

"Filtering Out" Wasted Energy

Changing Your Air Conditioner's Return Air Filter

Why Should I Do This?

One of the easiest ways to save money and improve your air conditioner's efficiency is by keeping the return air filter clear of dirt and dust. Regularly cleaning or replacing your air conditioner's return air filter can lower your air conditioner's energy consumption up to 15 percent, saving you money and helping the environment. And remember, when you reduce your energy consumption, you not only save money, you also help save the environment.

What you'll need:

- Static dust wipe or dust rag (or vacuum cleaner with hose and brush attachment).
- Screwdriver that matches the screws of your filter grille.
- A properly-sized air filter.

STEP
1

Before removing your filter, make sure to first turn off your indoor air conditioning unit at its service disconnect or switch.

STEP
2

Open the filter grille and remove the old filter. Dust or vacuum the front and the back of the grille to remove any debris or dust that may have settled onto it.

STEP
3

Determine what type of filter your air conditioner utilizes.

TYPES OF FILTERS

- **Reusable filter:** Give it a good washing. Most reusable filters are plastic, foam or metal mesh.
- **Disposable filter:** Throw away your old filter and purchase a properly-sized replacement filter.

STEP
4

Now install the new or cleaned filter. Find where it says "air flow" next to an arrow or two. Remember this filter is in the return air stream, so the arrow will point into the system toward the blower or, most likely, away from you. Make sure that the filter fits snugly in place so that no air or dust can get around the filter. Once you have placed the filter back in, you can replace the grille or access panel.

STEP
5

Turn the air conditioning unit back on.

ENERGY SAVING TIP



- Use your energy bill as a reminder to replace or clean your return air filter on a monthly basis.
- Make sure the replacement filter you use, fits snugly in the grille - poorly fitted or loose filters can allow unfiltered air into your unit. This reduces efficiency and costs money.
- Pleated or disposable filters are recommended over fiberglass filters as they filter more dust particles from the air.

SAFETY TIPS



- Be sure to turn your unit off before replacing or cleaning a return air filter.
- Watch for sharp edges on the filter or grille.

