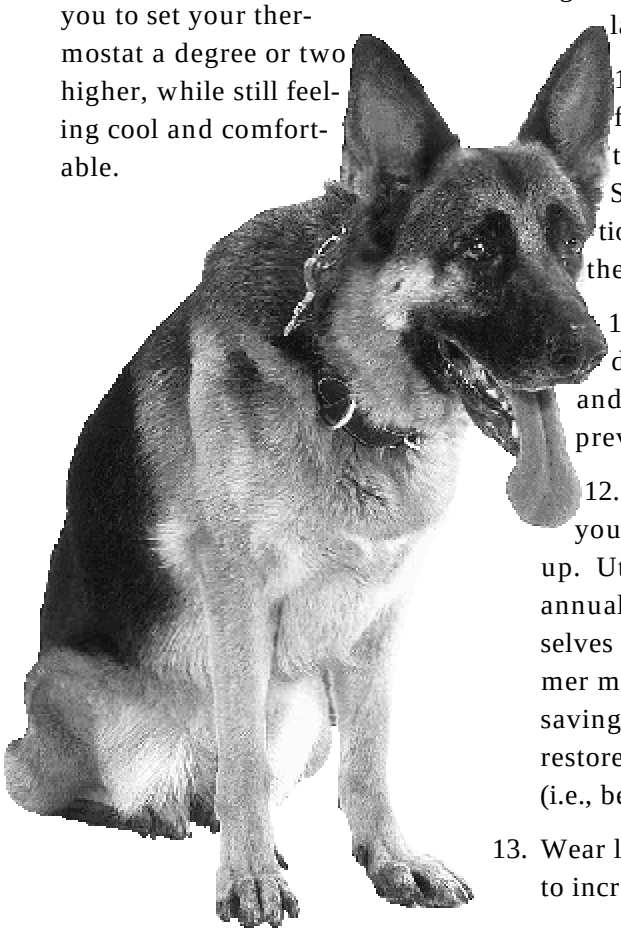
20 Ways to Beat The Heat Without Breaking The Bank

1. Set the thermostat up a degree or two when home and a lot more when you're away. Each degree you offset your thermostat reduces your air conditioning expense by 3% to 4%. If you don't have one, consider adding a programmable thermostat to take care of the job for you. It never forgets.
2. Shut off lights when no one's in a room. Only 5% to 10% of the electricity used in an incandescent light bulb is for light. The rest is waste heat. Consider motion detector light switches, which will automatically shut off when no one's been in the room for 10 to 15 minutes.
3. Use your ceiling fans to generate air movement, allowing you to set your thermostat a degree or two higher, while still feeling cool and comfortable.



4. If you have a standing pilot furnace, turning off the pilot will save 3% to 9% on your cooling costs.
5. As much as possible, cook with your microwave oven and outdoor grill. Avoid adding heat to your house.
6. When you do cook inside, use the kitchen range hood to exhaust the heat to the outside.
7. Run your bathroom fans during baths and showers to exhaust heat and moisture.
8. Attic temperatures can easily reach 130°F in the Summer. Install power vents or attic fans to lower attic temperatures.
9. Add extra insulation (find the right amount at simplyinsulate.com).
10. Replace or check the filters of your air conditioner monthly. In the Summer, your air conditioner gets a workout and the filters get dirty faster.
11. Close blinds and draperies on Southern and Western exposures to prevent solar heat gain.
12. It's not too late to get your air conditioner tuned up. Utility research shows that annual tune-ups pay for themselves in just a couple of Summer months through utility savings. Plus, a tune-up can restore lost system capacity (i.e., better cooling).
13. Wear loose fitting, light clothes to increase your comfort levels at a higher thermostat setting.
14. Use an incense stick to check for drafts and air leaks around windows, doors, recessed lighting fixtures, and attic hatches. Replace weather stripping when leaks are found
15. Add outlet gaskets to outlets located on exterior walls.
16. Wash dishes and laundry in the early morning or at night when your air conditioner has excess cooling capacity.
17. Wrap the hot water pipe leading from your water heater to your hot water piping.
18. Turn off electronics (i.e., computers, printers, monitors, stereos, television sets) when not in use. They are heat generators.
19. Have your ducts inspected. Duct leakage could account for 25% to 30% of your air conditioning costs and also result in lost cooling capacity. Consider a "Certified Test and Balance" to get the maximum efficiency from your system.
20. **Cut your cooling bills in half and increase your comfort with a new high efficiency air conditioner or heat pump.**

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