



## Energy Efficient Cooking Factsheet

Your cooker, which uses electricity or gas to produce high temperature heat, is likely to be one of the most energy hungry items in your home. There are various ways to save on your cooking-related energy bills, by ensuring that cooking is as efficient as possible.

**Slow cookers** are plug-in electronic appliances that use a low heat in a well-insulated pot over a long period of time (usually four hours or more) to cook soups and stews. Slow cookers are less energy intensive than cooking in a conventional oven and therefore more economical. They may also preserve more nutrients than higher temperature cooking methods, and don't produce steam.



**Pressure cookers** have a sealed and lockable lid which allows pressure to build up inside. They are designed to make short work of slow cook dishes. They're economical in the amount of power they use because they can reduce cooking times by up to 50%.

**Batch cooking** - the amount of cooking required on a daily basis can be significantly reduced if a large quantity of a dish is cooked at once, with plenty of spare portions saved for another time, when they only need to be reheated, perhaps using a microwave. This saves time, and results in a lot less energy use than cooking a new meal from scratch every day.





**Rice cookers** are fully contained systems similar to slow cookers which heat to the optimum temperature and typically have more insulation than a standard pan. This means that they require less energy – and are designed to produce perfectly cooked rice every time.

**Microwave ovens** can use significantly less energy than traditional cooking methods. Microwaves use high-frequency radio waves to heat the water molecules inside food. The food essentially cooks from the inside out, leaving the air around the food to remain at room temperature. The microwave is therefore generally the quickest, cheapest and most efficient way to heat up and cook food.



### Top tips for using your conventional cooker as efficiently as possible

- Use the right size pot or pan for the amount of food being cooked.
- Keep lids on as much as possible to prevent heat and steam from escaping. This is not only a more energy efficient way of cooking but it can help prevent damp and condensation which can cause mould.
- Use hob rings or ovens that are not larger than necessary.
- Don't turn heat up excessively, particularly when boiling food on the hob: once boiling it won't boil any hotter, but will merely evaporate faster, creating more steam.

And finally, keep cooking times to a minimum – overcooking obviously wastes energy, but it can also destroy essential nutrients in food.

