

White Goods Go Green

No matter what you read in the papers, you don't need to plaster your property with solar panels to turn your home into an energy efficient haven.

Your home appliances are your first step to following the principle of 'Eco Minimalism'. Luckily being environmentally friendly has never been so bank account friendly either.

Low energy home appliances are the watch words for making your contribution to protecting the planet. You might be recycling your bottles and composting for Britain, but you're [kitchen appliances](#) are always switched on and eating electricity.

The key to kitting out your house with low energy home appliances is to look for the performance rating. This is particularly important in the case of your fridge freezer because after central heating, they are the biggest users of domestic energy, as they're switched on all the time.

Eurolabels will tell you how energy efficient your new fridge freezer is going to be. Here's how this alphabetical classification works for your home appliances:

- A Optimum
- B Excellent
- C Very good
- D Good
- E Average
- F Mediocre
- G Poor

Today in the UK, fridge freezers are now labelled as A++, A+, A, B, or C. Obviously A++ is the very best and C the lowest you can go. Old fridge freezers can be anything from an A to a G rating, with modern fridges using up to 25 per cent less energy than a fridge made 15 years ago.

There's a clear message here: keeping that old fridge freezer going is a false economy. Not only will it be taxing the environment unnecessarily, but with no limit on the amount of electricity it's using, your pocket is taking a hit every time the bill comes through.

So what's the answer? It's fair to say that the more energy efficient you're [home appliance](#), the more pricey it's going to be. Take the Indesit BAAN10 fridge freezer for example. This has an A rating but with an RRP of over £200, you might be tempted by something cheaper that appears to do the job just as well. Don't be! You'll start to see your bills come down and this will make up for the initial outlay. Now that's a saving to warm the chilliest of hearts.

It's not just fridge freezers that need a little help going eco-friendly. Your washing machine could be making your electricity bills spiral upwards while your green credentials plummet.

As with fridge freezers, your washing machine will be classified according to the Eurolabels we looked at. Here they take into account three criteria:

- 1) The energy consumption
- 2) The washing quality
- 3) The drying quality

The energy consumption rating figure is shown in kilowatts per hour (KWh). You can work out the running costs of your machine by tracking down its Energy Consumption Rating in KWh and multiplying that by the cost of your electricity per hour (£/KWh). It's a simple equation that takes the guesswork out of what your outlay will really be.

Water consumption will also be shown in litres. This has been used to encourage manufacturers to make machines that use less water and its obviously worked!

Be realistic about how much you will be using your machine. If you have a big family and piles of washing to go with them, choosing from the top end of energy efficient home appliances is a wise move. The Hotpoint WT960G fits the bill, with A+ rating for wash and A rating for spin. As with fridge freezers, the best may be pricey, but you can clean over the long term.

All this energy efficient washing might make you the envy of the neighbours, but when winter sets in and makes your outside washing line redundant, you need a tumble dryer that works hard too.

Tumble dryers have long been the black sheep of energy efficient home appliances, so the AEG T59800 is the first of its kind with an A rating. It's the best for the environment so as we've seen before, it's also one of the most expensive. But there's a very good reason why you should consider taking this home with you.

The more energy efficient your tumble dryer, the more obvious your savings will be, as they are one of the biggest drains on your electricity. You'll see a marked difference in your bills and your beer money, which can't be bad.

Here's how it works. Tumble dryers are rated using Eurolabel ratings A to G and the energy used by tumble dryers is given in KWh (as we saw with washing machines).

Remember, the way you use your machine will dictate your running costs. So if you're drying straight from the washing machine, you're going to have higher running costs than Joe Bloggs next door, who simply finishes his threads off in the dryer to banish horrid crispy clothing.

Finally, maintain peak performance by regularly emptying the fluff from the filter.

So the message is simple. You're home appliances are the key to energy efficiency and eco-friendly living. Just head for the A rating and you can't fail to be top of the class when it comes to going green.

About the Author

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