimize fuel efficiency and reduce overall vehicle emissions. This approach is not only energy-efficient, but it also saves time too!

**4. Brake Gently:** Braking your car softly can conserve fuel but also minimizes wear and tear on the braking system. Hard braking can increase fuel consumption by approximately 40%.<sup>19</sup>



18. <https://www.ucsusa.org/resources/ride-hailing-problem-climate>

19. <https://sgi.sk.ca>

**5. Use Cruise Control:** According to the automotive brand Kia, cruise control can help you save an average of 7-14% on gas.<sup>20</sup>

**6. Keep Your Tires Properly Inflated:** Keeping your tires inflated to your manufacturer's recommended pressure can improve the efficiency of your vehicle by 0.6% on average—up to 3%.<sup>21</sup>

**7. Clean Your Car:** A clean vehicle has less air resistance, improving aerodynamics and contributing to better fuel efficiency.<sup>22</sup>

**8. Use Your Air Conditioning System Sparingly:** Air conditioning systems consume additional fuel to cool the cabin, placing an extra load on the engine and reducing your overall fuel efficiency.<sup>23</sup>

**9. Consider Driving an EV:** Unlike traditional internal combustion engine vehicles, EVs run on electricity, which can be sourced from renewable energy. This reduces reliance on fossil fuels, cutting down emissions and contributing to cleaner air.

**10. Travel During Off-Peak Hours:** During peak hours, traffic congestion is often at its highest, resulting in stop-and-go traffic and prolonged idling. This inefficient driving pattern increases fuel consumption and emissions. Opting to travel during off-peak times not only reduces the time spent in traffic but also allows for smoother and continuous driving.



20. <https://www.kia.com/dm/discover-kia/ask/does-cruise-control-save-gas.html#:~:text=Generally%20speaking%2C%20yes,pedals%20can%20eat%20more%20gas>.

21. <https://www.fueleconomy.gov/feg/maintain.jsp#:~:text=You%20can%20improve%20your%20gas,average%20pressure%20of%20all%20tires>.

22. <https://cleantools.net/blogs/news/can-cleaning-your-car-improve-your-gas-mileage>

23. <https://www.fueleconomy.gov/feg/hotweather.shtml>



# Chapter 5: Hacks For Energy Efficiency With the Resources in Your Home

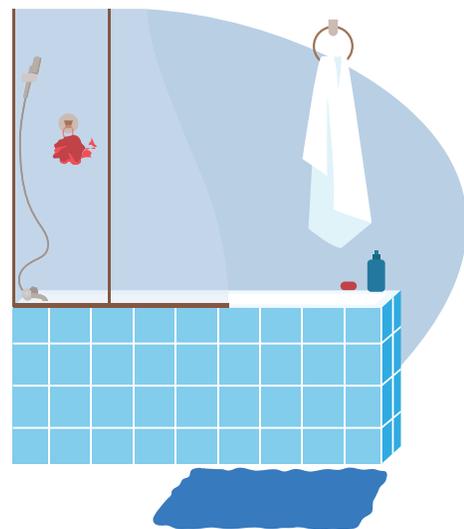
Implementing hacks that harness common resources in your home like wind and water can significantly bolster a home's energy efficiency. These resourceful hacks not only minimize dependency on traditional energy sources but also promote an eco-friendlier and energy-efficient home environment. Read below to find out more:

**1. Install Low-Flow Shower Heads:** These innovative fixtures reduce water consumption by maintaining optimal pressure while using less water per minute.

**2. Take Shorter Showers:** According to the E.P.A, each shower uses more than 16 gallons of water. By reducing the time spent in the shower, you decrease the demand for hot water and water used, thereby conserving energy and water used for your shower. <sup>24</sup>

**3. Reverse Your Ceiling Fans:** During colder months, running the fan in reverse, or clockwise, helps redistribute warm air that naturally rises to the ceiling into unoccupied areas. <sup>25</sup>

**4. Lower Your Water Heater's Temperature:** Setting your water heater temperature too high at around 140 degrees can waste anywhere from \$36 to \$61 annually. <sup>26</sup> Turn your water heater temperature to 122 degrees for energy savings and to prevent the growth of bacteria. <sup>27</sup>



<sup>24</sup>. <https://www.epa.gov/sites/default/files>

<sup>25</sup>. [https://www.energystar.gov/products/lighting\\_fans/ceiling\\_fans/installation\\_usage\\_tips](https://www.energystar.gov/products/lighting_fans/ceiling_fans/installation_usage_tips)

