

DIY HOME ENERGY AUDIT TIPS

DID YOU KNOW...

DIY Energy Audit Kits may be available to borrow from a local library.



Making a home energy efficient doesn't have to be complicated or expensive and can save money on utility bills

A home energy audit can identify hidden leaks, reduce energy waste, and uncover safety hazards.

Identify and seal air leaks

Drafts let heat escape, making your heating or cooling systems work harder. Rooms that feel warmer or cooler than others at the same thermostat setting may have poor insulation that would benefit from an upgrade.

Inside

Feel around doors, windows, baseboards, wall-ceiling joints, light fixtures, and electrical outlets for hot or cold spots. Examine for any cracks or gaps that could let air in or out.

Outside

Inspect around pipes, cables, and vents. Look for gaps or damage that lets air to escape.

Tip: Sealing drafts with caulking or weather stripping could save on heating and cooling costs.

Detect and fix water leaks

Even small leaks can increase your water bill or cause costly damage, such as mold. Make sure to compare water bills over time; unexpected increases may indicate hidden leaks.

Faucets and toilets

Cover a faucet with a water balloon overnight—collected water indicates a leak. Add a few drops of food coloring to the toilet tank; colour in the bowl within 10 minutes signals a leaks

Inside

Look for wet spots, mold, or stains on walls, floors, and ceilings.

Outside

Inspect hoses, outdoor faucets, and sprinklers for drips.

Tip: Fix small leaks with help from your local hardware store. Call a plumber for persistent or serious leaks. Renters should notify the landlord.

Review and maintain appliances

Remember to schedule annual tune ups for major appliances like Air Conditioners. Well-maintained appliances run more efficiently, last longer, and can reduce energy consumption.

Keep appliance vents, coils, and filters clean to improve efficiency, prevent overheating, and extend their lifespan.

Listen for unusual noises, inconsistent heating, unresponsive thermostats, and pilot light issues.

Watch out for “energy vampires”: *devices that draw power even when turned off.*

Tip: Use smart power strips or unplug devices to reduce phantom energy use. If replacing an appliance, look for ENERGY STAR ratings and EnerGuide information to help choose the most efficient products.

Audit your lighting

Well-maintained appliances run more efficiently, last longer, and can reduce energy consumption.

Check for unused or rarely used lights and consider installing timers or motion sensors to cut energy waste.

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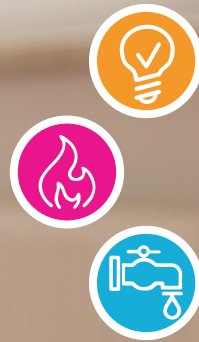
Use timers, photocells, and dimmers to save electricity.

Tip: On average LED lightbulbs use less energy than old incandescent bulbs.

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As the audit is completed, take notes on what's found. These observations will help prioritize the most important improvements to save money and increase comfort. Whether completing repairs yourself, or deciding to hire help, you will be aware of potential issues.

Move your hand around the edges of exterior doors, windows, bathroom and kitchen vents, and fans. If you feel air moving or a temperature difference, there's likely a leak.

1. on a cold, windy day, turn off your furnace and close all windows and exterior doors
2. turn on bathroom and kitchen fans to create negative pressure
3. light incense and slowly move it around doors, windows, vents, and suspected leak points
4. if the smoke moves or is sucked in, you have found a draft

- ☐ doors and windows: inspect frames, seals, weatherstripping
- ☐ baseboards: inspect where walls meet ceilings or floors
- ☐ light fixtures and ceiling fans
- ☐ electrical outlets and switches including exterior walls
- ☐ bathroom and kitchen exhaust fans
- ☐ fireplace dampers: check for a tight seal
- ☐ outside entry points for cables, pipes, and vents:
Watch for cracks caused by freezing and thawing

Once identified, seal leaks using caulking, weatherstripping, or plastic film, which can be found at local hardware stores. Proper sealing enhances comfort, reduces energy loss, and protects your home.

Notes:

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DIY HOME ENERGY AUDIT

WATER LEAKS



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Even small water leaks can increase your water bill or create damage, like mold. Fix small leaks with help from your local hardware store. If a leak is hidden, recurring, or causing damage, call a plumber. Renters—report leaks to your landlord right away.

Faucets

How to check for leaks: place water balloon over the faucet overnight; water inside means a leak.

☐ kitchen sink ☐ bath/showers ☐ bathroom sinks

Toilets

How to check for leaks: add a few drops of food colouring to the toilet tank. If colour appears in the bowl after 10 minutes, there is a leak.

☐ main ☐ master ☐ basement
☐ half-bath/wash closet

Exterior fixtures

How to check for leaks: look for drips or pooling water

☐ hoses ☐ sprinklers ☐ outdoor faucets or hose bibs

Interior areas

How to check for leaks: visibly inspect surfaces for wet spots, mold, or stains.

☐ walls ☐ ceilings ☐ floors ☐ basement

Sump pump

Test semi-annually to ensure it's working to prevent water damage.

How to seal leaks

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'Energy vampires' are devices that draw small amounts of electricity even when turned off.

Tips to reduce standby energy use

- unplug devices when not in use
- use a smart power strip that turns off power in standby mode
- look for low standby power ratings when buying new devices
- target use of high energy use appliances like portable air conditioners and space heaters

Common energy vampires

- ☐ cellphone and laptop chargers
- ☐ computer monitors
- ☐ televisions
- ☐ video game consoles
- ☐ standby coffee makers
- ☐ electric toothbrushes
- ☐ small kitchen appliances

Evaluate home lighting

Light bulbs, lighting usage, and lighting controls impact the energy consumed, and your energy bill.

- use natural light like windows and skylights to minimize the need for artificial light
- target lighting on specific areas or tasks instead of entire rooms or floors
- instal lighting controls like dimmers or sensors to ensure light is used when needed
- consider lighter paint colours that reflect light back into the room
- choose ENERGY STAR rated products
- consider installing timers or motion sensors to cut energy waste
- perform regular maintenance



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HEATING, COOLING, AND MECHANICAL SYSTEMS



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This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are approximately 20 lines visible. The paper has a slight shadow on the right side, suggesting it's resting on a surface.