

Lowering Your Energy Bill by Adjusting Your Thermostat

By Jon Sader

Americans see over 40% of energy consumption get expended by either heating or cooling their homes. Part of the reason people are seeing such high energy bills is because their home's furnace or air conditioning is running constantly to keep up with the demand for optimal temperatures. However, you can reduce your energy bills significantly by taking advantage of your home's demand for heating or air conditioning. By altering your thermostat appropriately, you may be able to save hundreds of dollars annually on your energy bills.

When you leave your home, the demand for optimal temperatures within the home declines since there is no one there to enjoy it. Leaving the thermostat at the same temperature as it was before you left the home is wasting energy and thus increasing your energy bills. One thing you can do, regardless of the season, is to adjust your thermostat or turn it off before you leave so as not to leave it running constantly while you are away.

Most households keep consistent schedules such as leaving for work or school in the morning and arriving back home in the evening. There is no reason for your thermostat to be set at an optimal temperature during this 8+ hour period. By adjusting the thermostat 10°F (+10 in the summer and -10 in the winter), your furnace or air conditioner will not be running nearly as often and can save a vast amount of energy. According to the United States Department of Energy (DOE), this practice can lower your energy bills by up to 15% every year¹.

People tend to be very busy right before they leave the house and may tend to forget adjusting their thermostat. There are "smart" thermostats on the market that will learn your household's habits and can adjust your thermostat for you. These thermostats will adjust the thermostat around the time people tend to leave for the day and will adjust it back around the time they arrive back home. Many of these "smart" thermostats will also let you control the temperature from your mobile phone. Many people turn off their thermostat when they go on extended vacations to save on their energy bill. With many of these "smart" thermostats, you will have the ability to turn on your thermostat and set the temperature with your mobile phone an hour before you arrive back home. The following are some of the leading "smart" thermostats on the market today:

- The Nest (as seen on the Knowledge is Power episode)
- Homewerks Radio Wireless Thermostat

¹ US Department of Energy – Energy.gov/energysaver/articles/thermostats-and-control-systems



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- Smart Thermostat from Ecobee
- Honeywell Prestige 2.0 Comfort System

By adjusting your thermostat every day or with the use of a “smart” thermostat, you effectively lower your energy bills without sacrificing the comfort level of your home.

