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by energie sprong

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How to Save Energy at Home

Saving energy: a benefit for everyone

Every day, we use energy to heat our homes, cook, wash, light our rooms, and power our appliances. Energy costs money, and **sometimes it can be difficult to keep expenses under control**, especially for those living in older buildings, with inefficient systems, or in families facing financial hardship.

According to the Italian Observatory on Energy Poverty (OIPE), in 2022 **about 2.2 million households in Italy were in energy poverty, struggling to pay their energy bills or maintain adequate heating conditions.** This number is increasing due to rising energy prices and living costs. Saving energy doesn't just depend on

individual effort, it's also linked to the characteristics of our homes and access to information about how to improve them.

Everyone can do their part to reduce waste, without sacrificing comfort. **Adopting more conscious habits and using systems and appliances correctly** helps reduce costs and improve quality of life.

This guide was created to provide **simple, practical, and economical advice to help improve energy efficiency at home and reduce consumption**. The tips apply to all types of dwellings and are useful for anyone, whether they live in apartments with central heating or individual systems.

Produced by



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 **University of Milan**

Good Practices for Managing Heat

System maintenance: Have your boiler and air conditioner checked regularly to ensure efficiency and prevent energy waste.

Thermal insulation: improving door and window insulation helps maintain indoor temperature, reducing the need for heating or cooling.

In winter (heating):

- Keep radiators **free from curtains or furniture**.
- **Close shutters and curtains** after sunset to retain heat.
- **Avoid drafts:** check doors and windows, use draft stoppers if needed.
- Air out rooms **only for a few minutes** with radiators off.
- **Adjust thermostatic valves differently** for each room.
- Use **carpets and heavy curtains** to insulate rooms.

In summer (cooling):

- Keep windows and shutters **closed** during the hottest hours.
- Open them only in the **evening** or at night when temperatures drop.
- Use **light-colored curtains** or hang damp sheets to cool rooms naturally.
- Prefer **fans** over air conditioners.
- Avoid using the oven, washing machine, or dishwasher **during hot hours**.



Hot Water and Water Consumption

How to save hot water:

- Set your water heater to **45–50°C**.
- Take a **shower** instead of a bath (5–6 minutes is ideal).
- **Turn off the water** while soaping or brushing your teeth.
- Use **flow reducers** and aerators — you'll save without noticing.
- Use **cold water** when possible, e.g., for washing hands or brushing teeth.

General good practices:

- **Fix leaking taps:** one drip every 5 seconds equals 20 liters per day.
- Wash fruits and vegetables in a **bowl**, not under running water.
- **Reuse water** (e.g., rinse water from vegetables) to water plants.
- Run washing machines and dishwashers only when full, using **ECO programs** to avoid waste.

Lighting and Electricity

Reduce electricity use:

- Replace all bulbs with **LEDs** — they use up to 80% less energy.
- **Turn off lights** when leaving a room.
- Use **natural light** as much as possible.
- **Keep lamps and windows clean:** they increase brightness without extra energy.

Beware of standby mode:

- Turn off TVs, decoders, modems, microwaves, and consoles — **don't leave them on standby**.
- Use **power strips** with switches to turn off multiple devices at once.
- Remember: **chargers also consume energy if left plugged in**.



Smart Use of Appliances

Washing machine and dishwasher:

- Choose **efficient models:** high energy class can save up to 50%.
- Washing machine: use **ECO programs**, low temperatures (30°–40°), full loads.
- Dishwasher: **run only when full**, use short and ECO cycles.
- Prefer **natural drying** — avoid using the dryer.

Refrigerator and freezer:

- **Don't leave the fridge door open unnecessarily** or place hot food inside.
- Check door seals and **defrost** the freezer regularly (recommended once a year).
- Keep temperature at **4–5°C for the fridge** and **–18°C for the freezer**.

Kitchen and small appliances:

- Use **thick-bottomed pots** and keep them covered while cooking.
- Turn off burners 2–3 minutes **before cooking ends**.
- **Use the microwave instead of the oven** to heat small portions — it consumes less energy.
- **Use an electric kettle for water** — it's more efficient than the stove.
- Since the oven uses more energy when preheating, **cook several dishes in succession** without letting it cool down.



Useful Tools for Saving Energy

- **LED bulbs:** last longer and use less energy.
- **Power strips with switches:** turn off several devices at once.
- **Reflective panels:** placed behind radiators to prevent heat loss.
- **Tap aerators and water-saving showerheads:** less water, same comfort.
- **Shower timer:** helps limit shower time and save hot water.
- **Room thermometer:** helps regulate heating efficiently.
- **Thermostatic valves:** adjust temperature room by room, optimizing energy use.
- **Double glazing:** reduces heat loss, keeping homes warmer in winter and cooler in summer

The Energy Label

The energy label tells you how much an appliance really consumes and helps you understand how much you will spend each year on your bill: the more efficient the appliance, the more you save!

Check the label before buying: a class A refrigerator-freezer consumes up to 56% less than a class E one. If your

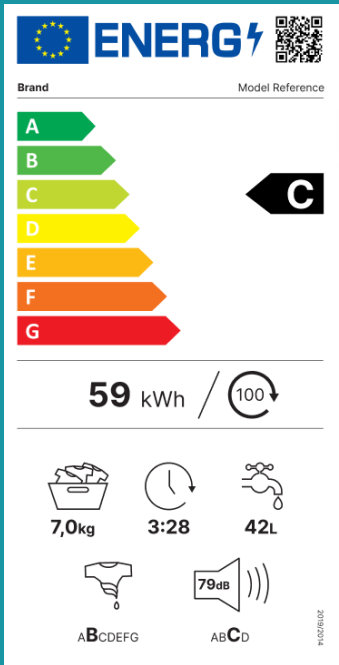
appliances are old, look at their labels: if they are in a very low class, it might be time to replace them! Choose carefully — it matters for both you and the environment.

You'll also find the average annual energy consumption of the appliance, the available volume for fresh and frozen food (for refrigerators), energy use per washing

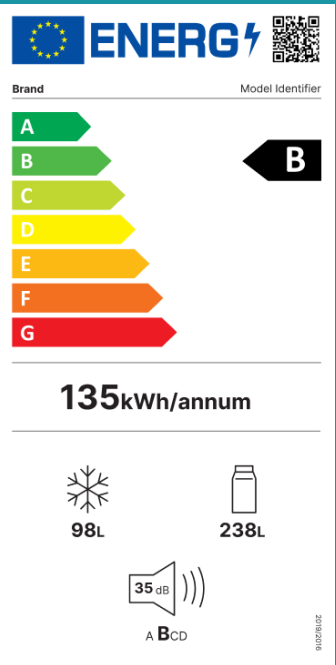
cycle (for washing machines and dishwashers), water consumption, and noise level.

You'll see the label on refrigerators and freezers, washing machines, dishwashers and dryers, light bulbs, TVs, water heaters, air conditioners and fans, and kitchen extractor hoods.

WASHING MACHINE



REFRIGERATOR



TELEVISION

