

Better living

Tips and hints
for more comfort





Tip

Use your smart phone's camera to scan the QR codes at "More information": this will take you directly to the linked websites and brochures.

This brochure contains links to additional material and QR codes for content that are not available in English.

You can order all the SwissEnergy brochures listed here at www.bundespublikationen.admin.ch, using the relevant article number.

About this brochure

There are instructions for everything nowadays – from televisions and electric toothbrushes to bicycles. You can read the instructions to find out what these products can do and how they should be operated. Of course, not everyone likes to read operating instructions. But even if we don't read them before, we're glad to refer to them when something isn't functioning as we want it to, because they help to solve problems.

But what if our whole home isn't functioning as it ought to? In that case, this brochure gives you simple tips and information to help you avoid or solve typical problems in your home. And the best part: if you take these tips to heart, you'll not only find living is more pleasant – but you'll also need even less energy.

To prevent the brochure from becoming too long, we have limited it to the most common topics. For instance, it covers room temperatures that are too high or too low, air that is too dry or humid, bad odours, mould, and other issues as well.

There are tips for both summer and winter. Some points also relate to daytime or night-time – as you can see from these symbols:



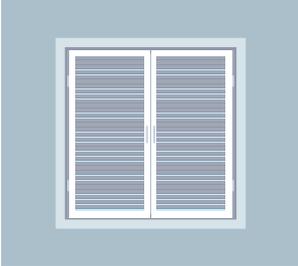
If there is no reference to a season or time of day, the tips are for general use and they will always work.

Here's a tip for anyone living in a building with old windows: During winter, the temperature near the windows may be considerably lower than in the middle of the room. It's all right for this to happen, and it is not a fault in the house or flat. So if it's too cold for you near the windows, you should simply move chairs, armchairs or sofas away from them.

We wish you much success with optimising your living comfort!

Too hot

In summer

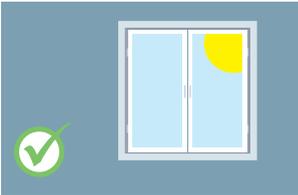


Close solar protection

If the sun shines through the window, it will heat the room up. So: close sunblinds or window shutters during daytime. Solar protection works best if it is installed on the outside of the window.

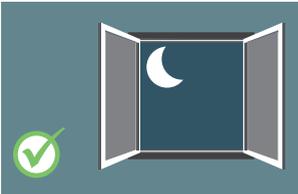


For more information
Fact sheet "Avoid
overheating in summer"



Close windows during daytime

If you close the windows during the day, the heat will stay outside.



Open windows at night

If you open the windows at night, cooler air can come in.



For more information
Fact sheet "A pleasant indoor
climate: five tips for summer"



Wear lightweight, loose clothes

Clothes keep our bodies warm – how well they do this depends on the material and its composition. So: wear lightweight, loose clothes so cooling air can reach your body.



For more information
Brochure "Everyday
ways to save energy"



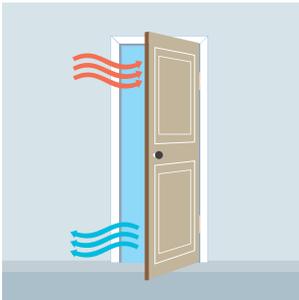


Switch off electrical appliances and lighting

Every electrical device generates heat. So: switch equipment off, and unplug chargers when you don't need them. By doing this, you can prevent the room from heating up any further.



For more information
Fact sheet "Avoid
overheating in summer"

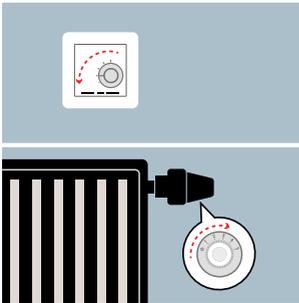


Open doors to adjacent rooms

Open doors equalize temperatures between rooms. So: if you open the door between two rooms, you will cool down the warmer room.



In winter



Turn the heating down

Is the heating system giving out too much heat? Then turn the control down a notch. If it's still too warm after 12 hours, turn the control down another notch. Repeat this until the temperature is right.

