

Check your own home

Even if you're not planning to sell your home yet, you can still save money by being more energy efficient, and this free Home Energy Check report from the Energy Saving Trust is your personalised guide of how to do it.

Home Energy Check report

The home energy check report is a free service available to anyone who wants to find out what they can do to save energy. Simply visit the website and complete yours now at www.diy.com/saveenergy and get an instant report. If you don't have access to the internet or want to speak to someone, you could call 0800 512 012 and speak to an impartial energy saving advisor. The advisor can not only help you complete a home energy check but they can also provide you with impartial personalised advice around saving energy in your home.

The home energy check will give you an estimate of how much money and carbon dioxide emissions you could save in your home.

It can also show you how your home's energy efficiency might be rated in an Energy Performance Certificate in a Home Information Pack.

You will also be provided with information about the specific improvements you can make around your home and how you can go about making them.

For your free report, click on www.diy.com/saveenergy

B&Q

In partnership with



Making your own energy

Renewable energy sources, like wind and solar power, are becoming a practical and environmentally-friendly option for many households.

Once you've made the initial outlay on renewable energy, it can repay you by generating free energy for your home over the long term - and can improve your home's energy rating at the same time.

Depending on where you live (and the average wind speed), a roof-mounted wind turbine can offer savings. Similarly, solar water heating can generate as much as a third of your hot water needs.

Visit www.diy.com/saveenergy for details of B&Q's renewable energy products.



Funding your energy efficiency project

In some cases, you can obtain funding for work to make your home more energy-efficient.

- UK Government grants are available for renewable energy projects, as well as to improve the energy efficiency of households on certain benefits.
- All the major energy suppliers offer incentives to encourage energy efficiency projects in the home.
- Many local authorities also provide grants and offers for local residents.

For details of funding that may be available in your area, log onto the EST website and check their Grant Information Database for your postcode area: www.energysavingtrust.org.uk/gid

The Energy Saving Trust (EST) is a non-profit organisation, funded by the Government and private sector, to help people lead more energy-efficient lives.

For more information, visit www.energysavingtrust.org.uk or call their freephone helpline on 0800 512 012.



Ideal for the job

Energy saving lightbulbs

High light from low wattage means that these bulbs burn a lot less power - and last around 10 times longer than standard bulbs.



Loft insulation

Most homes have at least some loft insulation - but, for maximum efficiency, you should have around 270mm of glass mineral wool, or its thermal equivalent. Modern insulation rolls are easy to fit and can quickly be built up to the required thickness.



Condensing boiler

Condensing boilers are more efficient because they reduce the amount of heat escaping through your flue. If everyone with gas central heating installed a condensing boiler, it would save enough energy to heat over 3.7 million homes for a year.



Look for the Energy Saving Recommended logo when buying new appliances.



B&Q how to...

Find out more about home insulation with our leaflet 'How To... Insulate Your Home' available free in-store



A summary of this leaflet can be made available in Braille, large print and audio cassette. Please ask for details or email us at diversity@b-and-q.co.uk

Every effort has been made to ensure that the instructions given in this leaflet are accurate and will enable you to do the job safely and successfully. Please follow instructions carefully and seek expert advice in the event of difficulty.

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Visit us at www.diy.com

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How to...

GET YOUR HOME READY FOR HIPs



The way we buy and sell property has changed. All homes put on the market in England and Wales will need a Home Information Pack, or HIP.

So, what should you know about the pack - and how can you get your home ready for it?

What is a HIP?

Around one in four home sales break down before contracts are exchanged - often because of information that only comes to light after a formal offer has been made.

Home Information Packs have been introduced by the Government to provide upfront essential information about the property to help prevent this.

The basic aim is to give prospective buyers a fuller picture of the property they're thinking about buying - including information that wouldn't normally come up until they carried out a survey.

The process also helps sellers to understand how they can improve the value of their property and make it easier to sell.

What's in the pack?

