



In simplified  
language

**verbraucherzentrale**

*Nordrhein-Westfalen*

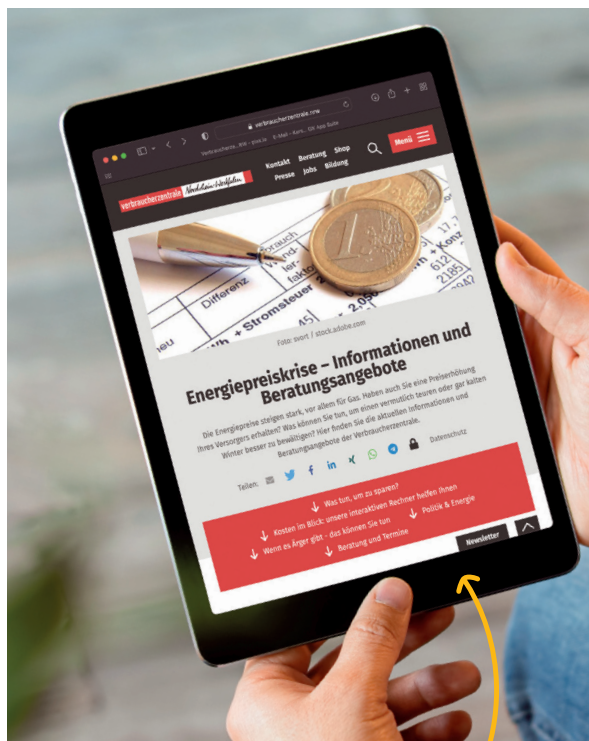
# HOW TO SAVE ENERGY EVERY DAY

TIPS FOR CONSUMERS

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## Our homepage

Visit the homepage of the Consumer Association of North Rhine-Westfalia (Verbraucherzentrale NRW) for up-to-date information on energy issues.



[www.verbraucherzentrale.nrw/  
energiepreise](http://www.verbraucherzentrale.nrw/energiepreise)



## Energy costs a lot of money!

Heating, hot water and electricity have become very expensive. The less energy you use, the more money you save. This brochure will show you how to save money at home.

This is the average cost of electricity, heating, and hot water for three people living in a 70-square-metre flat.



### Electricity

**€1150**

Electricity: 38 ct/kWh

Gas: 15 ct/kWh

Oil: 15 ct/kWh

As on September 2022



### Heating

**€1500**

with gas or oil

**€2300**

Night storage  
heating (electricity)



### Warm water

**€350**

with gas or oil

**€600**

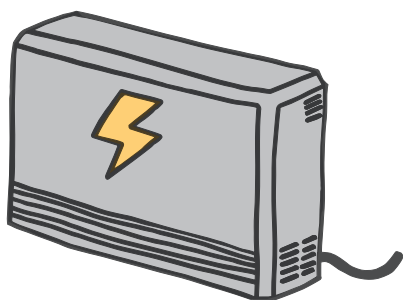
with electricity



## 1 How to heat and ventilate properly

You save the most money and energy by heating efficiently. Heating is very expensive, but cannot be avoided in winter. Find out here how to reduce heating costs without getting problems with mould.

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### Attention!

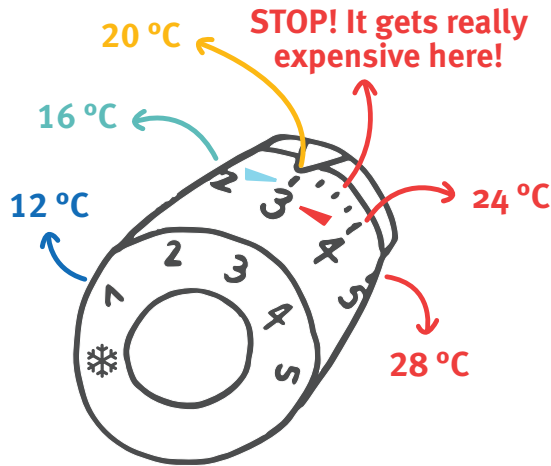
Heating systems that need electricity are especially expensive. Night storage heaters have a thick power cable. Get advice on the best way to use this heating system.