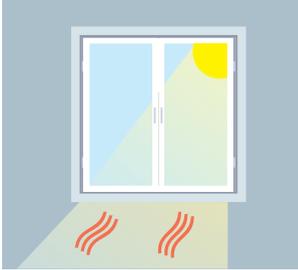


For more information
Brochure
"Energy manual"



Too cold

In summer and winter



Open solar protection devices

If the sun shines through the window, it will heat the room up. So: open the sunblinds and window shutters.



Put on warmer clothes

Clothes keep our bodies warm – how well they do this depends on the material and its composition. So: put on something warmer!



For more information

Brochure “Everyday ways to save energy”



In winter



Is the heating on?

Modern heating systems only switch on after a specified outdoor temperature is reached. This temperature is usually between 10 and 15 °C. Check whether the heating in any room in your apartment is actually running. If not, contact the caretaker. Ask when the heating will be switched on and, if necessary, request an inspection.



For more information

Brochure “Energy manual”



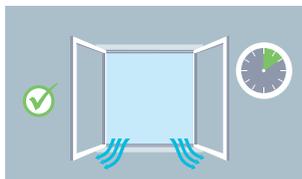


Is anything blocking your radiators?

Anything placed near a radiator prevents the heat from dissipating. Don't put anything on top of radiators. Move furniture, coverings and curtains away from radiators so the heat flow into the room is not impeded. Do you have underfloor heating? If so, make sure that no thick carpets are reducing the dissipation of heat.

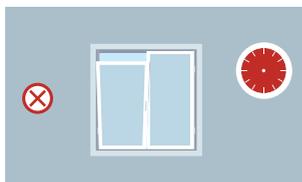


For more information
Brochure "Everyday
ways to save energy"

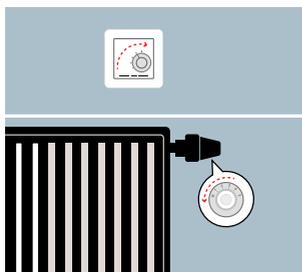


Ventilate the right way

A lot of heat is lost through permanently open tilting windows. This is the right way to ventilate: at least three times a day, open all the windows in your home fully for five to ten minutes, and then close them again. By doing this, you will change the air without cooling the room down. If you have a ventilation system, do not ventilate additionally through the windows.



For more information
Brochure "Everyday
ways to save energy"



Turn the heating up

Is the heating system giving out too little heat? Then turn the control up a notch. If it's still too cold after 12 hours, turn the control up another notch. Repeat this until the temperature is right.

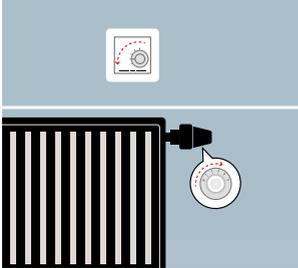


For more information
Brochure
"Energy manual"



Too dry

In winter

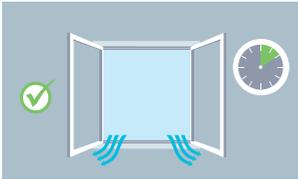


Turn the heating down

The warmer the air in a room is, the drier it becomes. So: reduce the room temperature. To find out how to do this, go to the section on “Too warm – in winter” on page 5.

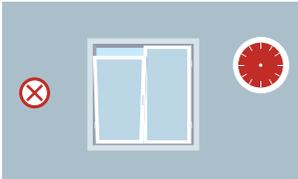


For more information
Brochure
“Energy manual”

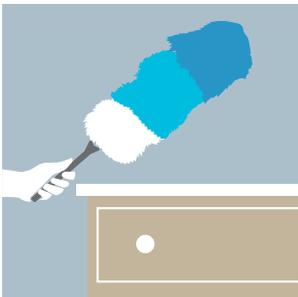


Ventilate the right way

Not only heat but also air humidity is lost through permanently open tilting windows. Open all your windows for five to ten minutes, at least three times a day. The lower the outdoor temperature is, the less time you will need to ventilate. If your home has a ventilation system, turn the controller down by one notch.