There are a number of compulsory elements in every HIP:

- Evidence of title or ownership (including details of leasehold arrangements or tenants in common, if either applies).
- Standard searches (local authority enquiries, drainage and water search).
- An index.
- A sale statement.
- Leasehold/commonhold information (where appropriate).
- Energy Performance Certificate (see next section).

The pack may also include the following voluntary elements:

- Home Condition Report - a preliminary survey that gives buyers an objective assessment of the condition of the property and what work, if any, it might need.
- Guarantees and warranties.
- Other searches.

For more information about Home Information Packs - including samples of what's in them and what they look like - visit www.homeinformationpacks.gov.uk

70% of buyers say energy efficiency is an important factor when choosing a home to buy.

(Energy Saving Trust survey)

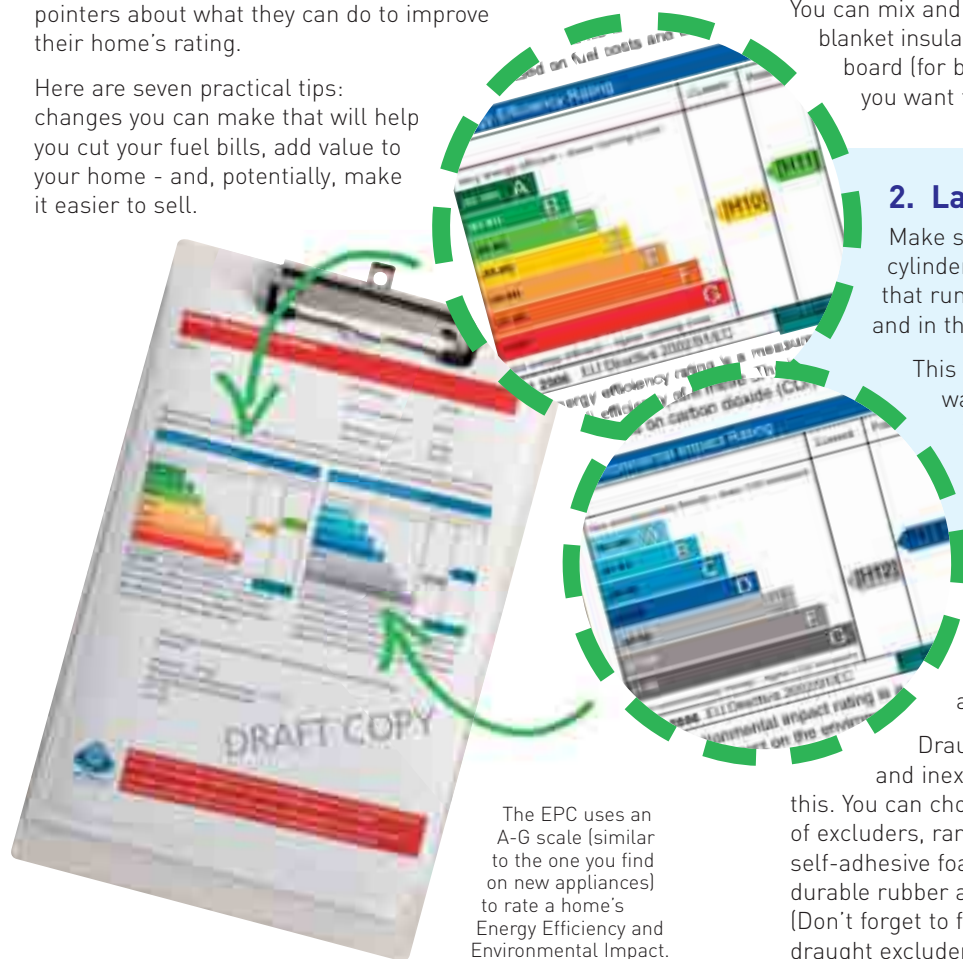
Energy Performance Certificate

One of the key features of the new HIPS pack is the compulsory Energy Performance Certificate (EPC). This is a report prepared by an independent Energy Assessor, which rates the overall energy efficiency of a home, as well as its impact on the environment (both increasingly important considerations for buyers).