### How do I heat economically?

The higher you set your heater, the more expensive it gets. A room temperature of 20 °C is often enough.

Setting your thermostat to a high level will not heat up your flat more quickly. Instead, the heater will become very hot, which uses a lot of energy.

## Which setting do you need for which temperature?



(approximate temperature setting)

## How warm should your rooms be?

### Living room

🔥 Level 3

🌡️ 20 °C

### Bathroom

🔥 Level 3–4

🌡️ 20–22 °C

### Bedroom

🔥 Level 2–3

🌡️ 16–18 °C

### Kitchen

🔥 Level 2–3

🌡️ 18 °C

### Children's room and study

🔥 Level 3

🌡️ 20 °C

## Tips for proper heating



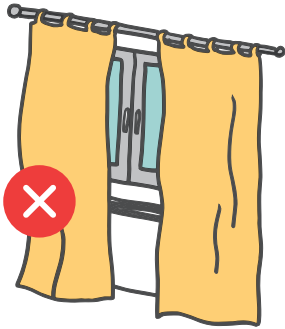
### FAN HEATERS AND RADIATORS

Mobile fan heaters or radiators that heat with electricity use a lot of energy. They are not an alternative to normal heaters.

### WHEN NOBODY IS AT HOME:

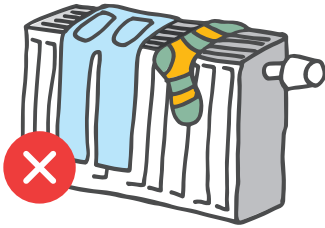
Turn down the heating to level 2. The rooms should not be colder than 16 °C, otherwise there is a risk of mould. Buy a thermometer that also shows air humidity (thermo-hygrometer). If you are away from home for a long time, set the thermostat to the star position. This setting offers protection from frost and prevents the heating pipes from freezing.



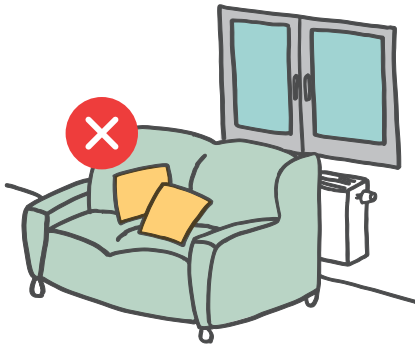


### HEAT DISTRIBUTION IN THE ROOM

Do not hang long curtains and drapes in front of a heater, as they prevent the heat from spreading through the room.



Do not dry clothes on the heater, as it increases electricity consumption.



Do not place furniture in front of the heater.



## Ventilation in winter

Showering, cooking or drying clothes releases water into the air. This moisture needs to be released regularly from your home. If it is too moist, mould will grow.

### OPEN 3 TIMES A DAY

Fully open the window at least three times a day. It is best to open the windows wide, creating a draught, for 5-10 minutes while the heater is turned off.

### DRYING CLOTHES IN THE FLAT

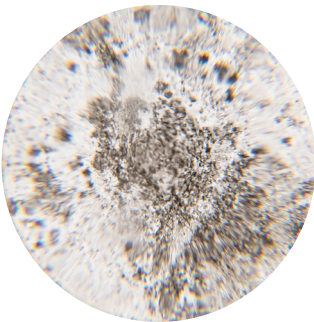
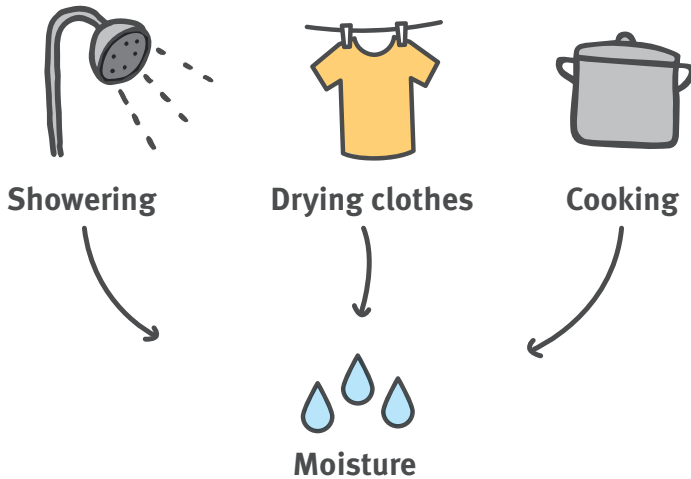
If you can only dry clothes indoors, you have to open the windows very often and heat more to prevent mould.

