

# Stay cool the green way

It's cool to be green, and green can keep you cool—especially in hot weather. Here are 10 tips for maintaining a comfortable home without relying on the air conditioner this summer.

1. Heat rises so make sure your roof is well-ventilated. Consider installing a temperature controlled attic fan that switches on automatically.

2. Ensure proper insulation in the walls and ceilings. In Canada we tend to think of insulation as a must for winter, but proper insulation also guards against the heat of the day.

3. Shade the west side of your home by planting large bushes or trees to mitigate the amount of direct sunlight your west-facing walls receive.

4. Ceiling fans can cool a room by several degrees. Install ceiling fans in larger rooms and set them to the forward position so the fan rotates counterclockwise. This will help create a wind-chill effect and make you "feel" cooler.

5. Venetian blinds or California shutters are both aesthetically appealing and effective at shutting out the sun's glare. Another option is to add heat reflecting film on windows. It will help keep things cool, while reducing ultraviolet rays that can damage furniture and floors.



6. Since most summer breezes blow from west to east, open the southwest and northeast windows to allow a refreshing cross-breeze. Open windows at night to allow the cooler air in, and close them in the morning.

7. Use a dehumidifier to absorb moisture in the air, as dry air feels cooler. A dehumidifier can also prevent mold, mildew, and musty odours, especially in the basement.

8. Consider using an outdoor barbecue or a slow cooker which emits very little heat.

9. Invest in a fold-away gazebo for your deck or garden. It protects from sun, insects, and summer showers when you want to cool-off outside.

10. Lighten up the exterior paint. Light coloured paint doesn't absorb as much solar energy as darker paint, and is a low-cost solution that can reduce your energy bills.

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