

5 proven ways to save on your heating bill this winter

Heating is by far the highest energy cost for homeowners in the winter, costing you hundreds or even thousands just to keep your home livable. That's money you could be spending on presents for loved ones or a weekend getaway in search of sand and sun.

Try these five ways to save on your heating bill so you can keep more money in your pocket from now until spring.

- **Get an efficiency upgrade**

For long-term savings, high efficiency is always the way to go. According to the [EPA's Energy Star Program](#), upgrading to a high efficiency furnace can save you 20% or more on energy compared to a standard furnace, and upgrading your water heater can save at least 10%.

What to buy:

Wall-mount Deluxe Heat Pump by Mitsubishi

Energy Saver Residential Electric Water Heater by Lochinvar

95% Efficiency or Better Gas Furnace by American Standard

- **Put your ceiling fans to work**

Hot air rises, and paying to heat air hovering a few feet above your head is just wasteful. Re-distribute that warm air by turning on the ceiling fans in your home, preferably on a low speed so you don't feel a breeze.

Ceiling fans use very little electricity, so the end result is less energy consumed, which is less energy to pay for.

- **Bring your thermostat into the 21st century**

Programmable connected thermostats do so much more than their more basic predecessors, including connect to your smartphone. You can program these thermostats to turn down the heat while you're away, but automatically turn back up when you're getting closer to home.

Your entire house will be the ideal temperature by the time you arrive, and you'll have avoided paying to heat an empty house.

What to buy:

Wi-Fi Connected Thermostat by Honeywell or White Rodgers

- **Take a closer look at your furnace**

When was the last time you had your furnace tuned up? Just like your car, furnaces need to be inspected by an expert to ensure they're running at peak efficiency.

- **Invest in a good humidifier**

Adding moisture to dry winter air allows you to feel more comfortable at a lower temperature, so you don't need to turn the heat up as high.

According to the general rule of thumb, setting your thermostat one degree cooler is worth about 3 percent of your heating bill, which adds up to major savings right away.

What to buy:

Whole-Home Humidifier by Aprilaire or Honeywell