



## Smart Meters

How a smart meter can reduce your energy bills, separating fact from fiction, and answering frequently asked questions.

### Can a smart meter save you money?

- Smart meter readings are taken digitally and forwarded on to your energy company. No need to read meters yourself, which is very helpful for people who have difficulty reading their meters regularly and get higher estimated bills as a result.
- You can request a smart meter set up as a prepayment meter. Some people find this helps their budgeting, though consider that the unit price for energy is higher on prepayment. If you have a large excess credit of hundreds of pounds on your energy account that your provider is holding, and you choose to switch to prepayment, your credit balance will be added to your prepayment top-up. Smart prepayment meters can be topped up digitally with an app.
- Smart meters are promoted to help households reduce energy usage. However, a smart meter can't identify how much you are spending on individual expenses such as heating or cooking. Some people find it stressful watching the meter updating as energy is used, and take drastic action such as turning off all the heating. Following energy-saving advice, hacks and tips is a more beneficial way of reducing energy usage without compromising health and wellbeing.

### Is smart meter installation compulsory?

No, having a smart meter installed is your choice. Energy providers pressure customers to get a smart meter, but you don't have to get one. But if your traditional meter starts to fail and give

unexpected usage readings, it's probably time to get a new meter. All new meters are smart meters.

### Can you switch energy provider?

Yes, current generation of smart meters will work with any energy provider. Digital readings are simply re-directed to your new energy company.

### Can I trust smart meter readings?

Many of the early smart meters are not passing on readings to energy providers, and some smart meters have not been installed properly. The latest model of smart meters is more reliable.

TIP: Take a photo of your smart meter readings on a regular basis as evidence in case you need to challenge a bill.

### Who pays for installation and repairs?

Your energy provider pays for installation. Some energy providers pressure customers to pay for repairs or for cost to replace a faulty smart meter, and add this to bills. But it is their responsibility to pay for this. Seek advice if you are asked to pay.

### Useful links

[ofgem.gov.uk/energy-advice-households/getting-smart-meter](https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/energy-advice-households/getting-smart-meter)

[citizensadvice.org.uk/getting-a-smart-meter-installed](https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/getting-a-smart-meter-installed)

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