7 Ways to Save Energy with Interior Design

Here are some interior design tips for a stylish place that'll help you save energy and money:

1. **Throw rugs**. The U.S. Green Building Council says hardwood, tile, or concrete floors are the greenest because carpet doesn't last as long, isn't usually recyclable, and can be a nest of dirt and chemicals. But how to keep your feet warm so you don't turn up the heat? Try cozy cotton or wool throw rugs instead of carpet, as they're biodegradable and easier to clean. (Plus, a rug can really tie a room together.)

2. **Lighting**. Efficient lighting has a gentler glow than it used to—and it lasts longer and gives off less heat than incandescent light bulbs. Compact fluorescent lights (CFLs) now come in dimmable options and natural, warm, and daylight hues. LED (light-emitting diode) lights can brighten up a desk or recessed lighting fixture while using even less energy (about 75 percent less than standard bulbs!).

3. **Wall hangings**. Tapestries on the wall aren't just for Sherlock. The Associated Press advises that tapestries, grasscloth, and wood paneling can serve as wall insulation, making it easier to heat and cool your home and adding a touch of class.

4. **Efficient windows and skylights**. Energy-efficient windows and skylights actually keep your carpets and furniture from fading, since they cut out UV rays, not to mention making it cheaper and easier to keep your home comfortable. Or consider window films to keep your house cool in the summer (although they may prevent you from using the sun's warmth in winter).

5. **Blankets**. Use a snuggly blanket instead of cranking up the heat in winter. They can add a swanky or homey touch to the back of your couch, and you can save 5 percent on your heating bill for every degree you turn down the thermostat!

6. **Seal air leaks**. Is your home drafty? Adding caulking around your windows and making sure you don't have drafty outlets or light fixtures can lower your energy bill by 10 percent.

7. **Power strips**. Tidy up unwieldy wires and plug 'em all into one power strip. Turning everything off at night just got easier, and you won't have to worry about your appliances drawing power when you aren't using them.