



Energy Conservation Tips for Refrigerators and Freezers

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Refrigerator & Freezer Tips

- Like other appliances that heat and cool, refrigerators are big energy users. If your refrigerator door does not shut tightly, check the door seal to see if it needs to be cleaned or replaced. A door leak allows cool air to escape, forcing your refrigerator to use more energy to keep food cold.
- Cleaning the condenser coils found in the back or bottom of the refrigerator will maximize its efficiency. A brush or vacuum can be used. Be sure to unplug the refrigerator before you start cleaning.
- Keep the refrigerator away from heating appliances (ovens and dishwashers, windows, and heating ducts). Direct exposure to heat forces the unit to work harder and use more energy. If you have a freezer or refrigerator in your garage, remember that the garage is not cooled and it will run more to keep cool.
- When purchasing a new refrigerator consider a high efficiency model. Compare yellow Energy Guide labels and choose the unit that uses the least amount of electricity.
- By keeping the freezer compartment full, you will increase its efficiency. Be careful not to block the fan that allows cold air to circulate.
- Although automatic defrost refrigerators are convenient, their defrosting features use a lot of electricity. A manual defrost refrigerator typically uses 36% less energy.
- Check temperature settings for the most efficient appliance operation. Refrigerator temperature should be 36-38 degrees and freezer temperature should be 0-5 degrees.

Dishwashers

- Eighty percent of the energy used in automatic dishwashers goes toward heating water. Significant savings take place by running the dishwasher only when it is full. Running a half-filled dishwasher twice uses as much energy as running a full load once.
- Washing dishes by hand may not save energy or money. In fact, you can probably save energy using the dishwasher since hand washing usually requires more hot water.
- When shopping for a new dishwasher, look for models that require less hot water. Dishwashers differ in the number of gallons of hot water used in the wash cycle. The manufacturer's specifications or the Energy Guide label should list this information.
- Many new dishwashers have an internal water heater that raises the temperature of the incoming water to 140 degrees. This device allows you to turn down the temperature on the water heater in your home and still have your dishes washed thoroughly.
- Take advantage of the energy saving control on many dishwashers. It turns off the heat during the drying cycle. Opening the dishwasher after the rinse cycle and letting the dishes air dry is another way to save energy.