

Did you know?

Air conditioning your home can account for more than 50 percent of your electric bill during peak cooling months. Heating your home during cold winter months can cost even more if you use an inefficient source of heat – such as electric strip heating.



Still have questions?

Our Energy Experts can help. Get more information on our energy-saving programs at FPL.com

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Guide to Heating & Cooling

Change the current way you use energy and make your bill even lower.



Enjoy cool comfort and savings

Save energy and money with our guide to heating and cooling

When the temperatures in Florida go up, we all fight the urge to turn our thermostats down — way down. And in the coldest winter months, heating can cost even more than cooling. This guide will help you get the most comfort for your money and provide guidance for when you need to replace your air conditioner (A/C).

Get the most comfort

START WITH QUICK, EASY TIPS FOR SAVINGS

Adjust your thermostat

- » Set your A/C to 78° F or higher in the summer with your fan set to auto. Save 5 percent on monthly cooling costs for each degree you turn it up
- » Set your heat to 68° F or lower in the winter with your fan set to auto. Save 5 percent on monthly heating costs for each degree you turn it down

Consider purchasing and installing a smart thermostat

- » Average savings could add up to 3 percent of your total energy costs

Use ceiling fans to feel cooler

- » Consider adding more ceiling fans – so you can feel cooler with your thermostat set higher
- » When leaving a room, turn off your ceiling fan. A fan that runs all the time costs up to \$7 a month

Keep your A/C unit clean and clear

- » Check your filter regularly for excess buildup of dirt, dust and pet hair. How often you change the filter depends on the type of filter you have, how often you run your A/C and the number of pets in your home
- » Keep leaves, shrubbery and debris at least 18 inches away from your outdoor unit

Turn off kitchen-exhaust and bath fans immediately when you're finished using them

- » A heater that runs all the time can cost \$100 per month

Keep sunlight out during summer months

- » Close your blinds, drapes and shades during the hottest time of day

Install or upgrade your ceiling insulation

- » Install or upgrade ceiling insulation in your home to reduce your heating and cooling costs and make your home more comfortable

Seal your home for savings to control airflow and reduce leaks

- » Close exterior windows and doors tightly when your heater or A/C is running
- » Caulk around windows, weather strip around doors if you feel a draft, and add door sweeps to the bottom of exterior doors
- » Keep interior doors and A/C vents open to help air circulate



Check your ducts

About 50 percent of all homes have leaky ducts that go undetected, causing electric bills to increase while affecting air quality and comfort. Here are ways to avoid wasting energy and money:

- » Look for rapid dust buildup around vents in your home because that's usually a sign of leaky ducts. Remove dirt and buildup, if necessary
- » Fixing leaky ducts improves efficiency and air quality by reducing the dirt and dust that could be drawn into your home's duct system

If you suspect your duct system may have leaks, you should contact an A/C contractor to check your duct system.

Do you need a new A/C?

CONSIDER A MORE EFFICIENT A/C OR HEAT PUMP



Depending on the size and efficiency of your current A/C, a new cooling system could save you money on your electric bill. For example, if you upgrade an older three-ton A/C with a new, higher efficiency model, you could save around \$377 annually.¹

You should consider a new, more efficient A/C if your current system:

- » Is more than 10 years old
- » Needs frequent repairs
- » Runs longer to keep your home cool

If any of the above is true, you may benefit from a new high-efficiency A/C.

Choose the system that's right for you

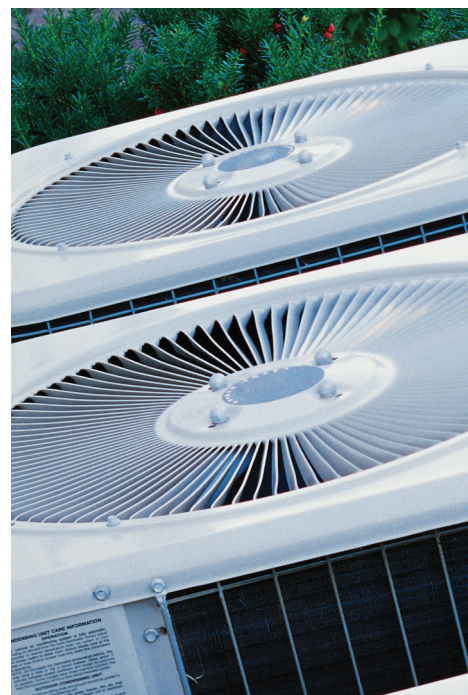
The main types of systems to consider are:

Straight cool system

- » An A/C that includes a cooling cycle only
- » A gas, oil or electric strip heater may be included