### TILTING IS NOT IDEAL

If you tilt the window, you need to ventilate for longer: 15-30 minutes. Turn off the heater when the window is open.

### VENTILATE TO PREVENT MOULD

When cooking or taking a shower, open the windows during or immediately afterwards.

**Why regular ventilation is so important**

**You can recognise black mould by the dark spots and patches.**

**What is mould?**

Black mould is often found on cold walls, in the bathroom, and in cold corners. It occurs when the humidity is too high. Mould is bad for your health.

If air humidity is more than 60%, you must ventilate. A humidity of 40-50% is good. Check the humidity with a thermo-hygrometer.



## 2 How to save hot water

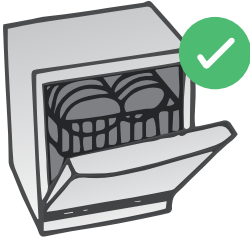
Hot water is very expensive, too, as heating it uses a lot of energy. You can reduce water consumption and set a lower temperature more often. Find out how on the following pages.

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### Tankless water heaters



Do you have a tankless water heater like the one shown here? If you do, it means that you heat your water with electricity. Do not set the tankless water heater higher than the water temperature you need for showering. Buy a water-saving shower head. It saves water and electricity. Check beforehand whether the water-saving shower head is suitable for your tankless water heater.



## Washing dishes

A full dishwasher always uses less energy than washing everything by hand.



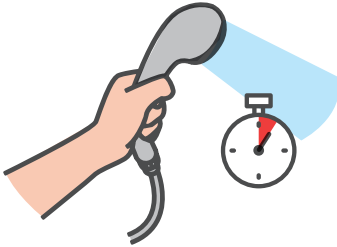
But if you have to do this dishes by hand, use the sink without running water.



## Showering

Shower as short as possible.  
Only 5 minutes is best.

Take a shower rather than having a bath. A bath costs a lot more than a shower.



Make sure to switch off the water when brushing your teeth or shaving.



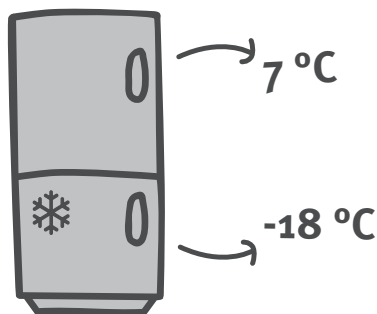


### 3 How to save electricity in the home

We often use electricity without noticing, for example through our mobile phones, PCs or TV sets. Some households also have to heat with electricity, which means that they use a lot of energy. Find out here how to reduce your electricity consumption.

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#### Cooling and freezing



Set your refrigerator to 7 °C (level 2 or 3). Check the temperature with a thermometer. The colder it is, the more electricity is needed.

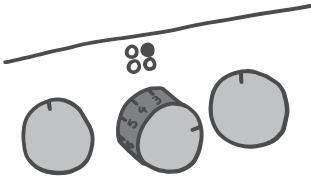
The freezer should be set to -18 °C, not colder.



### Cooking and baking

To boil water for tea or coffee, always use a kettle – it boils faster, which means you will pay less for electricity. Pre-boil water for pasta and vegetables in the kettle.

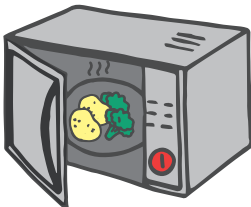
Put a lid on pots and pans.



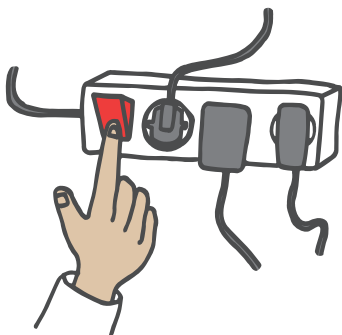
Choose a low setting when the water for vegetables, pasta, potatoes or rice is boiling.



