

Nest Building

KEEPING YOUR COOL

by KATE BRIDGER

August 4, 2010

It's a gorgeous sunny day in Nelson, thirty-something degrees outside and I'm managing to hold fast to a low-twenties reading on my thermostat indoors without air conditioning. Here are some of the things you can do to help keep you and your home comfortable midsummer:

1. Close your blinds. This is probably the most important precaution because any window—large or small—will heat up your home as soon as direct sun hits it. Insulated curtains and retractable awnings are other options.
2. Hot and cold spots in your home can be mixed up and homogenised by running your furnace fan.
3. Turn off all unnecessary lights and electronics. They all generate heat, even TVs, laptops and charger adapters.
4. Avoid using your oven or doing laundry during the hottest time of the day and turn off the heat dry option on your dishwasher.
5. Humidity makes ambient temperature feel considerably higher than it really is so a de-humidifier is a good thing to have.
6. Don't open and close exterior doors more than necessary. An open door allows the temperature within your home to rise a couple of degrees in just minutes.
7. As soon as the outside air is cooler than the inside air, open your windows and crank up the portable fans.
8. If you are thinking about re-roofing your house, choose light coloured shingles over dark ones.
9. Plant fast growing shade trees beside your house.

Finally, a couple of suggestions that may not lower temperatures, but will make you *feel* cooler:

Dim the lights, soak your wrists and pulse points in cold water, stay hydrated, mist the air with peppermint oil and slow down.

If none of these options are enough, go hang out in the dairy aisle of your local supermarket and hug the yoghurt tubs.