

12 ways to save on energy and fuel



We're all feeling the pressure of the rising cost of living so let's look at some handy hacks to help save on our energy and fuel usage



Home hacks to reduce energy usage



1. Take control of your heating

Whilst it may sound basic, turning down your main thermostat by just one degree could reduce the amount of energy you use to heat your home. Most families set their thermostat between 18°C and 21°C, and whilst we all have that preferred temperature, you're likely not to notice a 1 degree difference. So why not give it a try?

If this feels a little daunting, setting times or programming your thermostats can narrow down the length of time your heating is on, keeping it set at key hours where that additional heat boost is needed.



MYTH BUSTED: A lot of us believe that it's cheaper to have the heating on low all the time, but it's really not. And whilst you may think cranking up the thermostat will heat your home quicker, it really won't.



2. Switch up your home laundry routine

For a simple water saving hack, try switching up your normal cycle to an eco-wash and make sure you adjust the settings on your machine to reflect the proper load size ahead of pressing go.

When it comes to drying your clothes, if you regularly use a tumble dryer why not invest in a tumble dryer ball to help speed up the process. These ingenious balls help create space between the laundry, airing the clothes or sheets, and helping reduce the time needed in the dryer.



3. Spend less time in the shower

Every minute you shave off your time in the shower could save on your energy usage.



If you're looking for an easy way to shorten your showers, try setting a timer on your phone - or if you're feeling a little extra - why not create a shower playlist with songs that will energise you in the morning (and help keep your timings in check).

Alternatively, switching to a low flow showerhead can not only help the planet, but will help you use less energy whilst showering.



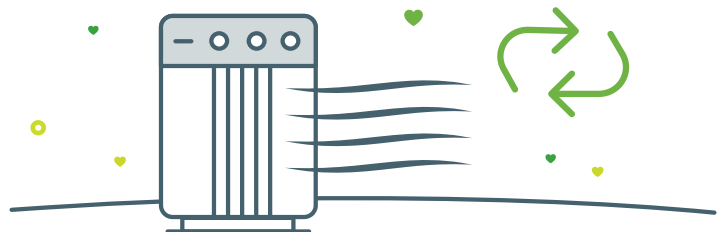
MYTH BUSTED: Cold showers can in fact be just as good for you as a steaming hot one. Cold showers provide muscle recovery and improve blood circulation - they also could lead to less time spent in the shower (for most) and as a bonus, you won't be heating the water, so that's more energy saved.

4. Insulate your home with tin foil

Feeling the chill? Putting aluminium foil behind your radiators could help keep heat in your home. Although this may seem a little far-fetched, the idea is simple - using reflective foil behind your radiator will bounce heat back into the room, rather than letting it out through the walls.

Bear in mind that this is only effective behind radiators on external walls, not internal.

The benefits are, of course, a warmer, more comfortable home and less energy wastage, making for a more heat efficient home. You can buy specialist foil from hardware shops or online in rolls or sheets, this can then be cut to size.



5. Take tech off standby

It's an age-old question, does switching off appliances and devices in our homes when they're not in use, save on your household energy use? The short answer is, yes. We all know that one person who switches everything off at the wall, and they're onto something.



Everyday appliances like fridges and freezers need to be switched on at all times. However, items like TV's, Smart Speakers and Game Consoles can use up energy even when turned off, unless unplugged at the wall.

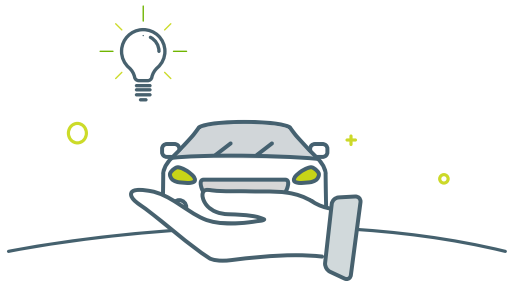
6. Don't overfill the kettle

Time for a cuppa? Whether tea time is at 11am or 3pm, stop filling the kettle up to the brim, use your mug to measure and boil just what you need.

Adding milk to tea is a personal preference but whether you like your tea milky or straight up, be sure to take this into account when filling the kettle.



Driving hacks to reduce your fuel usage



7. Listen to the flashing light

Having your car serviced regularly not only provides peace of mind that your vehicle is in road-worthy condition, but keeping up with car maintenance improves the overall efficiency of your vehicle. Identifying any issues with your car early on will help you save on costly repair bills, and undoubtedly help your car last longer.

Plus, new oil and air filters mean your engine will run smoother, and inflating your tyres to the correct pressure will improve your petrol and diesel use.