Use a thermos flask for tea and coffee. Appliances with a warming function always use electricity.



Heat the food in the microwave and not in the oven or on the hob.



## Lighting and devices

Switch off the light when you leave the room. Replace all your conventional bulbs and halogen lamps with economical LED lamps.

Switch off devices completely. If a light is on, the device is still consuming electricity (standby or sleep mode). Pull out the plug or buy a power strip with a switch to turn it off entirely.

## Washing and drying clothes

Fill the washing machine completely – it will save electricity and money.

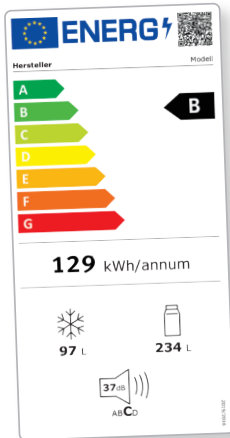
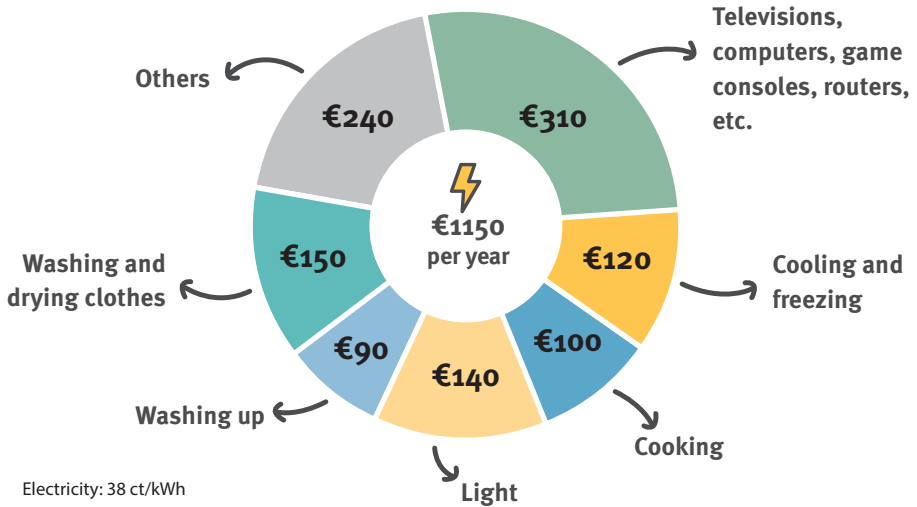
The hotter you do the washing, the more it will cost. For normal washing, 30 °C is sufficient. You can save money with the Eco programme.

Tumble dryers use a lot of energy. Only use it if there is no other option.

It is best to hang up your wet clothes in the cellar, attic or outside.

## What costs the most?

Example of a three-person household with an annual consumption of 3000 kWh



## BUY ECONOMICAL DEVICES

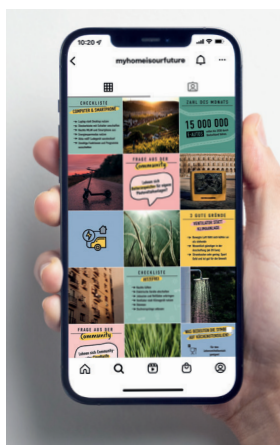
When buying a new electrical device, check its energy consumption. This colour symbol, the energy label, will help you: Dark green is very economical. If you buy used electronics or can get them for free, check the energy consumption beforehand. Otherwise, you might let power-hungry devices into the home.

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# VERBRAUCHER- ZENTRALE NRW

The Consumer Association of North Rhine-Westphalia (Verbraucherzentrale NRW) can give you advice on problems with contracts, loans, bills or energy suppliers at one of its 66 centres. You can find a wide range of information on our website and in our online seminars on the topics of energy saving, new heating systems, and home renovation:



**(0211) 33 996 555**



**[www.verbraucherzentrale.nrw/  
energieberatung](http://www.verbraucherzentrale.nrw/energieberatung)**

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