General Overview

Heating/cooling in the University Residence Halls works differently than in residential homes where a thermostat can switch to heating or cooling at any time. In many residence halls, the whole building must be switched to heating or cooling all at once. For this reason, we designate a heating season and a cooling season. During heating season you can’t request cooling to your room and vice-versa (even if your building has air-conditioning). Our goal is to keep your room at a comfortable range from 65 – 75 °F. This range is centrally controlled even in rooms with heating/cooling controls. Having issues with the temperature of your room? Please submit a maintenance request at: mars.housing.wisc.edu.

Guidelines & Helpful Hints

- Try small adjustments first to avoid overheating/cooling your room
- Make sure furniture, bedding, or belongings aren’t pushed against convectors as this could block air flow
- During heating season, open curtains and blinds during the day when you are home to allow the sun to warm your room naturally, and close them at night to decrease drafts; during cooling season, do the reverse
- Keep doors and windows closed when the heat or air conditioning is on
- Dress for the season: instead of turning up the heat, use blankets and sweaters

Heating

Heat must be centrally turned on or off for the whole building. Hot water is pumped through convector units located near the window in your room. A control knob on the front of the convector must be turned to the left (open) so heat can freely pass through the convector (see photo).

Cooling

Air conditioning is provided in common areas such as dens, lounges, and kitchens. Window unit air-conditioners are provided in resident rooms for medical needs only. Air conditioners have separate digital or turn knob controls for fan speed and cooler/warmer air. For more information: go.wisc.edu/housing-considerations