

Energy efficiency in the household

A little effort
saves a lot
of energy.



Energy efficiency: from buying new equipment to recycling

How can I save energy in my household? There are many possible ways to save energy, and you can read all about them on the next few pages. We will show you how you can identify an efficient appliance in the shop, how to use your appliances more efficiently, and how to repair or dispose of them sustainably.

Buy energy-efficient appliances

When you buy a household appliance, you should pay attention to its efficiency. Energy efficiency ultimately has a major influence on the long-term cost of your appliance.

The energy label is very useful here, because it enables you to compare the energy efficiency of different appliances with one another. This brochure gives you an overview of what the individual symbols on the label mean, how the new label differs from previous versions, and which labels apply to which types of equipment.





Energy-efficient housekeeping

Leaving the refrigerator open for a few moments while you add a dash of milk to your coffee. Or washing with the machine's drum only half full because you want to put your favourite garment back on straight away. All of us are familiar with situations like these that consume energy unnecessarily. And this is where a lot of energy and money can be saved, right here in the household. You can learn how by reading the tips on individual appliances.

Sustainability thanks to repairs and recycling

The lifetimes and recycling of household appliances also affect their energy efficiency. In this brochure, you will learn what options you have for repairs and recycling.

Get more tips

There is a QR code next to most of the articles in this brochure. Use your smart phone's camera to scan the code so you can access a vast range of additional information on specific topics as well as tips on purchasing, using, repairing and recycling your household appliances. This brochure contains links to additional material and QR codes for content that are not available in English.



Are you seeking advice on another topic related to energy?
We have the right publication for every subject area.



How much power do you consume?

A typical two-person Swiss household consumes about 2190 kWh of power each year. How much power do you consume? Compare your consumption here.

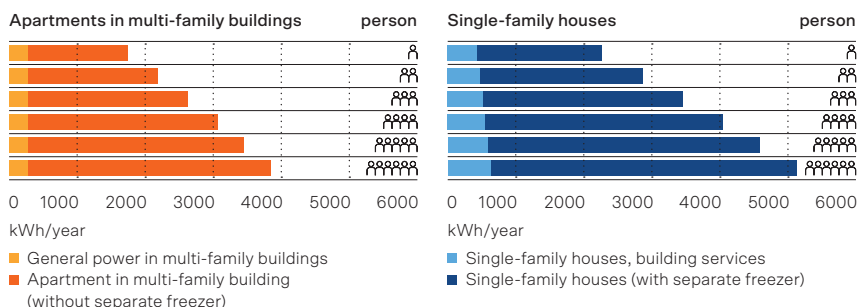
Is a typical household the average?

There's a simple reason why we talk about a typical household, not an average one: households with electrical room or water heating consume far more energy, and they almost double the average level of power consumption. But a typical household is not equipped with either of the systems just mentioned. That's why they are disregarded in the calculation, in the same way as aquariums, waterbeds or dehumidifiers.

Compare your power consumption with the figure for a typical household

Compare your annual power consumption (based on your living circumstances and the number of people living in the household) with the figure for a typical household. Please note: for apartments in multi-family buildings, the costs of general power are shown under "Ancillary costs", not on the individual annual bill/account statement.

Typical household power consumption



You can find detailed information
in the Household fact sheet



Pay attention to the energy label

At a glance, the energy label gives you information about consumption of electrical energy and – depending on the product – its noise level, washing efficiency or water consumption. When making a purchase, the label is a fast and simple way to compare appliances within a product group.



The new energy label has arrived

As from 1 March 2021, the energy label in Switzerland is gradually being adapted to EU directives. You can see the new energy label here.

New label

The diagram illustrates the layout of the new energy label with the following components and annotations:

- QR code:** link to model information in the database of the European Product Registry for Energy Labelling (EPREL database); in Switzerland, disclosure is voluntary.
- Model name** of the appliance
- Energy efficiency class** of the appliance
- Name or trademark** of the manufacturer
- Scale of energy efficiency classes** from A to G
- Energy consumption** by the eco programme in kWh per 100 operating cycles
- Number of standard place settings** for a standard load
- Water consumption** by the eco programme in litres/operating cycle
- Duration** of the eco programme
- Noise emissions** in dB(A) re 1pW (sound power)
- Designation of the **European directive**

The label itself features the EU flag, the word **ENERGY**, a box for the QR code, fields for **SUPPLIER'S NAME** and **MODEL IDENTIFIER**, a vertical scale of energy efficiency classes (A to G), a section for energy consumption (XYZ kWh / 100), and icons for standard place settings (XY x), water consumption (XY,Z L), duration (X:YZ), and noise emissions (XY dB, A B C D).

