

Reducing your energy costs

There are three ways to reduce the amount of money you spend on energy.

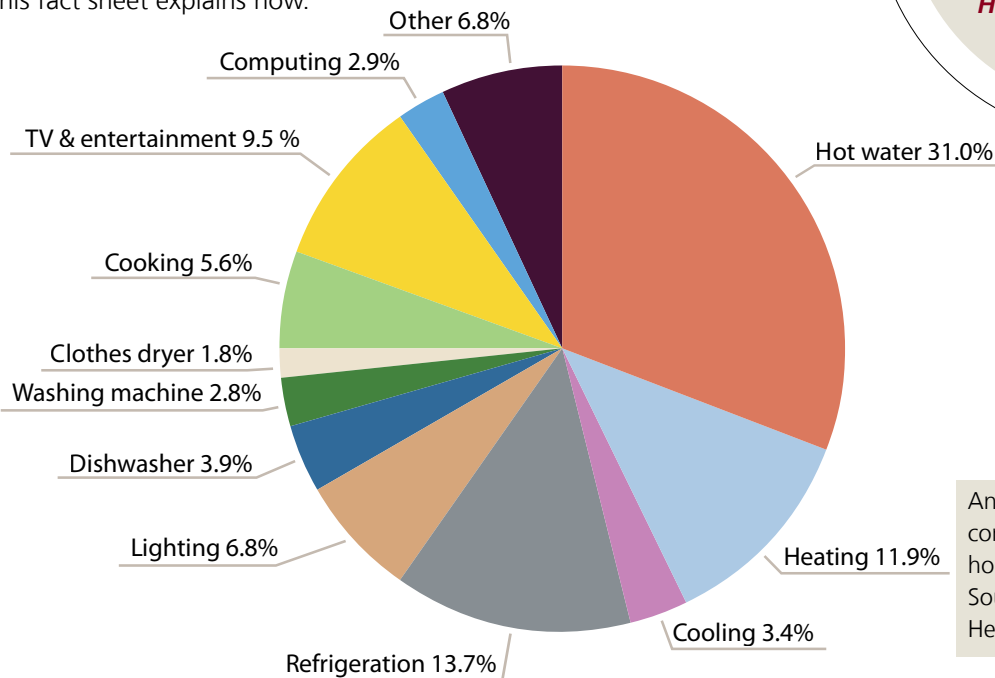
1. Reduce the amount of energy you use by changing your usage patterns.
2. Use energy at off-peak times.
3. Use appliances that are more energy efficient.

This fact sheet explains how.

Each year the average home in NSW uses approximately:

- 7,500 kilowatt hours (kWh) of electricity, and
- 23 gigajoules (GJ) of gas.

How much do you use?



An example of annual electricity consumption in a typical three person household in western Sydney.
Source: NSW Office of Environment & Heritage

1. Reduce the amount of energy you use

To understand how to *reduce* your energy use, it helps to know what your energy use is. The pie chart shows the annual average electricity consumption of a typical household in NSW.

Overall, the biggest uses of energy are:

- hot water – about 1/3 of annual energy use
- heating (in winter) and cooling (in summer) – about 1/4 of annual energy use.

How to use less hot water?

- Take shorter showers.
- Fit a 'low-flow' showerhead.
- Make sure there are no hot water taps leaking.
- Use cold water (instead of hot) in your washing machine.

How to reduce heating costs in winter?

- Only heat the rooms you are using. Close the doors of any rooms you are not using.

- Turn off the heating at night or when you leave the house.
- Insulate your home and shut out draughts.
- Don't overheat your home. In winter the optimum temperature is 18° to 20°C. Every degree above 20°C can increase your energy bill by 15%.

How to reduce cooling costs in summer?