For more information
Brochure “Everyday
ways to save energy”



Wipe dust away more often

Dusty air feels dry, even if it is not really dry. What’s more, normal house dust can also contain pollutants, allergens or harmful germs. So: remove dust regularly by vacuuming and wiping surfaces off with a damp cloth.

For more information
Website of the Federal Office of
Public Health (FOPH) → Healthy living



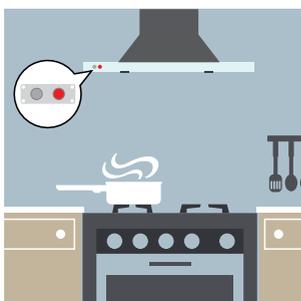


Put some plants around your home

Plants give off moisture into the air. Put a few “green housemates” around your living room – they will ensure a pleasant level of air humidity, and they won’t charge you anything.



For more information
Fact sheet
“Air humidification”



Do not switch the fume extractor on

If you cook with water, moisture will escape into the air. If you leave the fume extractor switched off, the air humidity will increase. But please note: if you cook with fats and oils, switch the fume extractor on; otherwise, a film of grease may be deposited throughout the room.



For more information
Fact sheet
“Hob ventilation”

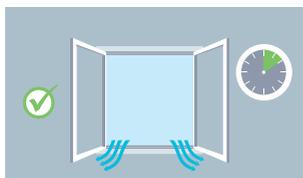


Open the bathroom door after showering or taking a bath

Open the bathroom door after showering or taking a bath. That will allow the humidity to escape into other rooms in your home.

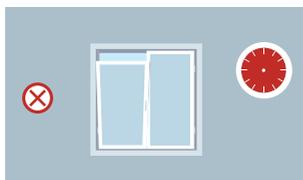
Too damp or mouldy

In winter



Ventilate the right way

If you don't ventilate sufficiently, moisture will accumulate in the room air. Do not ventilate through permanently open tilted windows – a lot of heat is lost by doing this, and mould can form. Open all your windows for five to ten minutes, at least three times a day. If your home has a ventilation system, turn the controller up one notch.



For more information
Brochure "Everyday
ways to save energy"



Put some plants around your home

Plants give off moisture into the air. If you remove some of them, the air humidity will also be reduced.



For more information
Fact sheet
"Air humidification"



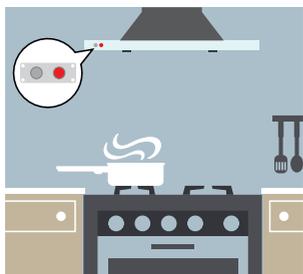
Do not dry laundry inside your home

When laundry is drying, it releases moisture into the room air. So: dry your laundry in the drying room, not in your apartment.



For more information
Fact sheet
"Air humidification"



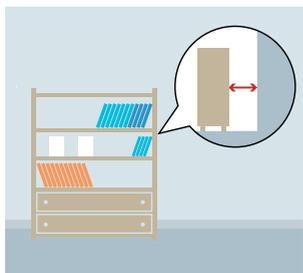


Switch on the fume extractor

When you cook, water vapour escapes into the room air. Switch the fume extractor on – it will extract excess moisture at source.



For more information
Fact sheet
“Hob ventilation”



Pay attention to distances between furniture and walls

If furniture is positioned very close to an external wall, moisture can accumulate behind it and form mould. So: move all larger furnishings at least 10 to 15 cm away from the external wall.



For more information
Brochure
“Energy manual”



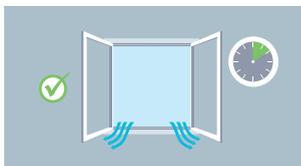
Important: Mould in the home is unhealthy and should be removed as quickly as possible. Mould can develop for many different reasons, so its causes should be investigated as quickly as possible. For example: if the mould covers an area of more than 10 × 10 cm, inform the building manager, caretaker or landlord immediately. If you don't do this, you will be liable for any consequential damage.

