

6 Ways to Make Your Home Office Energy Efficient

Summary: Working from home doesn't have to impact your energy bill. Follow these tips to make your home office more efficient.

Working from home, even on a temporary basis, may increase your energy use. It means that you're spending more time using a computer, lights and other appliances at home instead of in your workplace. But by improving the energy efficiency of your home office equipment, you can save on energy costs without hampering your productivity.

1. Make sure computers and other office equipment are turned off when they're not in use for an extended period.
2. Many electronic devices continue to use standby power even after they're turned off. Connect your office equipment to an advanced power strip, which will automatically shut off power to unused devices.
3. Set office equipment, such as printers and scanners, to automatically switch to sleep mode when not in use. In addition to saving energy, the equipment will stay cooler, which will help to extend its useful life.
4. Use a laptop computer instead of a desktop. Laptops use less than one-third the energy of a typical desktop computer.
5. Adjust the thermostat to the unoccupied setting. This avoids wasting energy by conditioning the entire house while you're occupying only a small portion of it. Consider using a ceiling fan to maintain comfort. You can reverse its direction to clockwise in winter, which pushes warm air down.
6. Use task lighting with energy-efficient lamps. A desk lamp uses less energy than whole-room lighting.

When purchasing new office equipment, make sure it's ENERGY STAR® qualified. ENERGY STAR-certified products use less energy than standard models. According to the U.S. Department of Energy, if every home office product purchased in the U.S. were ENERGY STAR qualified, Americans would save an estimated \$75 million a year in energy costs.