



Cost of Living Tips Home Heating Hacks

How to reduce heating costs and enjoy a warmer home.

Over the years I've been using more of these hacks and have seen the heating usage on my bills continually reduce. I've cut my heating usage by a further 25% this winter by turning off a non-essential radiator until needed, lowering room thermostat by one degree, and packing a cold draught with bubble wrap.

Cost-effective radiator

- **Adjust radiator dial settings.**

Be selective. Adjust radiator settings according to the use of each room. Make sure radiators are turned off in rooms not being used, consider turning off in hallway, and for example you could turn on radiator or heater in bedroom to warm up room before going to bed. Boiler experts say don't turn radiator dial down to below halfway as it won't produce any effective heat.

- **Avoid blocking heat from radiators**

- Move large furniture such as sofas and beds away from radiators. Ideally avoid anything in front of radiator. More practical with limited space is to move furniture away from radiator by 6-12 inches (15-30cm). Allows heat to flow around room more effectively making room warmer and could save up to 10% on heating bill. If space is tight, then even a gap of a few inches between furniture and radiator is beneficial.

- Avoid thick curtains hanging over radiators. Heat can't circulate around the room.

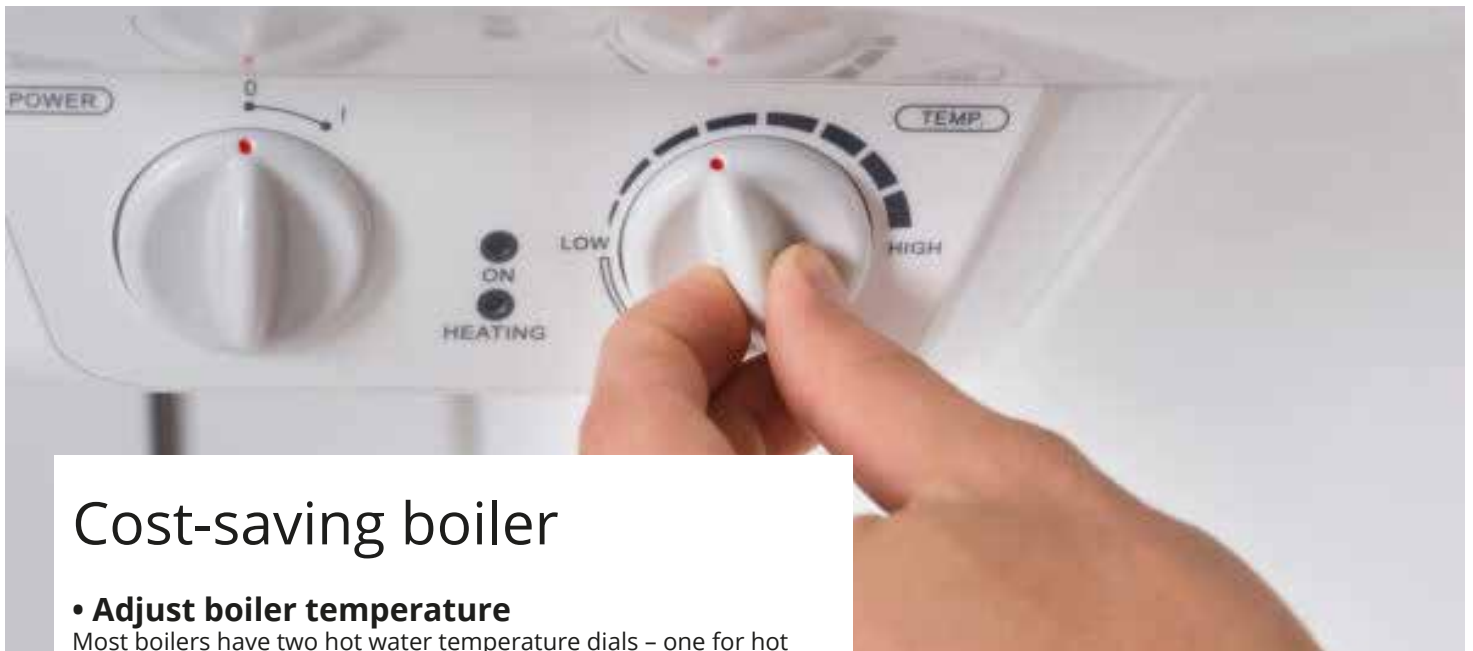
- Avoid drying laundry on radiators (includes over-radiator rack). Blocks heat from reaching the room, laundry dries slowly as warm air can't circulate, and can lead to damp and mould. Instead stand clothes airing rack on floor in front of radiator, so heat can flow effectively to warm the room and dry laundry quickly.

GREAT SAVER

Electric heated clothes ailer

- Dries clothes quickly without needing radiator or heater on. Can be safely left on overnight, and small amount of heat from ailer will take chill off room. Drying time 4-5 hours for light-weight fabrics, up to 10 hours for thick jumpers. Cost to use around 10p per hour for an ailer full of laundry. Cost to buy starts at £40-£55 at stores including Argos and Aldi.





Cost-saving boiler

• Adjust boiler temperature

Most boilers have two hot water temperature dials – one for hot water going to taps, and another for hot water going to heating system (if you have heating from boiler). Adjust both dials yourself so they are set at halfway, as 50% boiler heat is enough.

• Annual boiler service

Book an expert engineer. A cleaned and serviced boiler will work better and provide more effective heating system and run more cost-effectively.

Some energy companies have monthly plans costing from £3.50 per month that include annual boiler service. Or book an expert engineer for your make of boiler, cost around £85.

• Adjust room thermostat

Try to keep the room that is used most such as living room or bedrooms, heated to 18-20 degrees. So set your room thermostat for this, and turn down or turn off radiators in less used rooms according to use.



Avoiding heat loss

• Thermal-lined curtains

Help insulate room against heat loss and stop cold draughts from windows. Consider front door curtain too. Can reduce room heat loss by up to 15%. Cost can start from as low as £15. Alternatively, thick fabric curtains such as velvet.

• Draught excluders

Block draughts coming from around windows and door frames. For wider gaps add foam or rubber self-adhesive strips - check online for what suits your needs. Cost from £7 a roll. Or pack with bubble wrap strips (this works really well for thin gaps). For gaps under doors place a snake-shaped draught excluder, or even something like a rolled up towel.

Useful links

<https://helpforhouseholds.campaign.gov.uk>

<https://www.smartenergygyb.org/>

<https://www.moneysavingexpert.com/utilities/energy-saving-tips/>

Article by Susan Downing
Cost of Living Co-ordinator PP Team