You can find full information about the energy label on the NEW LABEL website. NEW LABEL is an initiative that supports the transition to the new “2021 energy label” in Switzerland. www.newlabel.ch ➔


Which appliances have which energy labels?

This table shows you which appliance categories already carry the new label (highest efficiency class: A) and which ones still have the existing label (highest efficiency class: A+++).

Class authorised for sale in Switzerland from July 1st 2025	A+++	A++	A+	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Appliances with new labels										
Refrigerators and freezers *				■	■	■	■	■		
Washing machines*				■	■	■	■	■		
Tumble dryers*				■	■	■	■	■		
Dishwashers*				■	■	■	■	■		
Televisions and monitors				■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Light sources				■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Smartphones and tablets				■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Appliances with existing labels										
Ovens	■	■	■	■						
Extractor hoods	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■		
Room air conditioners *	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■		
Coffee machines	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■		

* Device-specific exceptions to minimum energy efficiency requirements

Tips on buying new appliances

- Pay attention to the energy label.
- Compare energy-efficient appliances according to your needs.
- Choose appliances whose size or capacity meet your requirements. If an appliance is too large, its power consumption will be unnecessarily high.
- From appliances of the same size, choose the one with the highest efficiency class (dark green).
- **topten.ch**  is a comparison website where you can find and compare Switzerland's most energy-efficient products, including household appliances and many other categories. The site also provides continuously updated selection criteria and guidance.

The best tip on saving: use appliances the right way

New or old: every domestic appliance has dormant potential for saving energy. Follow our tips: the simple way to safeguard the environment – and the contents of your wallet!



Kitchen appliances



Tips on ovens

- Use convection for baking instead of top and bottom heat.
- Don't pre-heat the oven: that will save 20 per cent of the energy.
- Turn the oven off five minutes before the end of the baking time, and make use of the residual heat.

More tips
on ovens





Tips on extractor hoods

- Adjust the operating level to match the type of cooking you are doing: select a high level when you are frying or deep-frying, but a low level when you are simmering vegetables.
- Whenever possible, cook with closed pots and pans. As well as the energy you save, this will reduce the steam, fat and odours that are released into the room air.
- Clean or replace filters on a regular basis.

More tips
on extractor hoods



Tips on refrigerators and freezers

- Set your refrigerator's temperature to 7 °C.
- For your freezer, -18 °C is adequate.
- Let hot food cool down before you put it in the refrigerator/freezer.
- If you want to thaw food, put it in your refrigerator. This will cool the inside of the appliance.

More tips
on refrigerators and freezers





Tips on dishwashers

- Only start the dishwasher when it's full – but don't overload it.
- Select low-temperature or economy programmes. They may take longer, but they protect the environment and clean more thoroughly.
- Don't pre-rinse the dishes in water. It's quite sufficient to remove coarse food residues before clearing the dishes away.

More tips
on dishwashers



Tips on coffee machines

- Use the energy-saving mode (if available). New coffee machines automatically stop keeping the water hot after a freely selectable period.
- Descale your coffee machine at regular intervals. This will prolong its lifetime.
- Always switch your coffee machine off after using it.

More tips
on coffee machines



Laundry appliances



Tips on washing machines

- Only wash with the drum full and, if possible, select a low wash temperature (20–30 degrees). By doing this, you will protect the environment and your clothes.
- Select the economy programme – even if it takes longer. The short programme consumes much more power and water.
- Don't increase the amount of detergent for washing at lower temperatures: this will not make your laundry any cleaner.

More tips
on washing machines



Tips on tumble-dryers

- Whenever possible, let your laundry dry in the open air.
- Opt for a tumble-dryer with integrated sensors. They measure the moisture level of your laundry and adapt the drying time automatically.
- Select the “iron-dry” programme instead of “extra-dry”.

