

Top 10 Ways to Beat the Heat

The scorching summer heat is hard on our bodies, our moods, and our electric bills. Don't let the temperature get you down, though. These ten tips will help you keep cool even if it feels like the sun is out to get you.

10. Drink More Water

You know how important it is to stay hydrated all year round. When you're sweating a lot, either because of exercise or the summer heat, drinking enough water becomes even more important. As the CDC suggests, think of your body like an air conditioner:

Whenever your body heats up from physical activity or the hot weather outside, your internal air conditioner turns on and you begin to sweat. And remember, now that your air conditioner is using its coolant (your sweat), it is important to refill the tank – by drinking lots of H₂O.

As with other hydration myths, water isn't your only option, but it's free and easily accessible for most of us. Even if you have to trick yourself into drink more water and learn to love the taste of it, you'll be much more comfortable if you keep refilling your water glass.

9. Keep Excessive Sweat at Bay

For many of us, sweat-inducing humidity is the worst part of summer. Even if you don't have excessive sweat issues, you can get the sweating under control with a few tricks, like applying antiperspirant at night so it works more effectively and wearing breathable clothing materials, such as cotton.

8. Make a DIY Air Conditioner

Running the AC the entire summer gets expensive. You can make your own pseudo-air conditioner on the cheap with some basic materials, such as the styrofoam-and-fan version shown above. Don't like the look of

that? There are several other DIY cooling options to try.

7. Optimize Your Fans

Did you know that if you face your fan out, rather than in at night, your room will stay cooler and you might be able to sleep more comfortably? Day or night, you can use a temperature controller (or build one yourself) to automatically turn the fan on or off based on the temperature and save your energy—literally. If you have a ceiling fan, run it counter-clockwise (the “summer” higher-speed setting) for optimum cooling.

6. Keep Your Food Cool and Avoid Using the Oven

Summer might be a great time to eat outdoors, but some foods and drinks aren't that enjoyable when heated by the sun. You can make a zeer pot (aka evaporative cooler) for your food and drinks with just two containers or create ice blocks for your cooler using old milk cartons. When it's too hot to cook, consider making cold soups, relying on electrical appliances like the versatile rice cooker, or try these “no-cook” or “oven-free” recipe ideas.

5. Exercise Comfortably, Even in the Heat

Just because it's hot out doesn't mean you have to stop exercising. You can get used to exercising in the heat and use common sense strategies such as switching to water sports, avoiding the sun when it's strongest, and exercising in short bursts. Precooling techniques can also prevent you from overheating when you work out in hot weather.

4. Optimize Your Windows

You might not need to run your air conditioner if you pay a little more attention to your windows in the summer. Close the windows and use insulated drapes to keep the sun out during the day and open them at night when the sun is down. You can also hang a damp towel in front of the window to cool the air flowing into your home and open opposing windows or windows on the top and bottom floors for maximum air flow.

3. Cool Your Car Down Quickly

This Japanese trick will get your oven-like car closer to bearable temperature. Roll down one window and open and close the opposite door a few times to cool that car down.

2. Stay Cool While You Sleep

Summer heat is worst when you're trying to get some shuteye, because a higher body temperature makes it harder to fall asleep. If you feel like an insomniac in summer, cool your head with a special pillow like the Chillow, sleep on top of a wet sheet (aka the "Egyptian method"), or try one of these other strategies in our cool sleeping guide or this infographic.

1. Know Your Body's Best Cooling Points

Finally, if you're stuck in the heat and can't find get to a cooler place, know your body's best cooling points, e.g., your wrist and neck. By applying a ice cubes wrapped in a towel (or any other cold object) to these pulse points, you'll cool down more quickly and effectively.

