



HOW TO READ YOUR GAS METER

National Energy Action is the national charity, helping you with your energy bills. This leaflet helps you identify the type of meter you have to make sure you're correctly submitting meter readings. This could help you to avoid falling into debt.



You can translate National Energy Action's website and leaflets into over 160 languages - and get text to speech in over 100.

You can also adapt text for neurodiversities including ADHD and dyslexia, and visual impairments.

Use our Recite me button on www.nea.org.uk

TYPES OF GAS METER

There are lots of types of gas meter so yours might look slightly different. Most gas meters are metric, show readings in cubic meters (m^3) and have **five numbers** to read. Imperial gas meters (dial and some analogue meters), show readings in cubic feet (ft^3) and have **four numbers**. Find out which yours is before taking a reading.

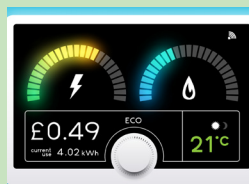
SMART METERS

All meters are either smart or traditional.

If you have a smart meter, your supplier should be automatically get accurate meter readings.

This means no more estimated bills. You can contact your supplier to request a smart meter. You don't need to have an in-home display if you don't want to. Usually, you don't need to, but you can get a reading from the smart meter itself or from the in-home display. Digital

gas meters measure in cubic meters or m^3 and have five numbers to read. Write down all the numbers from left to right, including any zeros. Ignore any numbers after the decimal point or which may be shown in red. The reading for the below meter is 55733.

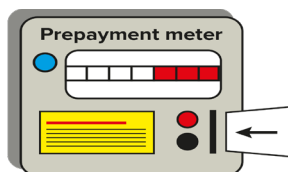


PREPAYMENT METER

Using a prepayment meter means you pay for the energy before you use it. You'll get a card for your gas meter from your supplier. If you have a traditional prepayment (non-smart) meter you must go to a shop with PayPoint or PayZone or to a Post Office to charge (add credit) to your card. You then insert it into your prepayment meter.

If you have a smart prepayment meter you can also top up by using your supplier's app, website or by phone. The display window on traditional and smart prepayment meters can show:

- units of energy you've used
 - any fixed charge from your energy supplier
 - the rate per unit of fuel
 - the amount of credit topped up
 - current credit
 - any outstanding debt
 - any debt repayments
 - remaining emergency credit if the energy meter runs out of credit
- You will also be sent energy statements either quarterly or yearly.



ANALOGUE METER

Write down all the numbers from left to right, including any zeros. Ignore any numbers after the decimal point or shown in red. The reading for the meter below is 8654.

This one is measured in cubic feet so has four numbers. If it were in cubic meters it would have five.



DIGITAL METER

Digital gas meters measure in cubic meters or m^3 and have five numbers to read.

Write down all the numbers from left to right, including any zeros.

Ignore any numbers after the decimal point or shown in red as these don't need to be included.

The reading for the meter below is 13772.



DIAL METER

- Read the dials from left to right starting with the dial furthest left.

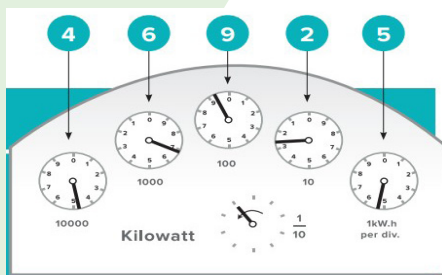
- If the pointer on a dial is between two numbers, write down the lower number. This may not be the number nearest to the pointer.

- If the pointer is between 0 and 9, use 9.

- If the pointer is exactly on a number, write it down and

underline it.

- If any of the underlined numbers you have written down are followed by a 9 or 8, you must take one away from the number you have underlined.



WHY IS MY GAS BILL HIGHER IN WINTER?

Every three months Ofgem sets the price cap level - what a unit of gas will cost. You may pay more or less than this if you have fixed your tariff with your energy supplier.

Gas is typically around a quarter of the price of electricity so if you have gas it can be cheaper to run gas central heating than plugging in an electric heater. People typically use more gas in winter as that's when they need to use gas central heating.

GLOSSARY

Actual bill – A bill generated using actual meter readings either from a smart meter or provided by the user or a meter reader.

Dial meter – An old-style type of meter that has clock faces reading left to right. Electric has five digits to read, and gas has four.

Economy 7 – An electricity tariff that charges the user two different unit rates. Seven cheaper off-peak hours overnight and 17 more expensive on-peak hours in the day. You will have two readings to take.

Estimated bills – A bill generated when an actual meter read is not possible. The supplier estimates the reading based on average previous usage and time of year.

Imperial meter – measures gas usage in cubic feet or ft³.

In-home display – A small hand-held device that comes with a smart meter. You can use it to view energy usage in kWhs, pounds and pence and set budgets.

kWh – Stands for kilowatt hour and is measurement of how much energy you use.

Metric meter – measures gas usage in cubic meters or m³.

Prepayment electric key – Lets you 'top up' your electric traditional prepayment meter at a shop. Plug the key into the meter and the top up is added to the credit balance.

Prepayment gas card – Lets you 'top up' your gas traditional prepayment meter at a shop. Plug the card into the meter and the top up is added to the credit balance.

Prepayment meter – A meter that needs to be 'topped up' before you use it either at a shop with a key or card, or online for smart prepayment meters.

Priority Services Register – Provides support, for vulnerable customers. Go to www.thepsr.co.uk or your supplier.

Smart meter – A meter that sends accurate readings to your supplier automatically. Your bills will be accurate, not estimated.

Traditional meter – A meter that is non-smart. You must provide a reading to your supplier or have a meter reader do it on your behalf.

Smart prepayment top up cards – Allows you to 'top up' your smart prepayment meter at the shop. The credit should be automatically added to the meter.



**IF YOU ARE STILL STRUGGLING, CALL
NATIONAL ENERGY ACTION'S ENERGY ADVICE AND
SUPPORT SERVICE ON 0800 304 7159 OR GO TO
WWW.NEA.ORG.UK/GET-HELP.**

National Energy Action is the national fuel poverty charity, helping everyone to have a warm, safe and healthy home.

© National Energy Action April 2025, charity registration number 290511. Company limited by guarantee. Registered in England and Wales No: 01853927.