

## Room by Room: Top 7 Must-Follow Tips for Your Living Room

*The following article is the first installment in an on-going series in which we'll explore unique ways to save in each room of the house.*



Image: Energy Star

Summer is approaching, and these tips can help transform your living room into the coolest, most energy-efficient oasis in the neighborhood, while simultaneously saving you money. Whether you live in a temperate climate or a scorching desert, these 7 tips are living-room musts:

### 1. Compact Fluorescent Lights (CFLs):

You know CFLs can save you 75% off lighting costs, but did you know they can save on cooling costs as well? A whopping 90% of the energy produced by incandescent lamps goes to heat, not light, whereas CFLs are much cooler. Hint: use the [Energy Star lighting guide](#) to get the light quality you desire.

### 2. Close Blinds or Shades

Yep, it's as easy as it sounds. Closing the blinds or curtains on south or west-facing walls can cut down on solar heat gain during the day.

### 3. Use Fans, We Can't Stress This Enough

If you use air conditioning, a ceiling fan will allow you to raise the thermostat setting about 4°F with no reduction in comfort. And here's the best part: most ceiling fans use less electricity than a light bulb. Remember to turn fans off when you leave the room, since they work by creating a breeze to cool people, not rooms.

### 4. Arrange Furniture Properly

Make sure your furniture isn't blocking vents or air registers and double check that your air can circulate freely. It would be a shame to condition all that air, only to have it blocked by the couch or bookshelf.

### 5. Close the Fireplace Damper

If your living room has a fireplace, make sure it is not leaking conditioned air out the chimney. Close the damper or seal your fireplace if it is no longer in use.

### 6. Plug Your TV into a Power Strip

TVs, cable boxes, and other equipment continue to draw power even when they are turned "off." Plug your living room electronics into a power strip and turn the strip off when they are not in use. You can also find [smart meters](#) which automatically cut off the power supply for you.

### 7. Use a Programmable Thermostat

One of the best investments you can make is a [programmable thermostat](#). It can help save you up to \$160 per year and keep you comfortable by turning on heating or cooling according to your schedule.