<sup>26</sup>. <https://www.energy.gov/energysaver/do-it-yourself-savings-project-lower-water-heating-temperature>

<sup>27</sup>. <https://homewarranty.firstam.com/blog/best-temperature-for-water-heater#:~:text=Manufacturers%20typically%20choose%20a%20temp,the%20growth%20of%20harmful%20bacteria.>

- 5. Fix Leaky Faucets:** Fixing easily corrected household water leaks can save homeowners about 10 percent on their water bills. <sup>28</sup>
- 6. Wash Clothes in Cold Water:** According to Energy.gov, washing your clothes in cold water is a great way to make your home more energy efficient.<sup>29</sup> Heating water accounts for a substantial portion of the energy consumption in laundry routines.
- 7. Run Full Loads in Your Dishwasher:** By maximizing the dishwasher's capacity with full loads, you optimize the efficiency of each cycle and minimize the frequency of operation. This not only conserves water but also conserves energy.
- 8. Collect Rainwater in a Barrel:** While this might be a unique way to collect resources, instead of solely relying on municipal water sources, harvested rainwater can be used for various purposes like watering plants, washing cars, or even flushing toilets which can conserve water in your home.
- 9. Turn Off Tap While Brushing or Shaving:** This small adjustment in daily habits can save gallons of water from going to waste, reducing the strain on water sources and cutting down on the energy required for water treatment and distribution.
- 10. Water Plants Wisely:** By utilizing efficient watering techniques such as watering in the early morning or using a drip irrigation systems, you can grow healthier plants and conserve water. <sup>30</sup>

28. <https://www.epa.gov/watersense/fix-leak-week#:~:text=Fixing%20easily%20corrected%20household%20water,percent%20on%20their%20water%20bills.>

29. <https://www.energy.gov/energysaver/laundry>

30. <https://santannaenergyservices.com/when-should-i-water-my-garden-and-how-often/>



# Chapter 6: Energy-Efficient Appliances

Energy-efficient appliances play a pivotal role in creating a more energy-efficient home. These appliances optimize performance while consuming less energy, contributing to a more sustainable and cost-effective household, aligning seamlessly with efforts to enhance energy efficiency at home. Read below to find out more:

- 1. Smart Thermostats:** Smart thermostats learn your heating and cooling habits and adjust temperatures efficiently to help you save energy when you're away or asleep and ensuring comfort when you're at home.
- 2. Smart Refrigerators:** These tech-savvy devices often come with features like energy-saving modes, tap-to-view monitors, and smart cooling to increase the longevity of your groceries and save you energy. <sup>31</sup>
- 3. Smart Power Strips:** These plugs enable remote control and scheduling of power usage. <sup>32</sup> They allow users to turn off electronics remotely, preventing standby power consumption and reducing energy wastage.
- 4. Front Loading Washing Machines:** These washing machines use less water to clean clothes. <sup>33</sup> As an added bonus, the spinning speeds expel more water which speeds up the drying process.
- 5. Tankless Water Heaters:** According to Home Depot, a tankless water



<sup>31</sup>. <https://www.appliancecity.co.uk/news/updates/what-does-a-smart-fridge-do/>

<sup>32</sup>. <https://news.demesne.ie/home-automation-the-benefits-of-smart-plugs#:~:text=Essential-ly%20Smart%20Plugs%20give%20you,lamps%20to%20switch%20on%20off>

<sup>33</sup>. <https://www.whirlpool.com/blog/washers-and-dryers/top-load-vs-front-load.html#:~:text=Front%20load%20washers%20typically%20use,times%20tend%20to%20be%20shorter>

heater can conserve 27 to 50 percent more energy than a traditional model and live 10 times longer than other water heaters.<sup>34</sup>

