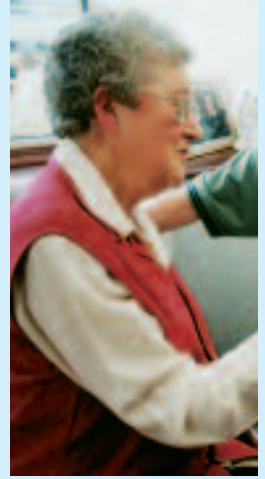


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How to use this pack

You will find a range of helpful suggestions to help keep you and your home warm during the winter months. There is also a list of useful telephone numbers on pages 12-13, which can be used to obtain additional information on a range of subjects for older people.

Eat for warmth

During cold weather, regular hot meals and hot drinks will provide warmth and energy. Even if you don't feel like cooking, try to have at least one proper meal a day. Certain foods, such as potatoes, beans, bread, milk, eggs, meat and fish, are all good sources of protein, energy and vitamins which will help keep you healthy. Eating plenty of fresh fruit and vegetables will also help. Contact your local council for details of the Meals on Wheels service in your area, which can provide hot meals.



It's also a good idea to keep stocked up on some basic foods so you don't need to go out to the shops on very cold days.

If you want recipe ideas for simple, cheap and tasty hot meal(s) for keeping warm in the winter please use the form enclosed at the back to order Healthy Eating, our leaflet which contains suggestions of culturally diverse meal suggestions.

Keep moving

Try not to stay sitting down for long stretches. Get up and move around a bit. Any kind of activity, from walking to the shops (as long as it's not very cold) to doing the vacuuming, gets your circulation going and makes you feel warmer.

If you have difficulty walking, moving your arms and legs and wiggling your toes and fingers will help.

If it's very cold outside or icy underfoot, try to keep active indoors rather than venturing outside.

Please share the information in this pack with your friends and neighbours



Dress for warmth

Wrapping up warmly, both indoors and out, is very important. Several layers of thin clothing, for example, a shirt or blouse, thin jersey and cardigan, will keep you warm by trapping air between them. Clothes made from wool, polyester or fleecy synthetic fibres are usually warmer. Thermal underwear can help beat the chill. Warm, thick tights or long socks are a must, as well as a warm pair of slippers. When sitting down, a shawl around the shoulders or a blanket over the knees will provide a lot of warmth. Wearing a hat or headscarf indoors can also keep you warm.

When you go out, be sure that you are dressed for the weather; it is very easy to just throw your coat on when you go to the shops, only to realise on the way that it's colder than you thought. During the winter, make sure you wear warm layers under your coat, and wear gloves and a hat or headscarf; this is very important as a lot of your body heat is lost through your head. Warm shoes or boots with good grips are also important. If you get wet, change into dry clothing as soon as you get indoors.

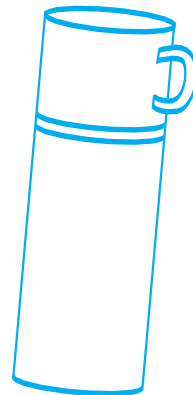
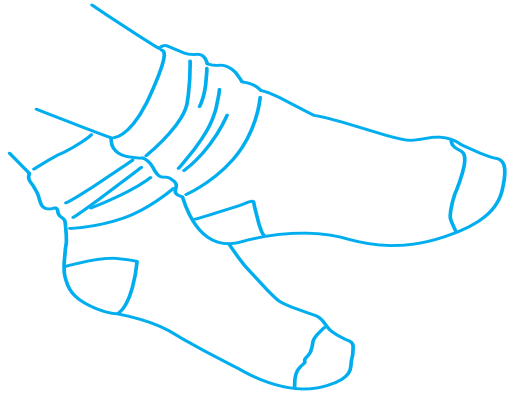
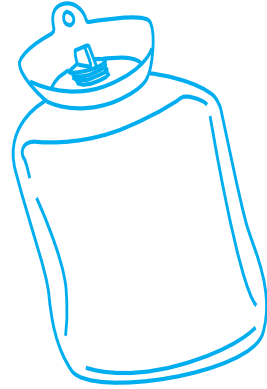


Keeping warm at night

It is very important to keep warm in bed at night. A hot water bottle will warm up your bed, as will an electric blanket, although you must never use the two together as this can be dangerous.

