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Martin Lewis: Is it cheaper to switch heating on and off or leave it running?



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Martin Lewis's MoneySavingExpert has revealed how to use your central heating this year.

As the temperature continues to drop outside, most of us will have already put the heating on, or be thinking about when to do it.

According to experts at the Energy Saving Trust, the idea that it's cheaper to leave the heating on low all day is a myth.

Martin Lewis has stepped in and revealed exactly how to use your central heating to get the best value out of it.

"Having the heating on only when you need it is, in the long run, the best way to save energy, and therefore money," the website explains.



The idea that it's cheaper to leave the heating on low all day is a myth

"A timer's best as your thermostat turns your heating on and off to keep your home at the temperature you set.

"The key thing to understand here is that it's all about the total amount of energy required to heat your home."

However, people living in places where it's damp might have to turn the central heating on for longer.

Martin added: "There are some engineers who argue that keeping the heating on low with all the radiators on and the boiler down can work as it reduces condensation, which when the heating is turned off collects within the walls, and can help conduct heat outside the home - meaning you lose heat more quickly and so will lose heat more quickly and will use more energy as a result." So if your house is prone to that you may want to think about it."

The Energy Saving Trust says if you're keeping the heating on all day you're losing energy all day, so it's better to heat your home only when you need it.

You can also apply for a Cold Weather Payment to help when temperatures fall to freezing, a Warm Home Discount or a Winter Fuel Payment to minimise your bills.

Six more ways to cut your heating bill:

Shut the blinds and windows

Many people get complacent over the summer months and forget to shut them – go round the house and make sure that no cold air is getting in anywhere.

If the sun is shining in the daytime then make sure curtains and blinds are open to let the heat in, but ensure that you shut them in the morning and the evenings to give yourself that extra bit of warmth.

Unused rooms can be taking in a lot of heat, as well as increasing the amount of cool breeze flowing through your house. By closing them off, you will cut out the draught and also ensure that any heat in your property isn't slipping into that

A big reason why your home may not be retaining heat very well is because of draughts.

Allowing cold air to get into the home will bring the overall temperature down. If you can stop these draughts from getting in, it will make a huge difference to the temperature in your home.

Get cooking

Eating hot food will help to warm you up and the process of cooking the food will throw heat out into the kitchen and surrounding areas, meaning your home will warm up as a result.

Consider getting rugs

If your house is fully carpeted, then you needn't worry about this option, as that will help insulate your home.

However, you can lose a considerable amount of heat through floorboards or tiles, so putting a rug over the top can make all the difference in your home's heat retention.

Put tin foil behind your radiator

If on the occasion you do have the heating on, which you should because it is good for home's condition, then you should put foil behind your radiators to make sure the heat is forced into the room, rather than getting lost in the wall.