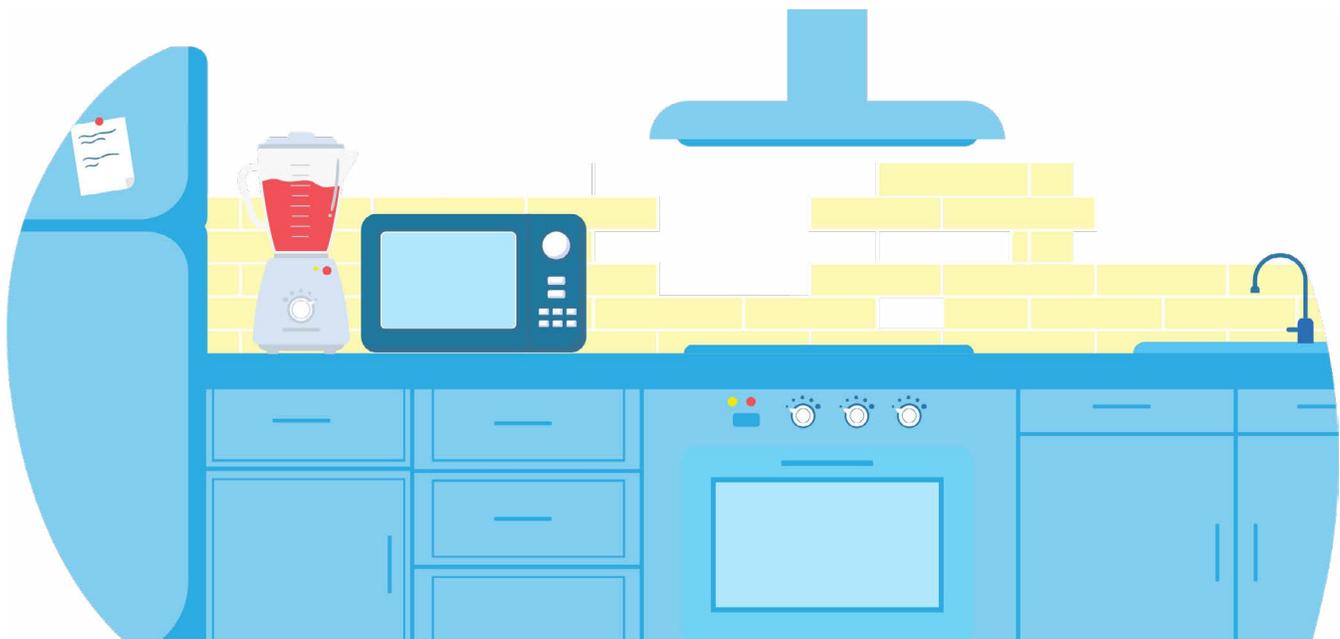
**6. Pool Pumps:** ENERGY STAR Certified above-ground pool pumps use 11% less energy and can save \$80 over the lifetime of the product.<sup>35</sup>

**7. HVAC Systems:** Upgrading your heating and cooling system can yield an annual energy bill savings of 10-30%.<sup>36</sup>

**8. Energy Efficient Heaters:** These heaters utilize advanced technology to produce heat more efficiently, with eco-friendly modes that minimize energy waste and maximize heat output. They not only enhance comfort but also lead to substantial savings on heating bills.

**9. Energy Efficient Fryers:** Standard sized fryers that are ENERGY STAR certified are up to 30 percent more energy efficient than standard models.<sup>37</sup>

**10. Ventilation Fans:** These fans are designed with advanced technology to move air more efficiently and reduce noise pollution.<sup>38</sup>



34. <https://www.homedepot.com/c/ab/benefits-of-tankless-water-heaters/9ba683603be9fa5395fab9050c59fb3>

35. [https://www.energystar.gov/products/pool\\_pumps](https://www.energystar.gov/products/pool_pumps)

36. <https://rpsc.energy.gov/tech-solutions/hvac>

37. [https://www.energystar.gov/products/commercial\\_fryers](https://www.energystar.gov/products/commercial_fryers)

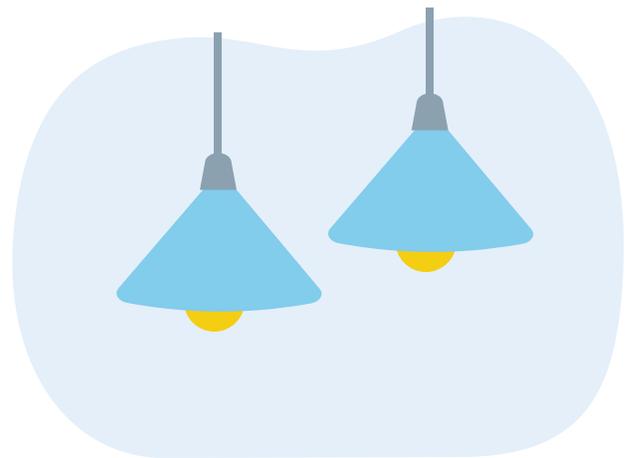
38. [https://www.energystar.gov/products/ventilation\\_fans](https://www.energystar.gov/products/ventilation_fans)



