



energy  
Barry  
Jensen

## Alternatives abound to air conditioning

You can enjoy comfortable summer living even if your home is not air conditioned by practicing some of the following suggestions.

And you will be surprised how a few simple tasks that take only minutes can cool your home and at the same time save energy.

- Nature can help cool your home, if given a chance. Open windows and doors in the evening and early morning hours to take advantage of cooler outside air.

- Close drapes, blinds and use awnings or shades to keep out direct sunlight.

- Do laundry, cooking, dishwashing and other "heat and moisture-producing" activities during cooler times of the day.

- Use portable fans where natural circulation isn't enough.

- The blower on an ordinary warm-air furnace can be used to circulate cool basement air through the upper living quarters.

- Use kitchen and bathroom exhaust fans to get rid of excess heat and moisture.

- An attic fan or window fan can be used to circulate cooler night air through the house. The house can then "coast" into a hot day at much lower temperatures.

- Other measures such as increased attic insulation, window awnings or sunscreens and keeping cooled homes closed up as much as possible during the day will all help to keep your home cool.

IF YOU are using air conditioning to make your home more comfortable, to use less energy, follow these suggestions:

- Set thermostats at the warmest comfortable temperature. A setting moved from 75° to 80° can save 13 percent on energy.

- Change or clean filters regularly. Maintenance is an important factor in how much energy your air conditioner uses.

- Check to make sure outside air flow is not blocked by leaves, bugs or grass. Inside, make sure furniture or draperies don't block the path of the cooled air.

- If the cool air stops, you might have frost on condenser coils. Get rid of the frost and the cool air will return.

- Keep windows and doors closed during the time you are using air conditioning.

- Put storms on windows in all parts of the house that will be cooled. Their insulation helps keep the rooms cool.

- Use screens on all windows in parts of the house that are not cooled mechanically.

- Don't do laundry, dishwashing or other "moisture-producing" activities during the warmest part of the day. Air conditioners condition the air by not only cooling but also by dehumidifying.

IF YOU need a new air conditioner, consider proper cooling capacity.

Biggest is not necessarily best. One with too much cooling capacity will not be efficient.

A unit that is too small won't do the job. Both waste energy. Your appliance dealer or an air conditioning engineer can help you select the air conditioner with the proper cooling capacity.

Look for the EER (Energy Efficiency Ratio). The higher the EER, the higher the efficiency. A high efficiency model can cool the same area as a comparable low-efficiency model and do it with less electricity.

EER is determined by dividing the cooling capacity in BTUs per hour by the wattage rating of the unit. EER of 10 is great, under 6 is poor.

Some of the information for this article comes from Consumers Power.

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