# Maintain or Upgrade Your HVAC System

* Check out your system’s air filters every month. A dirty air filter will slow down air flow and make the system work harder to keep you cool—wasting energy. A clean filter will also prevent dust and dirt from building up in the system, which can lead to expensive maintenance and/or early system failure.
* Get an HVAC maintenance check. While changing filters is a must, there may be other things wrong with your HVAC system that wouldn't be obvious to a non-professional. Have your system serviced annually by an HVAC contractor to ensure that it's running at optimum efficiency to save energy and money.
* If your cooling equipment is more than 10 years old or it needs frequent repairs and your energy bills are going up, it may be time to consider a replacement.
* Depending on where you live, replacing your old HVAC equipment with products that have earned the ENERGY STAR can cut your annual energy bill by more than $140.
* Ready to consider an upgrade? The interactive [ENERGY STAR Heating and Cooling Guide](https://www.energystar.gov/products/heating_cooling/guide) is your resource for navigating how to choose the right equipment to help you save energy, save money, and protect the planet.

# ENERGY STAR Certified Smart Thermostats

* For the average American household, almost half of the annual energy bill goes to heating and cooling – more than $900 a year. Being smart about how you control your temperature settings and HVAC equipment will help you save money and stay comfortable in your home.
* What is a smart thermostat? A smart thermostat is a Wi-Fi enabled device that can automatically adjust heating and cooling temperature settings for optimal performance. Smart thermostats that earn the ENERGY STAR label have been independently certified, based on actual field data, to save energy.
* Choose a new ENERGY STAR certified smart thermostat to get demonstrated energy savings and environmental benefits, reliable performance, and convenience, insight, and control.
* ENERGY STAR certified smart thermostats use less energy to keep you comfortable inside, which helps protect the environment outside while also saving you money on your energy bill. For the perfect climate all around, look for the ENERGY STAR label.
* Spend more time creating precious moments together and less time worrying about your energy bill. ENERGY STAR certified smart thermostats use less energy to keep you comfortable inside, which helps protect the environment outside. They are perfect for everywhere you live.
* ENERGY STAR smart thermostats are third-party certified to:
  + Accurately measure temperature.
  + Quickly entering a low-power standby mode when inactive.
  + Track and report equipment use and temperature data to the homeowner.
  + Provide tailored functionality and service that delivers energy savings that make sense for the individual homeowner.
* If everyone used an ENERGY STAR certified smart thermostat, savings would grow to 56 trillion BTUs of energy and $740 million dollars per year, offsetting 13 billion pounds of annual greenhouse gas emissions.

# ENERGY STAR Certified Room Air Conditioners

* For households without central air conditioning, choose an ENERGY STAR certified room air conditioner to save money on your energy bills.
* Room air conditioner models that have earned the ENERGY STAR save energy and offer improved sealing and insulation around the unit. They use about 10% less energy than standard models and cost, on average, less than $70 a year to run.
* Save even more by choosing a model that uses innovative variable speed technology. Room air conditioners with efficient variable speed compressors are able to vary the speed of the internal compressor motor in order to continuously control the temperature. As a result, the capability for efficient variable output allows a room air conditioner to more quietly regulate the temperature and save a significant amount of energy during operation
* Properly size your room ac for comfort and savings. An oversized unit will cool the room but only remove some of the humidity, leaving the room with a damp, clammy feeling. [Learn how to choose the right size for your room ac](https://www.energystar.gov/products/ask-the-expert/the-cool-choice-for-room-ac).
* ENERGY STAR certified room air conditioners with connected functionality offer additional convenience, comfort, and energy savings, including the ability to:
  + turn off the unit remotely using your phone or computer;
  + schedule changes to temperature settings based on your needs;
  + receive feedback on the energy use of the product.
* ENERGY STAR room air conditioners come with higher quality insulation materials and clear installation instructions, improving comfort and savings by allowing a better seal of the area between the unit and the window opening.
* Some ENERGY STAR certified room air conditioners use a new EPA-approved refrigerant called R32, which has a much lower impact on the climate – two-thirds lower than the refrigerants used in other room air conditioners.

# More Cooling Tips

* **Seal and Insulate:** You could save about $190 a year by sealing air leaks around your house and adding insulation. Focus first on sealing ducts that run through the attic, crawlspace, unheated basement, or garage. Use duct sealant (mastic) or metal-backed (foil) tape to seal the seams and connections of ducts. After sealing the ducts in those spaces, wrap them in insulation to keep them from getting hot in the summer or cold in the winter. Next, look to seal any other ducts that you can access in the heated or cooled part of the house.
* **Be a Fan of Fans:** Run your ceiling fan to create a cool breeze. If you raise your thermostat by only two degrees and use your ceiling fan, you can lower your air conditioning costs by up to 14%. Remember, ceiling fans cool you, not the room. So, turn it off when you leave the room. Need a new fan? ENERGY STAR certified ceiling fans with lights are 60% more efficient than standard fans with lights.
* **Look for ENERGY STAR Certified LEDs**: Replace those old, hot incandescent light bulbs with much cooler ENERGY STAR certified LED light bulbs. They produce about 70-90% less heat, so they’re safer to operate and can cut energy costs associated with home cooling.
* **Properly Program Your Thermostat**: If you have a manual or programmable thermostat, set the temperature up to save energy when you’re asleep or away from home.
* **Look for Utility Rebates**: Utilities or efficiency programs in your area may offer rebates on ENERGY STAR certified products. Visit the [ENERGY STAR Rebate Finder](https://www.energystar.gov/rebate-finder) for more information.