# Chapter 7: Smart Home Technology for Energy Efficiency

Smart home technology offers remarkable potential to enhance energy efficiency in homes. By automating and regulating home systems based on preferences and real-time data, smart technology helps minimize energy waste, leading to lower utility bills. Read below to find out more:

- 1. Smart Lighting:** With innovative features such as dimming capabilities, motion sensors, and remote accessibility through smartphone apps, smart lighting allows users to customize and automate their lighting needs to reduce energy waste and reduce their energy bills.<sup>39</sup>
- 2. Smart Coverings:** Automated blinds or shades help minimize the amount of energy your HVAC system uses by reacting independently to readings from temperature and sunlight sensors to open and close when needed to regulate the temperature in your home.<sup>40</sup>
- 3. Smart Sensors:** Installing smart sensors in your home allows you to take the guesswork out of determining your energy consumption. You can use smart sensors to monitor how much gas, electricity, and water you use in your home to increase your energy efficiency.<sup>41</sup>
- 4. Smart Water Heaters:** These savvy systems prevent unnecessary water and energy waste through remote monitoring.<sup>42</sup>



39. <https://www.cencepower.com/blog-posts/3-main-benefits-of-smart-lighting>

40. <https://eponline.com/articles/2016/11/15/seven-benefits-of-smart-blinds.aspx>

41. <https://www.linkedin.com/advice/0/how-can-you-use-smart-sensors-cameras-detect-prevent#:~:text=1%20Monitor%20your%20energy%20usage,-One%20of%20the&text=You%20can%20use%20smart%20sensors,lamps%2C%20TV%2C%20or%20computer.>

42. <https://neep.org/blog/smart-energy-home-blog-series-smart-water-heaters#:~:text=A%20smart%20water%20heater%20will,app%20as%20they%20come%20home.>

**5. Smart Home Assistants:** Smart home assistants, like voice-activated devices or AI-powered hubs, offer exceptional energy-efficient capabilities for modern households. Smart assistants use seamless communication to optimize your energy usage to minimize energy waste.

**6. Smart Irrigation Systems:** These systems use sensors and weather data to precisely schedule and regulate watering, ensuring plants receive adequate moisture without wastage.<sup>43</sup>

**7. Smart Vents:** These vents lead to a smarter approach to HVAC systems. Smart vents offer better temperature control for individual rooms and aid the improvement of air quality.<sup>44</sup>

**8. EV Charging Stations:** Energy efficient charging stations use 40% less energy in standby mode than other models, reducing their impact on the environment.<sup>45</sup>

**9. Smart Energy Meters:** Unlike conventional models, smart meters record data from household energy consumption that allows users to gain real time insights on their energy usage and where they can make improvements.<sup>46</sup>

**10. Smart Home Security:** These systems often incorporate low-power components and energy-efficient sensors that consume minimal electricity while providing robust security monitoring.

<sup>43</sup>. <https://extension.okstate.edu/fact-sheets/smart-irrigation-technology-controllers-and-sensors.html#:~:text=Smart%20irrigation%20technology%20uses%20weather,maintaining%20plant%20health%20and%20quality>.

<sup>44</sup>. <https://energy5.com/the-benefits-of-smart-vents-in-hvac-electrical-design>

<sup>45</sup>. [https://www.energystar.gov/products/ev\\_chargers](https://www.energystar.gov/products/ev_chargers)

<sup>46</sup>. <https://energy5.com/smart-meters-and-energy-efficiency-empowering-consumers-to-take-control#:~:text=Unlike%20conventional%20meters%2C%20smart%20meters,where%20energy%20can%20be%20saved>.



# Chapter 8: Energy Efficiency Hacks for Your Outdoor Space

Implementing energy-efficient hacks in your outdoor space can significantly contribute to a more sustainable home. These outdoor hacks not only enhance the appeal of your space but also contribute to a more energy-efficient and environmentally conscious home. Read below to find out more:

**1. Install Outdoor Motion Lighting:** These lights are equipped with motion sensors that activate only when movement is detected, minimizing unnecessary energy consumption.

**2. Plant Tall and Shady Trees:** Trees provide natural shade! By strategically positioning these trees to block sunlight from windows, walls, or patios, they help to lower indoor temperatures and diminish the need for excessive air conditioning.

**3. Choose Drought-Tolerant Plants:** Choosing these low maintenance plants for your landscaping can reduce the need for excessive watering.

