



How-to Save 40% on Energy Costs this Winter

Winterize your Windows and Keep Money in Your Pocket.

With the winter months fast approaching, it's time to unpack your down comforters, flannel sheets, and fuzzy slippers. And, just as you prepare yourself for the cold days ahead, you should also prepare your home.

Surprisingly, keeping your home warm is not as hard—or expensive—as you might think. In fact, saving money on energy is as simple as adding some drapes or shades. (Did you know that 40% of the heat in your home leaves through the windows?)

To save tons of money on heating and energy costs, walk yourself through the window winterization steps below. These steps will give your home an instant face-lift (new curtains are always nice), create a relaxing ambiance in your living space, and keep your home warm. The best part? Your money will stop flying out the window.

Step #1: Determine the Energy Flow.

Heat can be lost (or gained) through windows in three ways:

1. Air flow: Ever wonder where that pesky draft comes from? It's air flowing through your windows.
 2. Heat or Cold: When the glass on your window feels hot or cold, the air temperature is radiating off the window.
 3. Solar: Sunlight heats your home when the shades are open.
- Most likely, you're losing (or gaining) heat in all three ways. It's important to identify which windows are the biggest energy culprits and which can be the most beneficial in terms of energy gains. Feel around your windows for drafts and determine which windows allow the most sunlight into your home.

Step #2: Window Care

All of your windows should be treated to ensure maximum energy efficiency. Simple caulking around the frame and edges can prevent air from seeping through. To take it a step further, you may want to invest in a weather-stripping or shrink-wrapping kit. These steps combined will reduce the cold air and keep your living space more comfortable. For maximum comfort, proceed to step three.

Step #3: Add Window Treatments

Adding drapes or shades can be the easiest, and most stylish cold-weather solution. Use multi-layered treatments: Think of draperies like insulation—the more you have, the warmer you'll be. Sheer or light-weight layers should be kept nearest the window with heavier fabrics on top.

Install thermal or honeycomb shades: These shades act as a blanket for your window. The design has insulating properties (air pockets) that prevent heat transfer. Look for shades with a high R-value for the most energy savings. You can find a great example here:

http://www.hunterdouglas.com/hdg_product_detail.jsp?id=6

Size it Right: If your curtains are too small, you might be letting in the cold by accident. Be sure to hang wall-length draperies to prevent heat from escaping through the top or bottom. In addition, installing treatments wider than your windows will stop cold air from seeping through the sides.

Step #4: Control Your Shades.

Once you have your window treatments in place, you need to control your environment. As a general rule, close the shades when the sun isn't shining through. (For instance, a south facing window's drapes should be kept open on sunny winter days to let heat in, and then closed at night to maintain those heat gains.) According to the Department of Energy, this one step alone can save 5-10% on your energy bill.

This winter, I hope you're home stays warm and cozy (these tips will help). If you need help winterizing your windows, let me know! I'd love to help you pick out the perfect window treatments that will save you money and keep your living space comfortable.

About Lavish Interiors: Linda Green is the owner of Lavish Interiors, a company that specializes in finding the perfect window treatments for your home. Linda has been helping people for over 10 years by offering in-home shopping convenience, free consultations and installations, and a low-price guarantee.

Research:

How Energy Flows

To appreciate the improvement in today's windows, it is helpful to understand three ways that energy can flow through them.

1. Air can carry heat in or out of a window. Intentional air flow is called ventilation. Unintentional air flow - leakage - is called infiltration.

1. Heat - or cold - can flow through the frame and the glass.

1. Solar radiation - sunlight - can pass through the glass and can heat whatever is inside the building.

Department of Energy:

http://apps1.eere.energy.gov/consumer/your_home/windows_doors_skylights/index.cfm/mytopic=13500

Draperies

When drawn during cold weather, most conventional draperies can reduce heat loss from a warm room up to 10%. Therefore, in winter, you should close all draperies at night, as well as draperies that don't receive sunlight during the day.

To reduce heat exchange or convection, draperies should be hung as close to windows as possible. Also let them fall onto a windowsill or floor. For maximum effectiveness, you should install a cornice at the top of a drapery or place the drapery against the ceiling. Then seal the drapery at both sides and overlap it in the center. You can use Velcro or magnetic tape to attach drapes to the wall at the sides and bottom. If you do these things, you may reduce heat loss up to 25%. Two draperies hung together will create a tighter air space than just one drapery. One advantage is that the room-side drapery will maintain around the same temperature as the interior space, adding to a room's comfort.

Window Shades

When properly installed, window shades can be one of the simplest and most effective window treatments for saving energy.

Shades should be mounted as close to the glass as possible with the sides of the shade held close to the wall to establish a sealed air space. You should lower shades on sunlit windows in the summer. Shades on the south side of a house should be raised in the winter during the day, then lowered during the night.

For greater efficiency, use dual shades—highly reflective (white) on one side and heat absorbing (dark) on the other side—that can be reversed with the seasons. The reflective side should always face the warmest side: outward during the cooling season and inward during the heating season. They need to be drawn all day to be effective.

Quilted roller shades, and some types of Roman shades, feature several layers of fiber batting and sealed edges. These shades act as both insulation and air barrier. They control air infiltration more effectively than other soft window treatments.

Pleated or Cellular Shades

Several manufacturers have designed two- or three-cell pleated or cellular shades with dead air spaces, which increase their insulating value. These shades, however, provide only slight control of air infiltration.

Hunter Douglas:

http://www.hunterdouglas.com/energy_efficiency.jsp

Let's first consider some arresting numbers: 40% of the heat that escapes from your home leaves through the windows. And 50% of the solar heat that enters a room comes in through—you guessed it—the windows. Obviously, energy efficient treatments can translate into considerable utility bill savings, especially if your windows are on a cold north exposure in the winter or a sun-saturated west wall in the summer.

http://www.ase.org/uploaded_files/educatorlessonplans/window.pdf

http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m1216/is_/ai_79589503

<http://www.bejane.com/BJARTICLE1009200623442>