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Cool Your Home the Natural Way

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As the summer heats up, many of us will turn to the air conditioner to help us maintain a cool and comfortable home. There are other ways to keep down the temperature on the thermostat. By promoting good air flow throughout the house, shading your house, cooking outside and making other small changes, you can make your home a pleasant place without running high utility bills all summer long.

Maximize Airflow

Cool off your home by maximizing air flow throughout the house. Getting a cool breeze flowing through a room or down a hallway can cool sweaty skin and eliminate any feelings that the air in your home is stagnant. Sometimes getting air moving through the house can be a challenge, but these tips can help:

- Install sliding glass doors (<https://www.pgtwindows.com/browse-doors/?style=sliding-glass/>). Install patio sliding doors or French doors that can draw back to open your home to outside breezes. Sliding and French doors let in the natural daylight while also promoting good air flow.
- Replace single hung windows with double hung windows (<https://www.pgtwindows.com/browse-windows/?style=double-hung/>). Single hung windows have only one moveable sash that slides up and down. Double hung windows have two moveable sashes. Replacing your single hung with double hung windows enables you to lower the upper sash. With the windows open in this way, warm air near the ceiling can exit your home.
- Or, consider a casement window installation (<https://www.pgtwindows.com/browse-windows/?style=casement/>). As an alternative to double hung windows, consider installing a casement window. Casements work like hinged doors, by swinging outward to capture fresh air and breezes. Casements are an excellent option for anyone seeking to maximize airflow indoors. Unlike a double

hung window, which must always be partially covered by the sash (even when open), casements can swing the sash completely open to expose the entire open window frame.

Use Ceiling Fans

Ceiling fans are a fantastic tool for capturing breezes and drawing them into the house, while also circulating air around your home. Ceiling fans make an excellent addition to any living room, bedroom, guest room or even dining room.

When you're choosing ceiling fans for your home, focus on installing ceiling fans that have a touch of beauty and style, so you can be happy with your choice for years to come. You'll love the way your ceiling fans cool you off — you'll be even happier if you love the way they look too.

Plant a Shade Tree

Shade trees can help cool off your house by shading the siding and roof. Some shade trees grow much faster than others. Red maples, for example, can add as much as 18 inches each year (<https://www.bhg.com/gardening/trees-shrubs-vines/trees/how-long-will-it-take-my-new-red-maple-to-grow-to-full-size/#:~:text=The%20good%20news%20is%20that%20red%20maples%20grow%20at%20a,tree%20stops%20adding%20more%20h>) for about 25 years.

When you're planting a tree in your yard, consider the location of your home's main line. Avoid planting trees with invasive roots too close to your home's septic tank or sewer, to avoid future maintenance problems.

One more tip when you're installing a shade tree – consider the direction of sunlight when you're planting your shade tree. Plant the tree in a location where it will block sunlight from your home.

Use a Grill

Cooking indoors can heat up your kitchen and, subsequently, the whole house. Why cook indoors when you can grill outside? Plan to grill in the backyard on warm days. If you're serious about grilling, consider buying more than one type of grill to use. Charcoal grills can be fun, but they also take a lot of work to set up and clean up. A propane grill is easier to use as your go-to on a hot day.

Other cooking options for warm days include:

- Eat a cool salad of raw vegetables, cheese and deli meats.
- Bring a countertop oven outside and cook on your deck or patio.
- Get takeout or go to restaurants.

You have many options. Above all else, avoid turning on the oven in your home.

Install a Cool Roof

Just as a shade tree can prevent your home from absorbing heat from sunlight, so can a cool roof. A light-colored roof (white, light gray or another light color) will reflect light back into the atmosphere, thus helping you maintain a cooler home. While you may not have the ability to change the color of your roof very easily, this is something to consider the next time that you replace or repair your roof.

Turn On Exhaust Fans

Keep air moving through your home by turning on the bathroom exhaust fans and the kitchen exhaust. These fans will expel warm, humid air and keep air circulating around your home – just like the ceiling

fans.

Install Exterior Shutters

Shutters installed on the exterior of your home, especially on south- and west-facing sides, can shade your home's windows when closed. This is a good option if you don't have energy efficient windows, nor do you have the budget to replace your home's windows any time soon.

Experiment With Different Options

Which solutions will work for your home depends on your budget, your home's configuration and other factors. Experimenting with each option will help you determine what works for you, and what doesn't. Ultimately, cooling your home naturally can reduce your home's utility bills and help you maintain a comfortable temperature indoors.



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