

Working from home – Energy saving tips from the MMLL Green Team

By now, most of us are familiar with the drawbacks of working from home, including the effect on our energy bills. Both environmentally and financially, it can be costly to heat and power a house full of people who would otherwise be at work or school during the week. To help you reduce your energy usage while working from home, the MMLL Green team has put together a list of simple adjustments you can make.

- **If you aren't using it, turn it off**

At the end of the working day and before bed, do a quick sweep of your house to check the following: lights in rooms you are not in are turned off; electronics and appliances you are no longer using are powered down completely, not left on standby; phones, laptops and tablets are taken off charge once they reach 100%. It can be tempting to let our devices charge overnight while we are not using them, but they often reach full charge while we are sleeping, resulting in excessive energy usage and potentially even long term damage to the battery life. Similarly, if you take a break, turn off your monitor and switch off the lights while you are away from your desk.



- **Hold onto your jumpers**

With warmer weather well on the way, it can be tempting to start rotating out your winter wardrobe - but think twice about packing away all your jumpers. On chillier spring days, try opting for a jumper instead of turning up the heating - each 1 degree reduction can lead to an 8% saving on your energy bill and carbon emissions (Carbon Trust).

- **Keep track of what you order online**

After days, weeks or even months stuck inside, many of us have been left pining for the simple pleasures of high street shopping or dining out, and it's natural to be tempted to treat ourselves with hauls of goodies from the internet. But, even if the products we buy are reaching us quickly, cheaply, and conveniently, the environmental cost of shipping those items can be considerable. You can reduce the energy usage associated with shopping online by a) avoiding having products shipped internationally where possible, b) buying items at the same time so they aren't shipped separately, and c) looking for comparable products that you can pick up from supermarkets or pharmacies.

- **Switch your energy provider**

If you pay your own bills, consider reviewing your energy tariffs to see if you could be paying less, or if there is a more ethical option available to you. There are lots of sites that can help you find an energy provider to suit both you and the environment.

- **Try a cold wash**



With more time to keep up to household chores while working from home, our energy usage can creep up quickly. Especially if you're doing it every day, try washing your laundry on a cold cycle, or at a maximum of 30 degrees C. A lot of clothes need to be

washed at this temperature anyway, so think carefully about turning the heat up, and try to limit the number of hot washes.

- **Look for efficient upgrades**

If you're in the market for new appliances or electronic devices, consider opting for products with a higher energy efficiency rating. Especially if you know you're going to be working from home more in the future, investing a little more in energy-efficient hardware could save you money in the long term and benefit the environment. For example, energy-efficient lightbulbs typically use 25-80% less energy and can last 3-25 times longer!

- **Only use what you need**

The kettle can be one of the most frequently used appliances in our homes. We can markedly reduce the amount of energy used, and the cost of that energy, by



only boiling the water we need for a cup of tea or for cooking – regularly boiling enough water for five people when you only want one cup of tea will add up in the long run.

- **Insulate effectively**

Improving the insulation of our house may seem like a daunting and costly task, but there are easier ways to keep your house warm and lower your energy usage. If your home is chilly, invest in draft excluders or insulation strips for the windows. Wherever possible, keep windows and doors closed when heating your home. If you do need to let in some fresh air, put on an extra layer rather than turning on the radiators.

Thought of something we haven't mentioned? Contact us on our [Environment & Energy Yammer page](#) to share some of the ways you've been sharing energy while working from home!