



GreenTip
How Do You Measure Up?



Programmable Thermostats

One of the big expenses you incur in running your household is likely to be your heating and cooling bill. Coincidentally, this is also likely to be one of the easiest expenses to reduce, while **saving energy** and helping to **fight global warming** at the same time. According to the US Environmental Protection Agency, the average American household spends about \$2,000 per year for energy. Half of that goes to pay for heating and cooling. By installing and setting programmable thermostats in your home, you can reduce that annual expense by at least 10 to 20% without sacrificing comfort.

Choosing A Programmable Thermostat

There are a number of programmable thermostats on the market these days. The **EPA's Energy Star** ® program rates these thermostats and can help you determine which programs and optional features are best suited to your needs. At minimum, **Energy Star** ® qualified thermostats include 4 pre-programmed settings and will maintain those settings to within 2 degrees at all times. There are three different program models available. Simply consider your individual circumstances to choose the best model for your home. The 7-day model allows the most flexibility. You can program different settings for each day of the week. The 5+2 model provides the same program schedule for weekdays and a different schedule for weekends. The 5-1-1 model uses the same schedule for weekdays, and different schedules for Saturdays and Sundays.

Optional features may include vacation/hold programming, indicators for filter changes and malfunctions, touch pad programming and digital display and even voice and telephone programming. These features add cost to a more basic programmable thermostat, but may make a programmable system more workable for you.

Cost and Installation

While simple programmable thermostats are available for as little as \$30 at your local home improvement store, costs can range up to \$250 or more for more complicated models. Most come with a 1-year warranty and can be installed easily on low-voltage wiring, if that wiring already exists. Some of the more complicated models, along with those that require line-voltage wiring, must be installed by qualified professionals. It is important to make sure that the programmable thermostat you choose is compatible with your heating and cooling system.

For More Information:

Check the EPA's Energy Star ® website to find out more about programmable thermostats and how to use them properly-http://www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?c=thermostats.pr_thermostats



**When it comes to taking care of our environment....
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