

Efficient Cook

Kitchen Recipes for Daily Energy Savings



The kitchen is a hotbed of energy consumption when family meals are being prepared and even when dormant. Appliances make a big difference, and the tools and methods we cook with can reduce utility bills. According to *Mother Earth News*, cooking in a convection oven is 25 percent more efficient than a conventional oven.

Switching to an Energy Star-approved refrigerator that consumes 40 percent less energy than conventional models can save up to \$70

in energy bills annually, according to *ChasingGreen.org*. They suggest performing defrosts routinely and keeping the door tightly sealed, especially on an older model. Position the fridge so that it isn't next to heat sources such as sunlight, the oven or dishwasher.

While cooking, refrain from opening and closing a hot oven door too frequently, put lids on pots while heating and select the right size pans. Cooking with a six-inch-diameter pan on an eight-inch burner wastes more than 40 percent of the heat produced. For cleanup, a full load of dishes in a water-efficient dishwasher uses four gallons of water versus 24 gallons for hand washing, according to flow meter manufacturer Seametrics.

A slow cooker uses less energy and needs less water to wash afterward (*VitaClayChef.com*), plus it doesn't strain household air conditioning as a stove does. It's good for cooking hearty stews and soups made from local seasonal vegetables, steaming rice, making yogurt and baking whole-grain breads.

Consider taking a break from the kitchen by ordering a week's worth of organic, natural meals and ingredients delivered to the door by an eco-friendly meal distribution service, which cuts down on individual trips to the grocery. Search online for local service options.



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