

4 Questions Renters Should Ask Their Landlords



We know taking control of your energy usage can be difficult, especially when you are renting your home. Here are some helpful tips and resources you can use to become a smarter energy consumer.

How much does this unit pay for energy?

Are you considering a few options before deciding on where to move? Ask the landlord or property manager for any prior energy history to see how much typical energy bills are. Depending on the age of the building, how it was constructed and what energy-efficient upgrades have already been made, your energy bill might vary greatly compared to a similar sized unit elsewhere. Be sure to get bills from both winter and summer months as energy expenses can vary considerably depending on the unit's HVAC system, insulation, type of windows and more.

Already moved in? You can work with your landlord to find cost reductions that likely affect their bottom line too.



Here are some useful tips for a more comfortable rental unit:

Where can I save energy and water?

Look around your home and see about adding simple resources to help you save energy. Many electronics use what's called phantom power, meaning they use electricity even when they're switched off. You can install smart plugs or use surge protectors that allow you to easily turn off devices when not in use or simply remember to unplug them when you're finished. While LEDs are much more efficient than other bulb types, don't forget to turn off the lights when you leave the room too.

You can also ask your landlord to have any water fixtures switched to low-flow EPA Water Sense-labeled options. Water heaters typically use about 20% of a home's energy usage, and these low-flow options help to reduce your water heater's impact

Why does the HVAC system struggle to keep my home comfortable?

Efficient systems work better, reduce costs and avoid costly repairs. If your landlord is responsible for the HVAC, you may remind them to change the filters more frequently to improve your home's air quality and reduce stress on the system.

Also, adding things like window treatments or area rugs can help maintain the temperature in your unit. Don't forget to see if you need door sweeps to stop outside air from getting in.

What else can I do to lower my heating and cooling bill?

Ask your landlord to replace worn-out weather stripping or recaulk areas where air is getting in or out of your unit. Reducing the amount of air leaks is a cost-effective way to cut heating and cooling costs, improve durability, increase comfort and create a healthier indoor environment.

You can also check with your energy company to see if they offer free energy-saving kits filled with the items and information needed to weatherize and optimize your home for efficiency.

To discover additional questions that you can ask to become a smarter energy consumer on heat pumps, electrification and more, visit [WhatIsSmartEnergy.org](https://www.WhatIsSmartEnergy.org)