8 Ways to Prepare Your Home for Summer

It's that time of year again: The kids are out of school and the mercury is rising. Don't spend the summer sweating, especially from receiving those sky-high energy bills! You've heard of winterizing your home? Consider these techniques to summer-proof your house and keep those bills in check.

Implement Passive Design Strategies

Conditioning your home's air takes a lot of energy, not to mention the cost. However, passive design strategies utilize the elements (sun, wind, etc.) to keep your home comfortable and healthy. Planting trees and installing overhangs are just a couple of ways you can lighten the load on your AC. Also consider implementing some [daylighting techniques](https://www.thespruce.com/window-air-conditioning-tricks-1824737) to let that summer sun illuminate your home and reduce your use of electrical lighting.

Decide: Window Unit AC or Central?

[Window unit air conditioners](https://www.thespruce.com/ac-window-units-or-central-air-1821919) have a lot of entry costs, with most units priced at well under $500. They provide flexibility, too, as they can be moved between rooms as needed. Also, when if one window unit dies, you have others (hopefully) to keep pumping out cool air while you shop for a replacement or repair your present one. By contrast, central air conditioning is all-or-nothing: when it breaks down, the entire house is affected. But the greatest benefit of central air conditioning is one that trumps most of window units' benefits: being a permanent addition to the home, it adds long-lasting value to the property.

Properly Size Your AC

If you are planning on purchasing a new air conditioner this summer, do your research to make sure you are buying the most efficient model. [Bigger does not always equal better](https://www.thespruce.com/how-to-size-your-air-conditioner-1821575). Air conditioning that is oversized for the space is not just a waste of energy--it works less efficiently. On the other hand, undersizing your AC means a unit that is continually running inefficiently.

Conduct a Home Energy Audit

Before undertaking any energy efficiency upgrades to your home, you should always begin by conducting a home energy audit. Whether you complete them yourself or hire a pro, these evaluations will help you prioritize your project so you can save the most on your energy bills.

Add Insulation

Although it seems counter-intuitive to add insulation to your home to prepare for the summer, the better insulated your walls, ceilings and floors are, the less conditioned air they will leak. No need to try to cool the outdoors, too!

Reasons for adding insulation in the summer are endless, but consider this one: if walls need to be opened up, it is far better to do this in warm months than cool months.

Upgrade Your Windows

Energy-[efficient windows](https://www.thespruce.com/do-replacement-windows-pay-for-themselves-1822914) can make all the difference. But what separates the so-so from the best? We break down the most desirable characteristics. However, if your windows are too new to replace or it's not in your budget, then consider [installing Low E film](https://www.thespruce.com/energy-saving-low-emissivity-film-1821588) to minimize solar heat gain.

Paint Your Roof White

One of the biggest and best energy-saving ideas of the last decade was proposed by Steven Chu, former U.S. Secretary of Energy and a Nobel prize-winning scientist: [paint every roof white](https://www.thespruce.com/save-money-paint-your-roof-white-1821943). He estimated that doing so would be like removing every vehicle from the planet for 11 years. On an individual level, you can expect your energy costs to plummet when you paint your roof white. This is because light colors such as white essentially bounce light—and heat—back into space, rather than into your home's attic.

Tame That Moisture Problem

Summer means more than hot; it also means dry. Dry means that you have greater luxury to determine why exactly [your basement or crawlspace has moisture](https://www.thespruce.com/how-to-fix-basement-moisture-1821273) build-up problems. It's not something you can do in the heavy rainy months of fall or the icy months of winter. You'll especially [want to check outside sources](https://www.thespruce.com/how-to-fix-water-in-crawl-space-1821953), such as drain pipes that force water directly into the ground next to the foundation; cracked foundation walls, and ground sloping towards the house.