

# HOME ENERGY AUDITS

Performing a home energy audit is the first step toward cutting utility costs and making your house more comfortable.

## What's an audit?

Audits, or energy assessments, are examinations of a home's exterior construction or envelope and the systems within the home. Audits measure the amount of energy a property uses and identify why and where energy is being lost. Frequent causes of energy loss are leaky windows, a poorly sealed attic, ductwork tears, and invisible cracks.

## How it works

Professional auditors rely on various tools, the most common being blower door tests and thermographic inspections.

The tests, requiring three to four hours, help auditors discover where there's air infiltration or loss and pinpoint hidden, hard-to-reach spots where insulation is lacking or failing.

An auditor uses the test results, along with other data about your heating and cooling habits and utility costs, to identify the home improvement projects that will boost a home's efficiency.

## Benefits

By making upgrades following a home energy assessment, homeowners can save between 5% and 30% on energy bills, according to the U.S. Department of Energy.

And repairs aren't always big, high-ticket items. For example, some upgrades, such as air sealing and insulation, can be completed using a DIY approach. For Examples, visit [EnergyStar.org](http://EnergyStar.org).

## Learn more

ENERGY STAR®, [EnergyStar.gov](http://EnergyStar.gov).

U.S. Department of Energy, [Energy.gov](http://Energy.gov).

## Costs

The cost of a professional audit can vary based on size and location, but it's often possible to get free or low-cost audits through utility and government rebate programs. Locate programs through the Database of State Incentives for Renewables & Efficiency at [DSIREUSA.org](http://DSIREUSA.org).

## Prepare for an audit

List all problem areas, like drafty or hot spaces, and compile copies of your utility bills.

Also offer information about your habits, including:

-  The number of residents living in the house and whether people are home during the day
-  Average thermostat settings for summer and winter and during the daytime and evenings
-  Unused rooms, like the attic, basement, or spare bedroom

## Locate professionals

For auditors and energy experts, contact:

-  Building Performance Institute, [BPI.org](http://BPI.org).
-  Energy Star, [EnergyStar.gov](http://EnergyStar.gov).
-  Residential Energy Services Network (RESNET), [natresnet.org](http://natresnet.org).

