

Green tips for ovens and broilers

Rich Heffern | Jan. 14, 2011 Eco Catholic

These are some good tips for conserving energy this winter while using your oven and broiler.

1. Preheat an oven only if necessary. Baked goods, roasted meats and poultry are more likely to need initial hot cooking, but most casseroles can go directly into a cold oven.
2. Don't open the oven door unless necessary. The temperature drops about 25 degrees every time you do.
3. Adjust your oven racks to the desired position before heating the oven.
4. Don't overcook. Set a timer and use a thermometer.
5. Clean your oven window to monitor progress. Scrape away gunk with a one-sided razor blade.
6. Line your oven floor with oven mats and clean those as needed instead of using the self-cleaning option.
7. Keep air flowing; don't cover racks with foil, and don't block heat vents on the oven floor with foil.
8. Bake or roast more than one item at a time. Ask yourself: What else can I cook at the same time?
9. Since the oven will be hot, you can also pop something else into when the first dish is done and make use of the existing heat. Getting an oven up to a desired temperature takes a lot of fuel.
10. Cook on the stovetop instead of in the oven or broiler whenever possible. Pan fry in a grill pan instead of broiling.
11. When using glass and ceramic cookware, you can generally shorten cooking time or lower the temperature by 25 degrees F.
12. Turn on the self-cleaning option right after you've used the oven to take advantage of existing heat.
13. Cook in smaller sizes to shorten oven time; make two smaller pans of lasagna instead of one large one.
14. Cook once, enjoy twice. Double the recipe, morph or freeze your leftovers and freeze

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