What the Energy Performance Certificate also does is to rate the potential energy efficiency of a home.

This means buyers have a clear idea of what their fuel bills are likely to be. It also gives sellers practical pointers about what they can do to improve their home's rating.

Here are seven practical tips: changes you can make that will help you cut your fuel bills, add value to your home - and, potentially, make it easier to sell.



The EPC uses an A-G scale (similar to the one you find on new appliances) to rate a home's Energy Efficiency and Environmental Impact.

Buyers will pay as much as £10,000 more for an environmentally friendly home.

(Energy Saving Trust survey)



1. Check your loft insulation

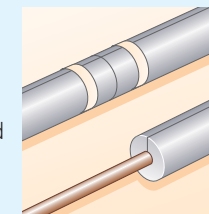
Around 26% of heat in an uninsulated home is lost through the roof. Most homes have some insulation, but often not enough. Boosting it to the recommended thickness of around 270mm of glass mineral wool or its thermal equivalent could shave around £30 a year off your heating bill.

You can mix and match different types of insulation: roll-out blanket insulation (to fit between and over joists); insulation board (for boarded lofts); and rafter insulation (ideal if you want to use the loft for extra living space).

2. Lag your pipes

Make sure your hot water pipes and hot water cylinder are properly lagged - especially pipes that run under floorboards and in the loft.

This will help to keep the water hot and reduce your fuel bills. (It's also a good idea to lag cold water pipes, to stop them freezing in winter).



3. Cut out the draughts

Around 11% of the heat in an uninsulated home is lost through gaps around doors and windows.

Draughtproofing is an easy and inexpensive way to reduce this. You can choose from a wide variety of excluders, ranging from easy-to-fit self-adhesive foam strips to more durable rubber and brush seals. (Don't forget to fit keyhole covers and a draught excluder over your letterbox).

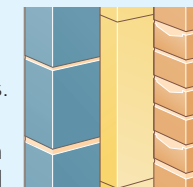


4. Insulate your walls

Over 30% of the heat lost from an uninsulated home goes through the walls. Most homes built after the 1920s have external walls with a small cavity between them. Cavity Wall insulation is a quick and cost-effective solution - reducing heat lost through your wall by around 60% and saving around £90 on your annual heating bill.

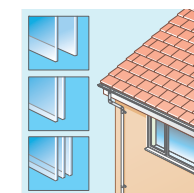
Homes with solid walls can be drylined with insulation and plasterboard, or insulating plasterboard, to keep the heat in.

B&Q has teamed up with British Gas to offer you a cavity wall insulation service. See in-store for more details. Available in mainland UK only.



5. Check your windows

20% of a home's heat can be lost through windows. Double glazing is the most efficient way to prevent this. If you can't do this, then applying secondary glazing film to your windows is a cheap and quick way and reduces some of this heat loss.

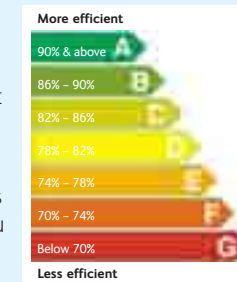


6. Choose energy efficient appliances

When buying a new appliance, from a washing machine, fridge, freezer to a cooker, the first thing you should look for is the energy rating. A is the most efficient; G the least (often using over 20% more energy).

The single biggest consumer of energy in most homes is the boiler. If it's more than 10 years old, then it probably isn't very energy efficient.

A modern condensing boiler could cut your heating bills by as much as a third - or by as much as 40% if you fit the right heating controls. Look for a boiler with an A or B rating.



7. Change your bulbs

One of the easiest and cheapest changes you can make is to use energy saving lightbulbs. They last around 10 times longer than ordinary bulbs - and could save as much as £60 over that lifetime.

