

Working in your home office can be pleasant without wasting energy

There are plenty of steps you can take in your home office to save energy and cut costs. They all add up to a valuable contribution to the fight against energy wastage.

Action

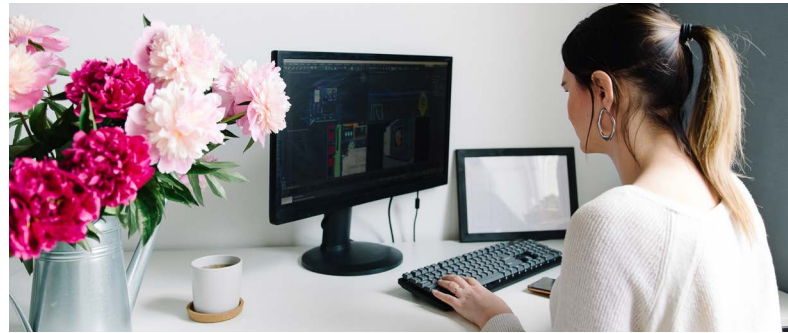
Be aware of how you use energy, and switch off all unnecessary equipment that consumes power.

Requirement

You work from your home office and you want to save energy and cut costs.

What to do

- Close the room door so as to retain the heat in the room where you work.
- Ventilate regularly. Open the windows fully – but only for short periods (see page 2).
- A small workstation lamp provides optimal lighting for your home office space.
- Switch the lighting off as soon as sufficient daylight is available.
- Switch computers, screens and printers off completely during your lunch break and in the evening.
- Always charge mobile devices with the cable, not with the wireless charging pad.
- If possible, use the internet with a cable connection (Ethernet etc.), not with a wireless system (WLAN, G4 or G5 mobile network). Cable solutions are also faster and more secure.
- Only switch the printer on when you need it. Laser printers in particular cause high standby losses.
- Check whether you can switch your router off completely at night – between 11:00 pm and 5:30 am, for example (see page 2).
- Activate the energy-saving function on your office equipment (see page 2).



Costs – effort

- An average household has standby consumption of 25 to 35 watts, causing superfluous electricity costs of around CHF 40 per year. Typical standby consumers in an office are notebooks (1 to 3 W), screens (1 to 2 W), modems (7 W) and chargers or power units (0.1 to 3 W, depending on their age).

Please note!

- In home offices, the breaks are often the times when most energy is wasted. Only heat up the amount of water you actually need for your tea or instant coffee (one cup or, better, one whole Thermos flask). Always use the electric kettle to do this – never a pan. Switch your espresso machine off completely after using it. Do not wash up manually; always use a fully loaded dishwasher. Incidentally: when you wash your hands, cold water is perfectly adequate for a clean and hygienic result.

Additional explanations

The right room temperature

For home office working – i.e. office work – the Swiss Society of Engineers and Architects (SIA) recommends an indoor temperature of 21°C and relative humidity of 30% to 60%. If your home is heated to between 19 and 20°C in winter (or if you actively reduce the temperature), note the following points:

- Put on a warm pullover and move about or exercise regularly during breaks from work.
- Close the door to your home office so as to save the valuable “waste heat” given off by your body, the lighting and all the office equipment that uses electricity.
- When the sun is shining, open the window shutters and roller shutters to let the natural heat come into the room.

Ventilate regularly

You must ventilate your workspace regularly, even though this requires energy. This is because “used” air with a CO₂ concentration of more than 1000 ppm has a significantly negative effect on performance. Ventilate five times a day: before you start work, during your morning and afternoon breaks, after lunch, and after you finish work. At these times, open the window fully for two to three minutes. In apartments or homes with a ventilation system (comfort ventilation), additional ventilation through the windows is not necessary. Half-open or tilted (bottom-hung) windows increase energy consumption without noticeably improving the air quality.

Lighting

During winter, artificial light is often needed in the mornings until there is sufficient daylight to work. Modern lighting systems in offices will then switch the lights off automatically. At home, you have to switch the lights off yourself – something that’s easily forgotten. One LED desk light is often sufficient for working at home. It requires only 3 watts – about five times less electricity than an LED ceiling light.

Switch IT equipment off completely

Computers, screens and printers are running round the clock in many home offices. That means they consume precious energy in standby mode. Although this only costs an individual person a few francs a year, the IT devices in Switzerland’s 3,9 million households cause standby losses totalling 180 GWh – equivalent to about 6% of the power generated each year by the Beznau 1 nuclear power plant. You can very easily prevent some of this pointless energy wastage: switch all your devices off during lunchtime, in the evenings and at week-ends, and disconnect them from the mains with the help of a power strip (switchable power bar).

Switch routers off at night

Before you switch routers off at night, check whether your internet provider performs security updates during this period. Also, note that many household devices (telephones, surveillance cameras, smart lighting and heating systems, smart home devices, etc.) do not function without a router, or their function is restricted.

Activate energy-saving functions

You can go to the system settings to activate the energy-saving function for your computer, monitors (screens) and printers. The software menus for this purpose are often self-explanatory; the operating system and the individual hardware determine what is possible. Please note:

- The screensaver is a relic from the past. It is technically superfluous, and it increases power consumption by up to 50%.
- Reduce the screen brightness on your monitor or notebook to 70%. This will generally be sufficient.
- Activate standby mode on all devices after 5 minutes without activity.

Additional information

- [Efficient office equipment](#)
- [Standby mode](#)
- [Everyday ways to save energy](#), SwissEnergy, 2022
- [Energy efficiency in the household](#), SwissEnergy, 2021