Heat pump system

- » Provides a cooling cycle during the summer and a heating cycle during the winter
- » Could save you up to 70 percent on heating costs compared to conventional strip heating²
- » May cost slightly more than a straight cool system to purchase
- » Strip heat may be added to a heat pump system for "backup" heating on cold days below 40 degrees – when heat pumps are less effective



Before making a decision, be sure your contractor provides you with:

1. An upfront estimate

A written estimate should include:

- » **System type:** "Straight cool" or "heat pump"
- » **Efficiency:** The recommended efficiency rating for your home (see Table 1: Annual Cost to Cool Your Home Based on Air Conditioner's Efficiency)

- » **Size (in tons or BTUs):** A "heat load calculation" will determine the correct size

- » **FPL rebates:** We offer rebates on qualifying systems, and that information should be included in your estimate

- » **Additional rebates:** Information on manufacturer, state and/or federal rebates, if available

- » **Warranty:** How long parts and labor are covered

- » **Price:** Final costs should include any changes to your home's electrical or duct system that may be required to support a new system. Be sure to ask if the size of your current ducts are appropriate for the new system

- » **Additional costs:** Whether your A/C model will require you to increase the size of your refrigerant lines

2. Answers to important questions

- » Does my duct system have holes or leaks that need repair?
- » Is my home's ceiling sufficiently insulated?

Table 1: Annual Cost to Cool Your Home Based on your Air Conditioner's Efficiency

Size or cooling capacity		Annual cost to cool your home if your A/C SEER is										
Tons	BTU/h	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
2	24,000	\$835	\$759	\$696	\$642	\$596	\$557	\$522	\$491	\$464	\$439	\$417
2.5	30,000	\$1,044	\$949	\$870	\$803	\$746	\$696	\$652	\$614	\$580	\$549	\$522
3	36,000	\$1,252	\$1,139	\$1,044	\$963	\$895	\$835	\$783	\$737	\$696	\$659	\$626
3.5	42,000	\$1,461	\$1,328	\$1,218	\$1,124	\$1,044	\$974	\$913	\$860	\$812	\$769	\$731
4	48,000	\$1,670	\$1,518	\$1,392	\$1,285	\$1,193	\$1,113	\$1,044	\$982	\$928	\$879	\$835
4.5	54,000	\$1,879	\$1,708	\$1,566	\$1,445	\$1,342	\$1,252	\$1,174	\$1,105	\$1,044	\$989	\$939
5	60,000	\$2,087	\$1,898	\$1,740	\$1,606	\$1,491	\$1,392	\$1,305	\$1,228	\$1,160	\$1,099	\$1,044

Example: Annual cooling cost to run a 3-ton (36,000 BTU/Hour) installed in the 1990s with a 10 SEER will be \$1,252. If replaced with a new 16 SEER system, the costs drops to \$783 - a savings of \$469 per year.



Learn the language

Seasonal Energy Efficiency Ratio (SEER):

A measure of average annual cooling efficiency of an A/C or heat pump. The higher the SEER, the more efficient the unit.

Heating Seasonal Performance Factor (HSPF):

A measure of average annual heating efficiency of a heat pump. We recommend a minimum HSPF of 6.8. Higher HSPF numbers are more efficient.

Units of measure that determine an air-conditioning system's size are:

- » **BTU (British Thermal Unit):** a measure of the size or cooling capacity of an air conditioner
- » **Ton:** one ton is equal to 12,000 BTUs per hour

¹ Costs above are estimates based on South Florida area average of 2,800 annual A/C cooling operating hours and current rate of 10 cents per kWh.
² Depending on how warm you want your home in the winter and how cold it is outside.

³ The list of Participating Independent Contractors (PICs) is a compilation of businesses that have agreed to comply with FPL's Program Standards, and is not a recommendation by FPL of a particular independent contractor. The decision to select, hire and the management of the PIC is the sole responsibility of the FPL customer. THE PIC IS NOT AN AGENT OF, OR JOINT VENTURER WITH, AND DOES NOT WORK FOR, FPL, AS SUCH, THE PICs ARE NOT UNDER THE CONTROL OR SUPERVISION OF FPL BUT RATHER ARE INDEPENDENT CONTRACTORS. FPL DOES NOT MAKE AND EXPRESSLY DISCLAIMS ANY WARRANTY, GUARANTEE, OR PROMISE, WHETHER EXPRESSED OR IMPLIED, INCLUDING, WITHOUT LIMITATION, ANY IMPLIED WARRANTY OF MERCHANTABILITY, FITNESS FOR A PARTICULAR PURPOSE, THE AMOUNT OF ENERGY SAVINGS TO BE ACHIEVED, THE SUITABILITY OR QUALITY OF MATERIALS TO BE INSTALLED BY, OR THE WORKMANSHIP OF THE PIC SELECTED AND HIRED BY THE FPL CUSTOMER.