Keep Warm
Keep Well

A guide for families

Advice on...
Getting financial help
Saving energy and money
Staying well and healthy

Keep Warm Keep Well
About this booklet

This booklet has been produced by the Department of Health, in association with other partners.

It aims to help you and your family maintain good health during winter, and take advantage of the financial help and benefits available.

Inside, you’ll find useful tips on heating your home effectively, a large section on financial support available, steps on preparing your home for the winter and advice on staying healthy.

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Your top five tips for keeping warm and well

These top tips are some of the best ways to keep your home warm, keep on top of your bills, and keep healthy. Some may seem obvious, but they could help you stay warmer throughout winter.

You'll find more top tips throughout this booklet.

1. Heat your home well
By setting your heating to the right temperature, (between 18–21°C or 64–70°F) you can still keep your home warm and lower your bills. If you feel cold at night, use a hot water bottle or electric blanket – but never use both together.

2. Get financial support
There are grants, benefits and sources of advice available to make your home more energy efficient, improve your heating or help with bills. It's worthwhile claiming all of the benefits you are entitled to.

3. Eat well
Food is a vital source of energy, which helps to keep your body warm. Try to make sure you and your family have hot meals and drinks regularly throughout the day.

4. Get a flu jab
If you or your children have a long-term health condition, speak to your GP about getting a free flu jab.

5. Look after yourself and others
Remember to wrap up warm if you need to go outside on cold days. If you have an older neighbour or relative, look out for them during winter to make sure they are safe and well.
Top tips for heating your home effectively

Some energy-saving tips may seem obvious, but they can make a big difference when it comes to reducing your fuel bills.

Top tips

- By setting your heating to the right temperature, you can keep your home warm and lower your bills. During the day set the thermostat to 21°C (70°F), and during the night set it to 18°C (64°F).

- Set your heating to come on just before you get up and switch off after you’ve gone to bed. If it’s very cold, set your heating to come on earlier and turn off later rather than turning the thermostat up.

- If you can’t heat all of the rooms you use, heat the living room throughout the day and your bedroom(s) just before you go to bed. Remember to close curtains and shut doors to keep heat in the rooms you use most.

Heating your home safely is really important. Remember to get your heating system checked regularly, and keep your home well ventilated.
Top tips

- If you have open fires make sure they are properly ventilated. Use safety guards and don’t hang your washing near the open flames. If you use a fire or heater in your bedroom at night, always keep a window and door open.

- Use your electric blanket as instructed and get it tested every three years. Remember never to use an electric blanket and a hot water bottle together.

- Switch your appliances (such as televisions and microwaves) off rather than leaving them on standby. This will save money and energy and help you to Act On CO₂.

For more information on energy efficiency, call 0800 316 2805 (8am–6pm Mon–Fri and 9am–5pm Sat) or visit www.warmfront.co.uk/energy-efficiency-advice.htm

Financial help to heat your home

If you’re struggling financially to keep your home warm, you could get a grant to make your home more energy efficient, or repair or install a new heating system.
If you don’t qualify for some benefits, you may qualify for others. And even if you’ve been turned down for benefits in the past, you may find that you now qualify for some means of support.

**Warm Front Scheme**

Warm Front provides grants to help people on disability or income-related benefits pay for heating and insulation improvements. You may be eligible if:

- you own your own home or rent it from a private landlord; and
- you receive a disability benefit or an income-related benefit (such as Child Tax Credit, Housing Benefit, Working Tax Credit or Council Tax Benefit); and

**How much could I get?**

You could get grants for heating and insulation improvements for your home worth up to £2,700, or up to £4,000 if your home needs oil central heating. You can also get advice on energy efficiency to lower your energy bills.

For further information on benefit eligibility, please see the enclosed application form.

**How to apply**

- Fill in the application form included with this booklet
- Call 0800 316 2805 (8am–6pm Mon–Fri and 9am–5pm Sat)
- Visit www.warmfront.co.uk
You could be entitled to more benefits than you are currently getting. Find out by calling the Benefit Entitlement Check team on 0800 072 9006.

**Cold Weather Payment**

Cold Weather Payments are made during periods of very cold weather to help people pay for extra heating costs. To get a Cold Weather Payment, the average temperature where you live must be recorded as, or expected to be, 0°C or below for seven days in a row. You may be able to get Cold Weather Payments if you are getting Pension Credit; Income Support and have a pensioner or disability premium, or you have a child who is disabled or under 5 years old; or income-based Jobseeker’s Allowance and have a pensioner or disability premium, or you have a child who is disabled or under 5 years old.

To find out more about Cold Weather Payments contact Jobcentre Plus or visit [www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk](http://www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk)

**Help from your energy provider**

As part of achieving their carbon emission reduction targets, your energy provider has partnered with the Act On CO₂ campaign. A booklet with tips on how to save money and reduce your carbon footprint will be available this autumn.
Other sources of financial support

If you’re struggling to pay your energy bills, there are plenty of sources of help. Remember to contact your energy supplier, as they may be able to offer you a special tariff or payment plan to help you stay on top of your bills.

Local council grants
If you have a low income, your local council may be able to help you with home repairs, renovations and improvements, such as insulation. To find out whether you can apply for a grant, contact your local council.

Grants and loans
Parents with a disabled child may be eligible for a community care grant, budgeting loan or crisis loan.

For confidential advice, call 0800 882 200 (textphone 0800 243 355).

Consumer Direct
Consumer Direct is a government-funded service that offers clear, practical and impartial information and advice on consumer issues.

Call 08454 04 05 06 (8am–6.30pm Mon–Fri and 9am–1pm Sat) or visit www.consumerdirect.gov.uk

The Home Heat Helpline
This is a free helpline that offers information on keeping warm, using energy efficiently, cheaper payment schemes and grants for insulating your home.
Call the Home Heat Helpline on 0800 33 66 99
(9am–8pm Mon–Fri and 9am–3pm Sat, minicom
0800 027 2122) or visit www.homeheathelpline.org

Energy Saving Trust
The Trust’s local advisers provide free, impartial advice on making your home more energy efficient. They can also tell you about grants for implementing energy efficient measures that may be available in your local area.

Call 0800 512 012 (9am–5pm Mon–Fri) to speak to an adviser, or visit www.energysavingtrust.org.uk

National Energy Action
This charity campaigns for affordable warmth and better energy efficiency for people who are particularly vulnerable to the cold.

Visit www.nea.org.uk, email info@nea.org.uk or write to NEA, St Andrew’s House, 90–92 Pilgrim Street, Newcastle NE1 6SG.

Home Improvement Agencies
There are about 250 Home Improvement Agencies in the UK, which provide advice on repairs and home improvements for disabled and vulnerable homeowners or tenants.

To find your nearest agency, call 0145 789 1909 (9am–5pm Mon–Fri) or visit www.foundations.uk.com

Citizens Advice Bureau
Your local bureau will be able to give you advice on benefits, heating, grants and debt.

Look under C in the Yellow Pages or visit www.adviceguide.org.uk for more information or to find your local bureau.