

Edinburgh's Hidden Energy Savers: 5 Unconventional Ways to Cut Costs in 2025

Ah, Edinburgh! A city of castles, cobblestones, and... eye-watering energy bills? If you've found yourself clutching your pearls (or more likely, your wallet) every time the utility statement lands on your doormat, you're not alone.

As we hurtle towards 2025, cutting costs and reducing energy use can seem impossible. There are, however, some clever ways to reduce your outgoings that can have a far greater impact than the unusual advice to just switch off lights or wear an extra jumper!

In this article, we'll explore some slightly unconventional methods and tips to help you reduce your energy use. These tips can also lower your emissions and help save you money in the long run.



1. Thermal Curtains: The Overlooked Insulators

When it comes to keeping your home cosy, thermal curtains are an often overlooked choice that can have a huge impact! Offering more than just adding a touch of style to your living room, thermal curtains keep the heat in and the chill out.

They work by creating an insulating layer of air between the fabric and the window. This clever design traps the warmth inside your room, preventing it from escaping through the glass. Thicker, insulating curtains can also significantly reduce your heating costs by up to 25% during the winter.

To get the most out of this tip, opt for floor-length curtains and make sure they're wide enough to overlap in the middle when closed. For maximum effect, consider using a pelmet or valance at the top to prevent warm air from escaping over the curtain rail.

2. Chimney Balloons: Plugging the Heat Escape Route

Chimneys are a charming feature of many homes, but they can

actually be a real enemy to your insulation. If you're spending money pumping out heating, with an open fireplace and chimney, all that hard-earned heat can be escaping right before your eyes!

Luckily, there's a handy device to prevent all this – a chimney balloon. These nifty devices are designed to plug up your chimney when it's not in use, keeping the warm air in and the cold draughts out. They can even save you up to 5% on your heating bill.

A chimney balloon is essentially a tough, inflatable plastic bag that you pop up your chimney and inflate. Once in place, it creates an airtight seal, blocking off any heat escape route. Then, when you want to use your fire, simply deflate the balloon, remove it, and you're good to go.

3. Smart Power Strips: Tackling Phantom Energy Use

You may have heard the term '**phantom energy use**' before. Essentially, this refers to all of those beloved gadgets and appliances that we keep plugged in which continue to use energy even when we think they're switched off.

Standby power can account for up to 10% of your household electricity use. In other words, you're paying for electricity you're not even using. To try and tackle this unnecessary spending, you can try a smart power strip.

These clever devices look like regular power strips, but they're packing some serious intelligence (and they could save you up to £60 a year). Smart power strips can detect when a device is in standby mode and cut the power completely, ensuring no excess energy use.

Some models even have a "master" socket – when you turn off the device plugged into this socket (like your TV), it automatically cuts power to related devices (like your DVD player or game console).

When shopping for a smart power strip, look for features like:

- Multiple “always-on” outlets for devices that need constant power
- Surge protection to safeguard your electronics
- Remote control options for easy management

For maximum effect, consider placing smart power strips in energy hotspots around your home, such as entertainment centres (TV, gaming consoles, sound systems), home office setups and kitchen counters (coffee makers, toasters, blenders).

4. Heat Pumps: A Modern Alternative to Traditional Boilers

If you're keen to look for a more long-term solution to cutting costs in the home, one of the best places to start is to look at your large appliance. The boiler, in particular, is a huge money guzzler but is such an important part of a home.

In recent years, heat pumps have become a viable option, with many homeowners choosing to [replace a boiler with a heat pump](#) for its many benefits and cost savings. Heat pumps draw in heat from natural sources – like the air outside or even underground – and they use this naturally occurring temperature to heat your central heating and hot water.

Heat pumps are surprisingly effective even in our chilly weather. In fact, they can be up to **300% efficient**, meaning for every unit of electricity used, you get three units of heat. Meaning you can make huge savings compared to running a traditional gas boiler.

You'll also reduce your carbon footprint dramatically, as you'll no longer be relying on fossil fuels to generate heat. While the initial installation cost is higher, the long-term savings can be substantial. Plus, the Scottish Government is keen on heat pumps too. They're offering grants through the **Home Energy Scotland Grant and Loan** scheme to help with installation costs.

5. Draught Excluders and Radiator Reflectors: Double Trouble for Heat Loss

When it comes to saving energy, one of the first things to consider is where your home might be losing heat. Gaps and cracks around windows and doors can have a considerable impact. It might seem old-fashioned, but sometimes, the simplest solutions are the tried-and-tested ones!

Draught excluders are a great way to combat gaps around doors and window frames, it's an inexpensive way to reduce cold air from entering your home – and you can make them yourself, if you're feeling crafty!

Another key area to consider is whether your radiators are working at their best for your space. Are they covered by large furniture? Do you need to bleed them? (This is when air gets trapped at the top of radiators, making them feel cold, releasing that trapped air can make a huge difference).

In addition, up to 40% of the heat from your radiators could be escaping through the walls. This is particularly true if you don't have insulation, or your radiator is on an exposed exterior wall. To tackle this issue, you could use radiator reflectors – they reflect heat back into the room instead of letting it escape through the wall.

By combining these two solutions, you can reduce heat loss and lower your energy spending without making drastic changes. These might seem like small steps, but over a long period the

savings can really add up.

Smart Energy Future

Remember, every small change counts. Whether it's inflating a chimney balloon or crafting a draught excluder, each action adds up to significant energy savings over time.

As we approach 2025, continue to embrace the more unusual solutions and seek new ways to improve your home energy efficiency. Saving money and lowering energy use is a difficult task, but trying new things and exploring how your home could work better for you, will ultimately pay off.