

How much electricity do you use?

The cost of electricity has almost doubled since 2002 and we are all using more and more. Charging our mobile phones and laptops, keeping our homes warm enough to let us wear short sleeves in winter and drying our clothes in a tumble drier means in our domestic energy consumption has increased by 70% since 1970.

The consequence of using so much electricity not only makes our bills more expensive but is causing our climate to change. Most of the energy we use comes from burning of fossil fuels which releases carbon dioxide into the atmosphere and is the main cause of global warming. Small actions can make a big difference to the cost of our energy bills and the less energy we use means less CO2 is released into the atmosphere.

We already know about the simple things that we can do every day to reduce the amount of energy we use. If we all turned off our TVs and other electrical gadgets that are on stand-by we could see a couple of power stations in the UK shut down and a significant reduction in CO2 emissions. Our homes produce more than 25% of the UK's CO2 emissions, even more than our cars.

Many of the things we need to do are just common sense. The amount of electricity consumed varies depending on the type of appliance and the following list will give you some idea of which appliances use the most:

Appliance	Watts used per hour	Appliance	Watts used per hour
Low-energy light bulb	11	Iron	1,000
Extractor fan	75	Dishwasher	1,000
Laptop computer	75	Bar heater (one bar)	1,000
Conventional light bulb	100	Washing machine	1,200
Stereo Hi-Fi	100	Electric cooker (one ring)	1,300
Television	100	Oil filled heater	2,000
DVD/Video player	110	Fan heater	2,000
Refrigerator	125	Bar heater (two bars)	2,000
Desktop computer	150	Deep fryer	2,000
Freezer	300	Electric cooker oven	2,150
Hair dryer	750	Kettle	2,250
Microwave	750	Immersion heater	3,000
Vacuum cleaner	800	Tumble dryer	3,000
Toaster	1,000	Electric shower unit	8,000

All figures are approximate and will vary according to the make and model of appliance. Check your actual appliance for accurate information.