- Only cool the rooms you are using. Close the doors of any rooms you are not using.
- Shade external windows.
- Take advantage of natural air flows. Open doors and windows to encourage cross-ventilation.
- Use fans instead of air conditioners. Fans are usually 20–30 times cheaper to run.
- Don't overcool your home. In summer the optimum temperature is 23° to 26°C.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Visit our website: www.resourcesandenergy.nsw.gov.au
(Copies of this fact sheet can be downloaded from the website.)
- Contact Service NSW on 13 77 88

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2. Use energy at off-peak times

Energy can cost less (per unit) if you use it outside periods of peak demand.

But this is only possible if you have:

- an off-peak hot water system, or
- time-of-use pricing.

Time-of-use-pricing

Time-of-use-pricing is where the cost of energy varies depending on what time of day or night you use it. There are usually three cost periods:

- peak (most expensive)
- shoulder
- off-peak (cheapest).

The times for these cost periods may differ slightly between retailers, but roughly they are as shown on the right.

Time-of-use-pricing cannot be recorded by a conventional meter. It can only be recorded by one of the new smart meters. If you're not sure whether or not you have a smart meter or time-of-use pricing, contact your energy retailer.

Off-peak hot water systems

Off-peak hot water systems heat water during the cheaper, off-peak period. You then use this hot water throughout the day.

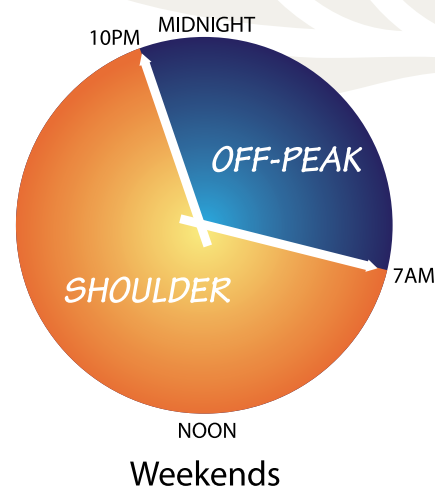
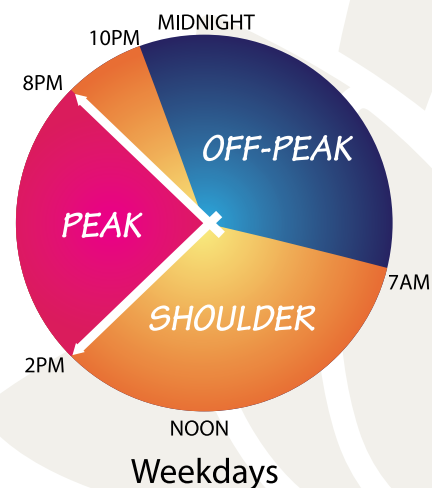
Off-peak hot water is only available with certain hot water systems and with certain retailers. If you're not sure whether or not you have off-peak hot water, or if you want to find out if you can have it installed, contact your energy retailer.

3. Use more energy-efficient appliances

At some point you may want to consider upgrading to appliances that run on less energy, such as energy-efficient fridges and washing machines. Upgrading of course costs money, but there are several schemes that offer rebates and loans to help finance such upgrades. See the information in the table below.

	Who is it for?	How will it help?	How to apply?
NSW Home Power Savings program (NSW Government)	Certain Centrelink and Veterans' Affairs cardholders or customers enrolled in energy utility hardship programs or living in social housing.	Free products and home energy assessment that can reduce your household energy use.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Phone: 1300 662 416 ■ Visit: www.environment.nsw.gov.au
No Interest Loans scheme (NILS®) (community-based)	People in low-income households who need help buying essential household services and goods (e.g. whitegoods, medical gear).	Provides an interest-free loan of about \$800 to \$1,200, usually to be repaid over 12 to 18 months.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Phone: 1800 509 994 ■ Visit: www.nilsnsw.org.au

* The NILS® trademark is registered to Good Shepherd Youth and Family Service (No. 766 836).



More energy-saving ideas? These are just a few suggestions - there are many other ways you can reduce energy use. Visit: www.resourcesandenergy.nsw.gov.au/energy-consumers/save-energy-and-reduce-your-bills/

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