

Vampires and Phantoms Do Exist!! Become a Vampire Slayer

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It is that time of year when we start thinking about vampires, phantoms, ghosts and goblins, some of our favorite scare-us-out-of-our-wits characters. Are they alive and well? In a sense, yes there's probably a vampire lurking near you right now.

Whether or not you're a fan of vampires, you're surrounded by them every day. Oh, not the fictional ones—real ones. In fact, you're almost certainly looking straight at one, right now! Fictional vampires sustain themselves by taking the vital life out of their victims. Real-life vampires slowly drain the vital energy out of your home, office or residence. That's right, they live on your electricity, and you pay for it, each and every day.

Electric devices — computers, adaptors, microwaves—use electric power when you are using them. Walk away from, say, the computer, and a “vampire” is just waiting to take over where you left off. Vampires may not be visible to you or me, but they are “standing by,” waiting to sustain themselves on the excess energy electronics continue to use when you think they are off or in standby mode.

The cell phone charger you leave plugged into the wall: it's using electricity every second, even when your cell phone isn't connected.

That TV with the “instant on” feature: it's using electricity even when you're not watching it.

Believe it or not, many of the electronic devices you use every day probably consume more power when they're not being used than when they are. As a matter of fact, about 70% of your electric bill is due to vampire power. Ready to save energy and some of your hard earned cash? Become a vampire slayer today!!

How to be a Vampire Slayer:

1. Computers—PCs consume 50–250 watts of energy, with laptops consuming the least amount of energy at around 45 watts. With the rising cost of electricity at around \$.12 per kilowatt-hour, the following simple steps will save energy and reduce the amount of money you send to your energy provider each month.

- Tuning off your computer reduces energy consumption to 3 watts and can save about \$112.00/yr.
- Unplugged computers use 0 watts and can save about \$115/yr.
- Sleep mode uses 6 watts and can save about \$109/yr.
- To calculate the cost of your computer:

$$(\text{Watts} \times \text{Hours Used}/1000) \times \text{Cost per kWh} = \text{Total Cost}$$

Sleep Mode:

In Windows XP go to **Start > Control Panel > Power Options**

On a Mac go to systems

Preferences > Energy Saver

2. Plug your home electronics into a power strip and, at the end of the day, turn off the power strip, turning off all the power. Otherwise, consider unplugging your appliances when you are finished using them — chargers, paper shredders, computers, etc.
3. Considered rechargeable batteries for use in cordless phones, a cordless mouse and other battery operated electronics. According to the Department of Energy, studies have shown that rechargeable batteries are more cost effective than traditional batteries. Always dispose of batteries responsibly.
4. Before you go on vacation or away for a long weekend unplug your large appliances, if they are not necessary.