

Top tips for keeping warm

Get your heating system working for you

It is really important to familiarise yourself with your heating system and understand how it works. This will enable you to set up your central heating so that it works effectively for you and your lifestyle. For more detailed guidance, check out our **'Managing your heating' guide**.

- **Set your thermostat between 18-21°C.**
- If you can, **set up timed settings** for your heating.
- Check your radiators are working properly and **adjust the valves**.
- If possible, **avoid putting items in front or on top of radiators**.

Use your curtains effectively

- **Open curtains in the morning** to let the sun in during the day, or when outside is warmer than the inside of your home.
- **Close curtains when it starts to get dark** to create a layer of insulating air between the windows and the inside of your home.
- Look out for the gaps in the curtains and make sure no cold air can seep through.
- If there is a radiator under your window, tuck curtains behind it when you shut them to avoid warm air escaping to the window.
- **Heavy or thermal curtains** are best, but you could also make or buy additional lining to attach to the curtains you have already.

Draught-proof your windows and doors

- If there are gaps in the sealant around the windows, ask the landlord/agency to **reseal** them. Request **installation of draught-proofing** strips and door sweeps to the windows and doors, keyhole covers, and a draught excluder to the letterbox.
- Put up **window insulation film** (just bear in mind that you will not be able to open the window without removing the film).

- Put **draught snakes** at the bottom of draughty doors or windows to the outside (substitute with rolled up blankets or towels).
- You can also hang blankets over doors or windows to reduce draughts (just make sure to air them frequently to avoid damp build-up).

Keep windows and doors closed

- **Keep the doors closed** in rooms you are heating and using frequently, e.g. the living room or your bedroom. Keeping doors closed will help keep the warmth in the most used rooms and reduce warm air escaping into hallways.
- Close the doors to rooms which you do not heat or where you are leaving the window open.
- **Close the windows** in your bedroom at night to reduce draughts.

Use residual heat in the kitchen

Both the oven and stove generate a lot of heat when being used, which will naturally increase the temperature in your kitchen area. If it is safe to do so, **leave the oven open after using it**, so the residual heat can dissipate around the kitchen.

Have warm food and drinks

Warm food and drinks can help warm yourself up from the inside. It is also recommended by the NHS that we all **have at least one hot meal a day** in colder months. Soup is a great option for a quick, easy, nutritious, and warming meal. **Hot drinks throughout the day can also help keep you warm and warm mugs can help keep your hands warm** after lots of typing! To save boiling your kettle multiple times, you could fill up a thermos flask with a batch of your favourite hot drink and refill your mug over the day.

Keep your feet warm

Your feet play a key role in regulating your body temperature; keeping your feet warm will help the rest of you feel warm, too. When it is cold, **minimise your time barefoot** and **put a layer between your feet and the floor** (especially if you have hard floors). Slippers are perfect for using inside and keeping your feet warm; if you don't have any, you can also use thick woollen socks.

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Make use of a hot water bottle

Hot water bottles are a great way to keep warm when you are still for extended periods of time, e.g. sitting down working, watching TV or lying in bed. **Put a hot water bottle in your bed an hour before bedtime** to warm it before you go to sleep. Make sure you use your water bottle sensibly and safely by always using a protective cover, never filling it with boiling hot water and only filling it up to two-thirds capacity.

Keep active

Staying still for extended periods of time will make you feel colder. If you can, **take regular breaks and try to move around at least once an hour** to help boost your circulation. Even something as simple as wriggling your hands and toes can help.

Think about your clothes

- **Wearing multiple layers of clothing** is a much more effective way of keeping warm than one thick layer - this is because multiple layers will trap the heat better.
- Certain fabrics are better at trapping heat and keeping you warm than others. Some of the best layers of clothes to wear are **cotton, wool or fleecy fibres**.