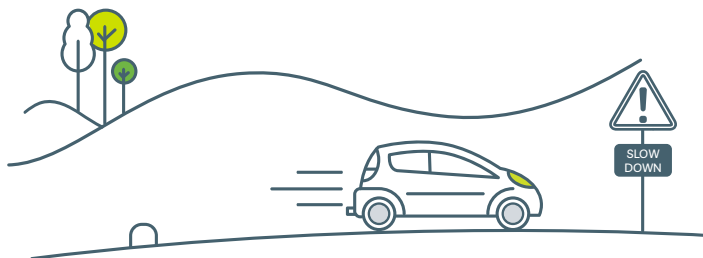
And remember, just because a car feels ok, it doesn't automatically mean all is working as well as it should be, so watch those lights on the dashboard and make sure you get your car serviced.



8. Avoid overaccelerating

It may seem like an old wives' tale, but excessive speed does in fact guzzle more petrol or diesel whilst driving. You'll accelerate a number of times when driving, but making sure your acceleration is as gentle as possible is key to being more petrol and diesel efficient. Remember, the faster an engine spins, the more petrol or diesel your car uses.

The best way to achieve high mpg (miles per gallon) is driving in the highest possible gear for your vehicle while keeping within the speed limit (of course). And, when driving in urban areas, be sure to change up through the gears as quickly as they allow.



9. Switch on cruise control



Cruise control is a great way to use your petrol and diesel economically, as it's the constant change in acceleration and deceleration of a car that causes you to use more petrol or diesel as you drive.

By switching on cruise control, your car will maintain the same pace. Motorway driving is great for cruise control as it works best when driving on a constant flat surface.

And, although they only use a small amount of petrol or diesel, if you're looking to make the most of your tank, we suggest turning the air conditioning or heating off too (when possible).

Did you know

If you're driving with your windows open at high speed, you may be using more petrol and diesel. That's because opening the windows whilst driving at high speed, like on the motorway, will cause your car to drag.

10. Stick to the speed limits

We all know that speeding whilst driving is illegal but staying within the speed limit is also good for your petrol and diesel tank. And it won't save you that much time either - driving continuously at 80mph instead of 70mph, you would only save five minutes. That isn't even long enough to make a decent cuppa!



Top tip

Give yourself time – not only does it save petrol and diesel, arriving safely is more important than arriving quickly.

11. Consider carpooling

Carpooling can be a fantastic solution to reducing travel costs.

If several employees from your workplace live close by and have cars, it's well worth getting together to share driving. For example, if four of you carpool, it could work out that you only need to drive to work one in every four weeks, or once a week depending how you split the trips (ker-ching!).

As well as saving on petrol, you could also be sharing the load when it comes to toll payments and parking fees and you're less likely to use your own vehicle every day, which could minimise wear and tear.

Can't wait to get started?

Here's some top tips for making it work for you...

First step: Our top tip is to join a carpool that already exists or create one if you don't have one taking place near you. A great way to start is by asking your employer whether they have a carpool in place or a way to connect commuters travelling in the same direction.

Talk to your neighbours and friends about introducing a new car-sharing system to go to the local shops or drop the kids off at school. Alternatively, using neighbourhood notice boards and social media is a great way to spread the word.

Not got a group of friends or colleagues to carpool with yet? Don't worry. With the UK government's [toolkit](#) for lift sharing, many local authorities have set up their own schemes. Try getting in contact with your local government to see if there's one available near you to join.

Be truthful: If you're behind on a project at work, staying two hours later to car share might be a lifesaver, but if the schedule for sharing isn't convenient for you, don't force it.

Be prepared: Make sure you have a back-up plan in place in case something goes wrong, as even the best-made plans can occasionally be derailed by unforeseen circumstances like illness or a flat tyre.

Get a group chat going: Making sure you're connected and can get in touch with your fellow carpoolers means you are less likely to show up when someone no longer needs a lift.

And finally, **don't forget to be safe.** It's essential to use caution when choosing who you carpool with. Always follow your instincts and take precautions, such as verifying the identity of people you don't know.

12. Time for an upgrade? Switch to electric

To encourage people to switch, there are various government grants or schemes, such as car tax discounts or exemptions and exemptions from petrol and diesel duty (obviously no petrol and diesel is needed for an EV!) to congestion charge.

And whilst electric vehicles are typically more expensive than petrol and diesel fuelled cars to purchase, the cost of running and maintaining an EV can be much lower in the long run than running a petrol or diesel car.



Already an EV owner?

Did you know that generally the cheapest time to charge your car is overnight, due to lower energy demand? So, get your dressing gown and outdoor slippers at the ready, and add plugging in to your night time routine!