Wearing the right clothing to bed is as important as wrapping up when you go outside – thermal underwear or pyjamas and bed socks will all help keep you warm right through the night. A warm, milky drink before bed can also help and, if you sometimes wake during the night feeling cold, you could keep a flask of hot drink by your bedside too. Try and make sure you have enough bedclothes.

Finally, however much you like the fresh air, in very cold weather it is advisable to keep your bedroom window closed.



Please share
the information
in this pack with
your friends and
neighbours



Keeping your home warm

Whatever type of heating you may have, it is important to keep both your living room and bedroom warm enough.

Try to heat your bedroom overnight during the winter months. If this isn't possible, warm your bedroom at night before you go to bed. If it's very cold weather, and if bills are a great problem, living and sleeping in one room may be a last resort – but get some friends or family to move your bed into the living room rather than sleeping in an armchair overnight.

Recommended room temperatures

OK

The recommended temperature is 21°C, but you may be more comfortable at a higher temperature.

COLD – DANGER

If the temperature falls below 16°C, you could be at risk of suffering from hypothermia, a heart attack or a stroke.

Take action to keep warm by turning up your heating and putting on plenty of layers of clothing.

One of the best ways of increasing your comfort and keeping bills down is to make your home more energy efficient. There are two sides to energy efficiency. One is to keep the heat in and draughts out by insulating and draught-proofing your home. The other is to make good use of your heating and get full benefit from your fuel. By keeping you warmer and saving you money, energy efficiency is good news all round. Please read page 13 which has details of the grants and help available to make your home more energy efficient.

Keep a thermometer handy so you know the temperature.

Try to keep all the rooms you use during the day at a temperature of 21°C (70°F) and warm your bedroom at night before going to bed.

Keeping your home warm

This illustration shows various things you can do to help keep out the cold.



Central heating

Make sure your heating system is in good working order by getting it checked at least once a year. Ask your gas or electricity supplier about this as they may offer free checks for people aged over 60. Please read page 13, as you may be eligible for a grant towards the cost of central heating.



