

# ECO LIVING

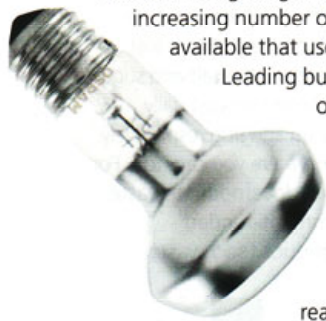
Follow our easy advice and take your first steps to a greener life

## Brighter kitchens

We all know swapping to energy-saving light bulbs can make a difference to our electricity bills, and many people have made the change. But according to The Lighting Association, we're less inclined to fit them in the kitchen, even though we could save up to £60 a year. Lighting experts think this may be because halogen spotlights have become popular in kitchens and we don't believe that low-energy bulbs can match them for brightness.

'It's still a common misconception that low-energy bulbs don't offer the same quality,' says Peter Hunt, CEO of The Lighting Association. 'But there are an increasing number of bright halogen spotlights available that use 30 per cent less energy.'

Leading bulb manufacturer Osram now offers a dimmable halogen energy saver, so you can create the right mood. In fact, it's possible to swap most styles for more efficient versions that are just as bright. So whether you've got a chandelier or a run of pendants, refit the bulbs and start saving. For more ideas on using eco lightbulbs stylishly, read Refresh, Revamp, Renew – in this issue.



The average UK household has 19 indoor light fittings, which account for 16 per cent of energy bills

THE LIGHTING ASSOCIATION



Set the mood and save energy with dimmable halogen bulbs

## How to... update your flooring

Swap worn floors for an ecofriendly option with these ideas from *The Sustainable Home*, by Cathy Strongman (£19.95, Merrell)

- For **carpets**, choose from a variety of natural fibres, including seagrass, hemp, jute and sisal. The more durable versions are best for busy areas, and should last from five to seven years.
- **Stone** floors, such as limestone, slate or marble, are long lasting and add character. Reclaimed or local stone is the best option in ecological terms. Fix with lime mortar for the most ecofriendly result.
- Manufactured from renewable materials, **linoleum** is hardwearing and easy to clean. It's recyclable, biodegradable and good for those with asthma and allergies, as it resists bacteria and repels dust and pollen.
- **Cork** bark can be harvested without harming the tree, and takes just nine to 12 years to grow back. It's renewable, recyclable and



An ecofriendly floor is ideal for family life

biodegradable, and offers excellent thermal and acoustic insulation.

- For **timber**, save existing floorboards if possible. When laying a new floor, the most ecofriendly options are reclaimed boards or sustainably sourced wood or bamboo.
- Recycled **rubber** and natural rubber floors are recyclable and water-resistant. Some contain PVC or plasticisers, so check before buying.

## HOUSEHOLD HERO



Green Dragon logs, £9.99 for 12, Phoenix Fuels



If you enjoy the cosiness of your open fire or solid fuel stove at this time of year, why not change your fuel and save money? Green Dragon logs burn three times longer than wood and give out twice as much heat, so you get a toasty warm fire for less fuel. Made by farmers in Nottinghamshire, the logs are composed of ecofriendly rapemeal, which is grown as a 'break' crop – one that's planted as part of the natural crop rotation, so it complements food production rather than competing with it.

TEXT: BETH PRECIOUS. PHOTOGRAPHS: GETTY

**Eco holiday** In the September 2008 issue, in a feature about an Ecocabin in Shropshire, we gave the impression that Kate Grubb lives in the house. We now know that the Ecocabin is in fact a business, which Kate and her husband run and let out on a self-catering basis. Readers who'd like to book a visit to the cabin, which was purpose-built following ecological design and building principles, should visit [ecocabin.co.uk](http://ecocabin.co.uk) or call 01547 530183.

### SMALL CHANGE, BIG DIFFERENCE

If you're considering buying a digital radio, choose an Energy Saving Recommended model. Over a year, it uses around a quarter of the power of other DAB radios