**4. Weatherproof the Outside of Your Home:** By sealing gaps and addressing leaks or cracks, you create a more insulated and airtight building increasing the energy efficiency in your home.<sup>47</sup>

**5. Install Smart Sprinkler Systems:** These systems allow you to “set and



<sup>47</sup>. <https://santannaenergyservices.com/how-to-winterize-your-home/>

forget” your watering schedule without having to worry about wasting resources. <sup>48</sup>

**6. Apply Mulch Around Plants and Trees:** Using this strategy allows you to retain soil moisture and reduce the frequency of watering.

**7. Use Solar Pool Covers:** Solar pool covers can increase your pool’s temperature by up to 15 degrees and can reduce heat loss from your swimming pool. <sup>49</sup>

**8. Choose Energy-Saving Light Fixtures:** Opting for outdoor lighting such as low-voltage lighting can illuminate paths or spaces with less energy. <sup>50</sup>

**9. Turn Off Your Pool Heater When on Vacation:** Energy.gov states that the energy consumption for each degree rise in temperature will cost 10%–30% more in energy costs, depending on your location. <sup>51</sup> Energy.gov advises to turn off your pool heater if you’re going to be gone for more than a couple of days.

**10. Install Storm Doors:** These additional doors provide an extra layer of insulation, reducing air infiltration and heat transfer between the inside and outside of your home. By acting as a barrier against drafts, storm doors help maintain more stable indoor temperatures.



48. <https://www.slashgear.com/901077/how-energy-saving-smart-sprinklers-could-save-you-money/>

49. <https://global-poolproducts.com/are-solar-covers-worth-it/#:~:text=A%20well%2Dfunctioning%20solar%20cover,evaporation%2C%20so%20this%20is%20important.>

50. [https://www.lampsplus.com/products/outdoor-lighting/type\\_energy-efficient/](https://www.lampsplus.com/products/outdoor-lighting/type_energy-efficient/)

51. <https://www.energy.gov/energysaver/managing-swimming-pool-temperature-energy-efficiency>



# Chapter 9: Quick Energy Efficient Wins for Busy Individuals

Quick hacks tailored for busy lifestyles can remarkably enhance energy efficiency at home. Incorporating these quick hacks not only saves time but also leads to lower utility bills and a more sustainable living space. Even amidst a hectic schedule, these small changes make a substantial impact on fostering an energy-efficient home. Read below to find out more:

- 1. Air Dry Your Clothes:** By skipping the dryer and opting to hang your laundry outside or on a drying rack indoors, you reduce your electricity consumption and help extend the lifespan of your clothes by minimizing wear and tear.
- 2. Unplug Your Phone Charger:** Even when not actively charging your phone, chargers left plugged in continue to draw power.<sup>52</sup> By unplugging chargers when they're not in use, you reduce this unnecessary power consumption.
- 3. Turn Off Your Lights:** It takes just a moment but significantly reduces electricity usage and can save you money on your energy bills.
- 4. Adjust Your Refrigerator Temperature:** Setting the refrigerator temperature between 35°F and 38°F and the freezer at 0°F ensures food safety while minimizing energy usage. Plus, it takes less than a minute to do!<sup>53</sup>



52. <https://stanfordmag.org/contents/vampire-energy-essential-answer>.

53. [https://www.energystar.gov/products/appliances/refrigerators/best\\_practices#:~:text=Keep%20your%20refrigerator%20at%2035,air%20circulation%20behind%20the%20fridge.](https://www.energystar.gov/products/appliances/refrigerators/best_practices#:~:text=Keep%20your%20refrigerator%20at%2035,air%20circulation%20behind%20the%20fridge.)

**5. Use Your Dishwasher:** Set it and forget it! According to big brand Finish Dishwashing, running a dishwasher is more energy efficient than hand washing dishes. <sup>54</sup>

**6. Reduce Oven Preheating:** When cooking in your home, try to time your preheating as close as you can to when your dish will be ready to cook. The longer you wait, the more energy you waste.

**7. Use Reuseable Water Bottles:** This eliminates the need for single-use plastic bottles, which require significant energy for production, transportation, and disposal. Although this might not directly impact you, it impacts the planet and promotes eco-friendliness.

**8. Turn Off Fans When You Leave the Room:** Leaving appliances on when they're not in use is the biggest way to waste energy in your home. Turning your fans off helps save electricity without compromising comfort.

**9. Close Blinds and Curtains:** The heat that escapes or enters through windows accounts for 30 percent of energy used to heat or cool buildings. <sup>55</sup> Closing your curtains during the summer and opening your blinds during the winter can help you save on air conditioning in the summer and insulate your home in the winter.

**10. Declutter:** Removing unnecessary items from living spaces allows for better airflow and more effective heating or cooling, reducing the strain on HVAC systems. It also simplifies cleaning routines while saving time!