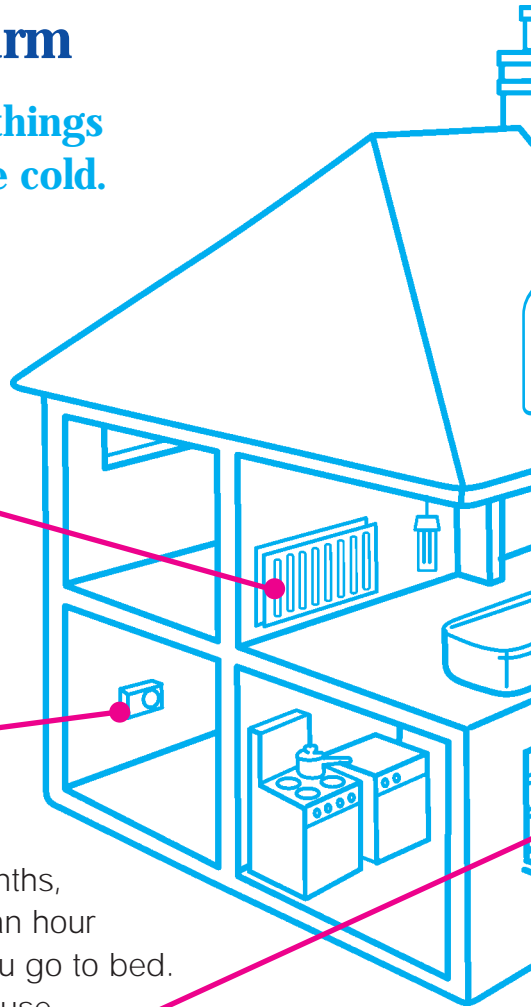
Thermostat control

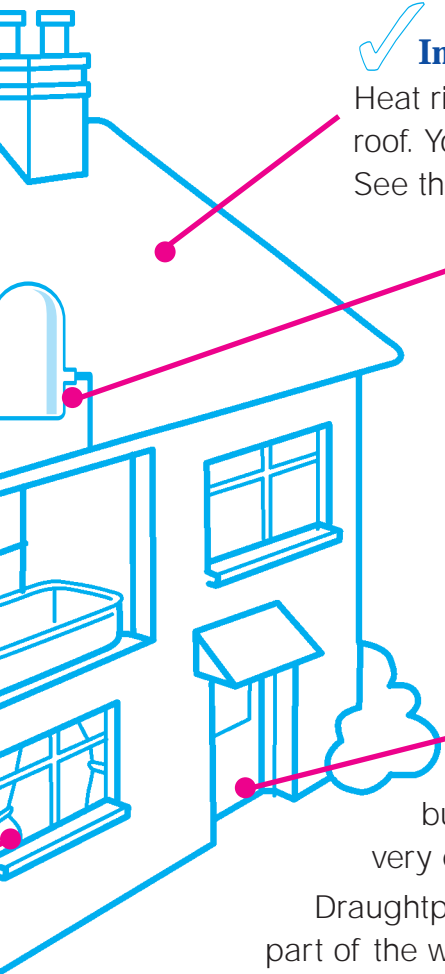
Make sure you know how to set the heating controls. If you can't heat your bedroom overnight during the winter months, set the timer so that the heat comes on an hour before you get up and goes off when you go to bed. Try to keep the heat in all the rooms you use during the day at 21°C (70°F).



Double glazing

Double glazing cuts heat loss, but can be expensive. However, you can attach plastic film or sheeting to the window frame which will help. Curtains will also insulate your windows. Ideally they should reach right down to the ground. This traps a layer of air between the glass and the curtain which gives added insulation. If you have radiators under your windows, don't let the curtains hang in front of them. Tuck them behind the radiators so that the heat flows into the room.





✓ **Insulation**

Heat rises, so a lot of heat can be lost through your roof. You can cut this down by insulating your loft. See the box below.

✓ **Water tanks**

Your hot water tank should also be insulated. A special jacket that fits around the tank will slow down the amount of heat loss and keep your hot water at the right temperature for longer. Your cold water tank should also be insulated to stop it from freezing over in the winter months.

✓ **Draughtproofing**

Draughtproofing the front door with a well-fitting curtain will cut down on draughts, but avoid using loose draught excluders as it is very easy to trip over them.

Draughtproofing strips can also be fixed between the part of the window that moves and the frame, and to the bottom of doors, especially the front and back doors where most heat is lost.

Call the British Gas 'here to HELP' telephone line on 0845 605 2535 to find out if you are eligible for FREE insulation for your home and a Quality of Life check. (Please quote HTA1).
Or for more information on keeping your home warm and grants in your area, call your local Energy Efficiency Advice Centre on 0800 512 012

Common misconceptions

Did you know?

There are several misconceptions about keeping warm and having a healthy home:

“A cool home is a healthy home – warm homes are more likely to spread germs.”



Research has shown that as we get older, the risk of heart attack or stroke greatly increases in cool temperatures, so it's important to keep your home warm.

“Going from a warm house to the cold outside makes you feel the cold more and/or is a danger to health, so better to keep the house cool.”



Living in the warm keeps the body temperature up which helps to protect against the effects of the cold outside. So it's important to keep your home warm and to dress up warm when you go outside.

“Sleeping with a window open at night, even during the coldest weather, is good for you – get the germs out and the fresh air in.”



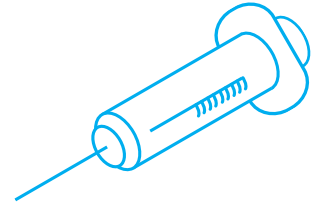
Cold air on the head and face at night has been shown to increase blood pressure. So remember to close your bedroom window at night when it's cold outside.