More tips
on laundry dryers



Room air conditioners



Tips on room air conditioners

- Cool your living space by taking simple actions: switch off unused household appliances and lamps. Close window shutters when the sun is shining on the façade. Don't open the window if the façade has already heated up; it's best only to ventilate early in the morning, before sunrise.
- Opt for a fan (ventilator) instead of a room air conditioner. The movement of the air has a cooling effect that you can feel, and the energy consumption is far lower.
- Don't use mobile units. They release waste heat into the room, so they are ineffective. They are also noisy and they consume a lot of energy.

More tips
on room air conditioners



Living room appliances



Tips on television sets

- Reduce the image resolution (HD, 4K or 8K) so as to lower the energy demand.
- Always switch off your television set and the set-top box completely. This is very easy to do with a power switch or a socket strip (power strip).
- A television set with a home cinema system can more than double the power consumption.

More tips
on television sets



Tips on consumer electronics

- Opt for equipment powered by rechargeable batteries. They use less power than equipment supplied from the mains.
- The energy consumed during the lifecycle of consumer electronic equipment is less than the grey energy needed to produce and transport the equipment. That's why you should continue using these items for as long as possible.
- Take time to get to know the functions of your equipment, and turn on the energy-saving settings.
- Supply power to all your entertainment equipment (television set, set-top box, DVD, hi-fi, game console) from a common socket strip that can be switched on and off. You can then turn all the devices off with just one click when they are not in use.

More tips
on consumer electronics



Office equipment



Tips on your home office

- A multi-purpose unit with a printer, copier, scanner and fax machine saves a lot of space. And it uses less power in standby mode. The production process for these units is also beneficial because it consumes fewer resources than for single devices.
- And concerning printers: as well as the power they consume, every page they print pollutes the environment. Only print when necessary! And if you do print, use both sides of recycled paper.
- Supply power to all your office equipment from a socket strip that can be switched on and off. At the touch of a finger, all your devices are switched off completely so they do not consume energy unnecessarily in standby mode.

More tips
on home office



Save energy with efficient lighting

You can create a wonderful atmosphere at home with nice lighting. As well as a sense of well-being in your living space, you can achieve even more with a few simple tricks: you'll also save money and energy.



Worth knowing

Select the right colour temperature for your bulbs. This is stated in Kelvins (K); bulbs are classified as warm white (2700 to 3000 K), neutral (cool) white (4000 K) and daylight white (6500 K). Warm white is very popular for living rooms and bedrooms; 4000 K is suitable for the bathroom, and daylight white has a stimulating effect in workplaces.

Not all light bulbs can be dimmed. However, the bulb pack carries a warning if the light source cannot be dimmed, or can only be dimmed with specified dimmers. In the latter case, manufacturers must provide a list of compatible dimmers on their website.



Tips on lighting

- LED is the only way to achieve efficient lighting. LED technology is setting new standards for energy efficiency, quality and service life.
- How to save the most energy? Switch off lights where they are not needed. Time controls, motion sensors, presence and daylight controls are helpful here. They are particularly useful in corridors and on staircases, for outdoor lighting and (for example) with office floor lamps.
- Light-coloured surfaces in a room support efficient lighting. On the other hand, dark lampshades, surfaces and furniture swallow up the light.
- Avoid lighting equipment that is difficult to retrofit with LED lamps. This category includes lamps with halogen bulbs and an R7s base. Difficulties can also arise with very small halogen bulbs when space is limited: LED variants are often larger (base types G4, GY6.35 and G9).

More tips
on efficient lighting for your home



Repair, or buy new?

Is a repair worthwhile when a fault occurs? The answer depends on the age of the equipment, the repair costs and the technical development of new equipment.



With a little manual dexterity, you can quickly replace many wearing parts such as seals or door hinges yourself. You can often rectify minor instances of damage yourself, too. Incidentally: you can usually obtain the right spare parts for up to ten years after a model goes out of production. If you are unsure about anything, an expert will always be glad to advise you.



Recycling is so easy!

Thanks to recycling, valuable raw materials that can be re-used are returned to industry, and the environment is protected. So: when electrical appliances and lighting components reach the end of their lifetime, return these items free of charge to a shop that offers comparable products. It doesn't matter where you bought your product. You can also dispose of it free of charge at a specialised collection point.

www.erecycling.ch ➤

For an overview of disposal/collection points, visit SENS eRecycling.

www.swico.ch/en/recycling ➤

SWICO Recycling offers you more information about recycling electronic equipment.

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