<sup>54</sup>. <https://www.finishdishwashing.com/dishwasher-benefits/handwashing-vs-dishwasher/#:~:text=Using%20a%20dishwasher%20is%20more,sink%20laboring%20over%20your%20dishes>.

<sup>55</sup>. <https://news.mit.edu/2020/preventing-energy-loss-through-windows-0106#:~:text=According%20to%20the%20U.S.%20Department,this%20massive%20loss%20of%20energy>.



# Chapter 10: Low-Effort Energy Efficiency Hacks

Low-effort hacks tailored for busy lifestyles offer significant contributions to an energy-efficient home. These adjustments seamlessly integrate into a busy routine, optimizing energy consumption and reducing environmental impact. By adopting these low-effort hacks, individuals create a more sustainable living space while effortlessly aligning with their fast-paced lifestyles. Read below to find out more:

- 1. Utilize Natural Lighting:** Opening curtains or blinds during the day reduces reliance on artificial lighting, cutting down on electricity usage.
- 2. Switch Your Phone to Dark Mode:** Turning your phone to dark mode on 100% brightness can save you an average of 39%-47% battery power.<sup>56</sup> This reduces your need to charge your phone more often, thus saving your energy.
- 3. Use Energy-Saving Modes:** Whether you're using appliances or devices, energy-saving modes are specifically designed to save your energy which will lead to energy savings overall.
- 4. Use Energy Tracking Apps:** These apps do the work for you! They provide real-time insights into energy usage, allowing users to identify areas where they can save energy without investing much time.
- 5. Use the Microwave to Cook What You Can:** Microwaves use up to 80



<sup>56</sup>. <https://www.purdue.edu/newsroom/releases/2021/Q3/dark-mode-may-not-save-your-phones-battery-life-as-much-as-you-think.-but-there-are-a-few-silver-linings.html>

percent less energy than conventional ovens. Plus, cooking with a microwave saves time! <sup>57</sup>

**6. Close Unused Vents:** By closing vents in rooms that are not frequently used, you redirect airflow to areas where it's needed, optimizing heating or cooling efficiency.

**7. Shut Your Doors:** This low-effort practice helps trap heat or air conditioning in the rooms you need it most. This can reduce the workload on heating or cooling systems.

**8. Reduce Phantom Load:** Phantom loads <sup>58</sup> refer the amount of power that is being drawn despite the device or appliance not being in use. Unplugging electronics and devices when not in use can reduce your electricity consumption.

**9. Defrost Your Fridge:** Ice buildup in the freezer can reduce the appliance's efficiency, making it work harder to maintain optimal temperatures. <sup>59</sup> By regularly defrosting the refrigerator and freezer, you can ensure efficient operation of your refrigerator which can reduce your energy consumption.

**10. Don't Leave Your Bathroom or Kitchen Ventilation Fans Running:** These fans continue to draw energy even after their purpose is served, contributing to unnecessary electricity consumption. Turning them off promptly after use helps conserve energy without requiring extra time or effort.

<sup>57</sup>. <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/stove-versus-microwave-energy-use>

<sup>58</sup>. <https://www.bhg.com/home-improvement/green-living/energy-efficient/save-money-electricity-bill-phantom-loads/>

<sup>59</sup>. <https://www.energy.gov/energysaver/kitchen-appliances#:~:text=Regularly%20defrosting%20manual%20defrost%20freezers,one%20quarter%20of%20an%20inch.>

# Conclusion

In the whirlwind of today's fast-paced world, prioritizing energy efficiency amidst a bustling lifestyle is not just a responsibility but an opportunity for positive change. Thank you so much for taking the time out of your busy routine to read our e-book and sharing our tips for achieving ultimate energy efficiency. By embracing these energy-saving practices, we can collectively reduce our environmental footprint, save on energy costs, and pave the way for a brighter, more energy-efficient future—one small hack at a time.

## About Santanna

At Santanna Energy Services, we believe in creating life-long relationships by providing quality service to our customers, communities, and employees. With over 35 years of experience in the energy industry, we're committed to helping our customers make smart, sustainable energy choices.

Our mission is to provide reliable, affordable, and environmentally responsible energy solutions that help our customers save money and reduce their environmental impact. We offer a range of energy products and services, including natural gas, electricity, and earth-friendly options, designed to meet the unique needs of our customers in [Ohio](#), [Illinois](#), [Pennsylvania](#), [Michigan](#), and [Indiana](#).