For more information
Brochure
“Mould in living rooms”



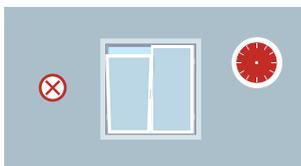
Disturbing odours

In summer and winter



Ventilate the right way

If you don't ventilate sufficiently, moisture will accumulate in the room air. Do not ventilate through permanently open tilted windows – a lot of heat is lost by doing this, and mould can form. Open all your windows for five to ten minutes, at least three times a day. If your home has a ventilation system, turn the controller up one notch.



For more information
Brochure "Everyday
ways to save energy"



Reduce vapour emissions to the minimum

New products such as furniture, clothes, electrical appliances or plastic objects can give off vapours containing substances that smell unpleasant. Buy products that give off as few unpleasant vapours as possible. Ventilate well whenever you place new products in your home.

For more information
Website of the Federal Office of
Public Health (FOPH) → Healthy living



Caution – chemicals!

Household products such as cleaning agents, polishes or adhesives can sometimes contain unhealthy chemicals. They can vaporise and may be released into the air, so use products of this sort sparingly. When you do use them, ventilate well.

For more information
Website of the Federal Office of
Public Health (FOPH) → Healthy living





Drain maintenance

Remains of food, cleaning agents, skincare products and similar substances can be deposited in the drains of washbasins, showers and bath tubs, etc. Residues of this sort can start to smell bad over time. Bad odours can also come from dried-out siphons. Inspect your drains every three months and clean them as necessary. Pour a litre of water into the syphon to fill it.

For more information
Website
hausinfo.ch



Switch on the fume extractor

Cooking often gives rise to smells – some of them pleasant, others not so nice. Switch the fume extractor on to remove bad smells at source.

For more information
Fact sheet
“Hob ventilation”



Other tips

In summer and winter

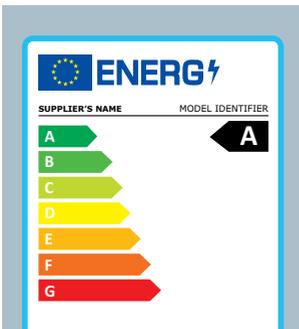


After an absence: flush out the water pipes

Water that stands in the pipes for a long time may become “musty” or even unhealthy. So: if you were away for more than three days, open all the water taps and let the water run until it comes out of the pipe at a constant temperature. This applies to both hot and cold water.

For more information

Federal Food Safety and Veterinary Office (FSVO) → Safety of water for drinking, showering and bathing



Buy energy-efficient appliances

When you're buying a new electrical appliance, it's worth paying attention to the energy label. Choose equipment in the highest energy efficiency class!

For more information

Topten, www.newlabel.ch, Energy Star, energy label, Brochure “Energy efficiency in the household”



Turn off the lights in rooms that are not in use

It's true that the latest LED lamps need much less electricity than incandescent bulbs. Nevertheless: switch off lights in rooms that are not in use.

For more information
Brochure “Efficient lighting in the household”





Clean your water filters

If the water supply is cut off and then restored, small particles become detached from the pipes; they could block the filters (strainers) on the water taps. For this reason, clean the water filters after every interruption to the water supply.

For more information

Website
hausinfo.ch



Clean or replace the extractor hood filter

Every extractor hood has a filter that retains oils and fats. Check this filter once or twice each month, and clean it as necessary – then the fume extractor will work properly. Recirculating (ductless) hoods have an additional filter that retains odours. This has to be replaced after a specified period. You can find more details about this in the instruction manual for the appliance.

For more information

Fact sheet
“Hob ventilation”



Clean the water filter on your dishwasher

Dishwashers have a filter that removes coarse impurities from the dishwasher. If the filter is blocked, the machine will no longer wash the dishes clean. This can also lead to unpleasant odours. For this reason, clean the filter at least two times every month.

Content developed by

Lucerne School of Engineering and Architecture

Lucerne University of
Applied Sciences and Arts

**HOCHSCHULE
LUZERN**

Technik & Architektur
FH Zentralschweiz

With support from

Swiss Homeowners' Association (HEV), Switzerland

Minergie Switzerland

City of Zurich Building Department

Faktor Journalisten AG

Keystone-SDA

SwissEnergy

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Sales and distribution:

bundespublikationen.admin.ch

Article number 805.116.ENG