Top ten tips for claiming benefits

- 1. Claiming benefits is a right** – don't think of benefits as a handout but some extra money to help make life easier for you.
- 2. Don't assume you're not entitled** – check with a benefits advisor or an online benefits calculator (www.entitledto.co.uk)
- 3. Don't be put off** – claiming benefits doesn't have to be complicated. Visit www.helptheaged.org.uk or www.direct.gov.uk to help guide you through the process.
- 4. Visit a registered advice provider** – to speak to a trained benefits advisor, visit www.citizensadvice.org.uk, www.clsdirect.org.uk or www.ageconcern.org.uk. For a benefits check over the phone, call SeniorLine on **0808 800 6565**. For Pension Credit, contact The Pension Service on **0800 99 1234**.
- 5. Ask for a full benefits check** – even if you're claiming some benefits, you may be entitled to others. Get tested for them all.
- 6. It's good to have support** – The Pension Service's home-visiting service will explain the benefits process to you to make it easier for you to claim.
- 7. Don't forget the extras** – ensure you receive winter fuel payments and free bus passes, eye tests and gas safety inspections. For free home insulation or grants, call British Gas 'here to HELP' on **0845 605 2535** or **0800 952 0600** (England), **0800 072 0150** (Scotland) or **0800 316 2815** (Wales)
- 8. Appeals and tribunals** – ask your advisor if their organisation can help you appeal if your claim has been turned down.
- 9. Money management** – for hints and tips on budgeting, visit www.helptheaged.org.uk or contact the Consumer Credit Counselling Service on **0800 138 1111**; the National Debtline on **0808 808 4000**; or your local Citizens Advice Bureau. Get advice from your bank if you have problems with Chip and PIN.
- 10. Imagine the possibilities** – Claim all the relevant benefits and enjoy stress-free bill paying or even a weekend away.

Flu jab

The best time to have your flu jab is from October to early November, ready for winter. **The jab is free if you are over 65 and available from your GP or local surgery.** If you are housebound you can have



the jab at home – just ask your local surgery. Viruses that cause flu change every year. This means the flu this year will be different from last winter's, so it's important to get this year's new vaccine.

Winter fuel payment

Every household that includes someone aged 60 or over will receive a winter fuel payment to help with their fuel bills. The payment is £200 – £300 depending on your age and you must be aged 60 or over to receive anything.



This year, anyone aged 60 or over on or before 24 September 2006 may qualify for a Winter Fuel Payment. The date is also referred to as the 'qualifying week' which this year is 18th – 24th Sept 2006. If you have not claimed before and wish to receive your Winter Fuel Payment before Christmas, you will need to send in your correctly completed claim form by 22 Sept 2006. The final deadline for the receipt of claims for this winter is 30 March 2007. For more information contact SeniorLine on 0808 800 6565 or see this website:

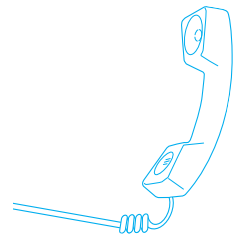
<http://www.thepensionservice.gov.uk/winterfuel/>

Useful local telephone numbers

Three empty rounded rectangular boxes for entering telephone numbers, arranged vertically.

Useful telephone numbers

Key contact numbers:



NHS Direct 0845 46 47 (0800 22 44 88 in Scotland)

– 24 hour health advice and information service.

SeniorLine 0808 800 6565

– The Help the Aged free welfare rights service for older people, their relatives, carers and friends.

British Gas ‘here to HELP’ 0845 605 2535

– Find out if you are eligible for FREE insulation for your home – see page 9 for more details.

Home Energy Care 0845 955 5404

Winter Fuel Payments Helpline 0845 915 1515

– For more information on winter fuel payments.

Citizens Advice Bureau

– Your local CAB should be listed in your phonebook.

Energy Efficiency Advice Centre 0800 512 012

– Advice and information on keeping your home warm and the grants available in your area.

Grants 0800 952 0600 (Warm Front in England)

0800 072 0150 (Warm Deal in Scotland)

0800 316 2815 (HEES & HEES Plus in Wales)

– Call to find out if you are eligible for a grant of up to £2,500 towards insulating and heating improvements in your home.

Home Energy Care

Everyone needs a hand from time to time and British Gas Home Energy Care gives extra help to those who need it, including those who are older, disabled or suffering from a debilitating illness.

What services does the register provide?

The register is free, confidential and offers customers a variety of services.

For added security in your home, you can request to have a confidential password which British Gas representatives will use to identify themselves at your door – for example, when they come to read your meter.

There is also an annual gas safety check available – this is a free service to those who qualify.

If you would like to find out more about other services that are available or would like to join Home Energy Care, call British Gas on 0845 955 5404 or visit us at www.house.co.uk

