

Appliance Tips

Fridge and Freezer Tips

Choose an energy-saving setting.

Set your refrigerator thermostat to 37 to 40 degrees and your freezer between zero and five degrees. Setting it lower just wastes energy: Ten degrees lower in the freezer can use up to 25 percent more energy.

Allow about two inches of air space around your refrigerator.

This helps it run most efficiently. Be aware that a refrigerator has to work harder if it's in direct sunlight or right next to your stove or dishwasher (good to keep in mind if you're planning a remodel).

Take notice if your refrigerator motor is running excessively.

That could be a sign it's no longer operating efficiently.

Check fridge and freezer gaskets.

Clean the rubber gaskets on freezer doors regularly and make sure they seal tightly. A loose gasket may cause frost build-up. Try this test: Close the freezer door on a dollar bill and then pull on the dollar. If it slides out easily, the seal isn't tight. Find instructions on replacing a freezer gasket online.

Turn it off before extended trips.

If you're leaving for a month or more, you might want to empty, clean and unplug your refrigerator and freezer to save energy. Prop the door open to prevent odors.

Recycle the second refrigerator and/or freezer.

They probably waste a lot more energy than you realize, because most are older castoffs. Depending on their size, age and location (like a hot garage, back porch or storage shed), a fridge could cost up to \$100 to \$200 a year to operate. A freezer could eat up \$60 to \$120 per year. If you are keeping a second fridge or freezer, unplug it until you need it.



Fridge & Freezer Shopping Tips

Always buy ENERGY STAR® models that save up to half the energy used in standard models.

Water and ice can cost you more. You might like the convenience of a through-the-door water and ice feature, but it can increase refrigerator energy use by 20 percent. Choose ENERGY STAR models that improve the efficiency of these options.

Choose a more efficient style. Side-by-side refrigerator/freezers generally use more energy than freezer-on-top or freezer-on-bottom configurations.

Buy the right size for your needs. If you buy a bigger refrigerator or freezer than you really need, you're just wasting energy.

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Washing/Drying Tips

Increasing efficiency in the laundry room is also good for the environment because you'll save water and help combat climate change.

Wash in cold water.

Or at least choose warm wash/cold rinse. Usually, about 90 percent of energy used for washing laundry goes toward heating water.

Wash full loads only (but don't overload).

If you have less than a full load, adjust the water level setting.

Try presoaking.

You can get clothes cleaner and save energy with 15 minutes of presoaking and five minutes of agitation rather than 15 minutes of agitation.

Remove lint for efficiency AND fire safety.

Get in the habit of checking the lint filter on your dryer after every load. Also, vacuum the exhaust duct and the exterior dryer vent a couple of times a year. Lint build-up blocks airflow and lengthens drying times.

Avoid over drying.

It wastes energy and it's harder on your clothing. Remove clothes from the dryer promptly and fold or hang up to prevent wrinkling.

Don't overstuff the dryer.

It will take longer to dry your load if the dryer is tightly packed.

Line dry laundry outside when possible.



Buy Energy Star

Premium-efficiency ENERGY STAR qualified washers come in front-load or top load styles. These models:

- Cut water and energy use by more than 40 percent compared to conventional models.
- Spin clothes faster, removing more moisture, reducing drying time — saving even more energy costs.

Front-load machines may require a little more cleaning and maintenance than top-loading models. Cleaning "tablets" that you can drop in the machine make it easier. Be sure to read and follow the washing machine owner's manual for maximum savings and performance, and always use laundry detergents labeled "HE" (high-efficiency).