



How private households can save gas

Germany's 41 million households account for about a third of the country's natural gas consumption – they use it for heating, cooking and hot water. This consumption can be reduced in an economical way and without detriment to people's living standards. Each and every one of us can help make sure we will have enough gas throughout the coming autumn and winter. Here are five tips for saving gas at home.

1. Hydraulic balancing for your heating system

Did any of your radiators overheat, gurgle or have problems warming up last winter? If so, it may well be that your heating system is not properly adjusted. Hydraulic balancing can help, ensuring the heat is distributed evenly within the building or apartment.

Specialist companies can make sure that all radiators give off the amount of heat needed to achieve the desired room temperature. In doing so, they will look at individual criteria such as the building's physical properties, windows and the insulation of external walls. As a result, a building's energy consumption can be lowered by ten to fifteen percent. Private users can claim reimbursement for 20 percent of the costs of hydraulic balancing via the funding scheme '[Federal Funding for Efficient Buildings – Individual Measures \(BEG EM\)](#)'. Do use the summertime to prepare these steps.

2. Keep your heating system properly and regularly maintained

You can save up to fifteen percent of your energy costs at home by making sure your heating system not only undergoes regular maintenance, but is also optimised. Therefore, you should adjust your heating system now to your expected demand in the coming winter. For example, modern heating systems are able to lower the temperature automatically at night. They can also be programmed to turn down the temperature by a few degrees when nobody is at home on working days. This can significantly reduce your heating costs.

3. Know your heating bill: understand where you can save costs for heating and hot water

If you understand your heating bill and know where you can save energy costs, your motivation to save money will be higher. The Heating Costs Ordinance aims to improve heating-related billing and information for rented buildings. In some cases, heating bills may be so lengthy that you are well advised to consult an expert to understand your individual costs. The information you will receive on heat and hot water consumption, costs and comparability can be worth good money. The advisory services provided by the [consumer centres](#) can be accessed by anyone free of charge.

4. Saving hot water

You may well be able to save energy in the shower. Water-conserving showerheads have a smaller head and concentrate the waterflow. In this way, they use less water than regular showerheads or rain showers. Often, they feature built-in flow restrictors. A simple fix that allows you to save up to 30 percent of hot water costs. After all, your hot water processor does need a lot of energy to achieve comfortable shower temperatures. If you can reduce your shower to a maximum of five minutes and lower the water temperature somewhat – provided the temperature is high enough to fight legionella –, you will not only conserve hot water but also help save gas that is needed to treat the water. This is not just good for the environment, but also for your skin, as dermatologists confirm.

5. Heating and ventilating properly

Rooms should have a use-based temperature with the thermostatic valve properly adjusted. They should be closed when windows are open. By lowering the temperature by one degree, about 6 percent of energy can be saved. In the case of fluctuating usage times or a lack of a night-time reduction mechanism, it is recommended to use thermostatic valves that can be programmed separately for each room. Care should also be taken to close the doors between rooms that have different temperatures. This also applies to the use of air conditioning. The less a room has to be cooled, the lower the need for energy.

Proper ventilation means heating and cooling less. Make sure you open your windows wide for short but intense ventilation. Avoid tilting windows on cold days and turn down the heating while windows are open. When ventilating your bedroom in the morning or opening several windows across your flat, the internal doors should be kept open. However, while ventilating your bathroom or kitchen in the case of high humidity, the internal doors should stay closed in order to prevent the humidity from spreading to other rooms.