



How to read your energy bills



Easy read booklet



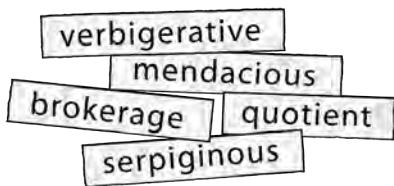
This is an Easy Read version of some information. It has words and pictures.



You might want help to read this booklet. You can ask someone to help you.

words

Some words in this booklet are **black and bold**. This means we think they are difficult words.



We explain what **black and bold** words mean in a box like this.



Some words in this booklet are **bright blue and bold**. These are links to websites or email addresses. You can click on these links on a computer.

Who we are



We are a **charity** called **National Energy Action**.



A **charity** is an organisation set up to help people.



We want to help stop **fuel poverty** in England and Wales.



Fuel poverty is when people do not have enough money to use the right amount of energy to stay warm and healthy in their own homes.



When fuel poverty happens, people might not be able to pay their energy bills. This can mean people get into **debt**.



Debt is when you owe money for something.



To help fight fuel poverty, we

- give advice and support to people about energy bills
- do work to protect **vulnerable** people
- give training to other organisations so they can support people better.



Vulnerable means people most likely to be affected by fuel poverty, like older people or people with disabilities.

What this booklet tells you about



This booklet tells you how to read your energy bills.



We will show you an example of what your energy bill might look like.



Your real energy bill will look different as we have tried to make ours simpler.



You can ask for help to read your real energy bill.

Your energy bill



Your energy bill shows how much money you have been charged for energy.



Energy is measured in a unit called **kilowatt hours**, or **kWh** for short.



Your **energy supplier** will send your energy bill by letter or online.

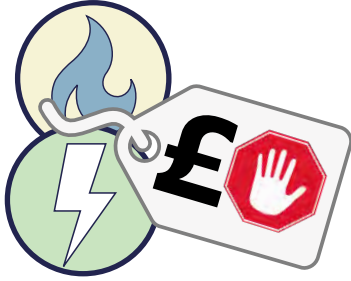


Energy suppliers are companies that provide gas and electricity. You pay your energy supplier for the gas and electricity you use.



Cost of energy

Your energy bill also shows how much the energy you use costs.



Every 3 months, **Ofgem** decide the highest cost energy suppliers can charge for a unit of gas and electricity. This is called the **price cap**.



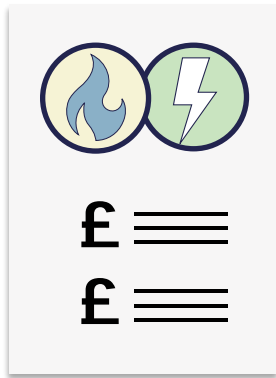
The price cap is not a limit on your total bill. It limits the cost your energy supplier can charge you for a unit of gas or electricity.



Ofgem is in charge of energy costs in Great Britain.



You might pay more or less than the price cap amount if you have fixed your **tariff** with your energy supplier.

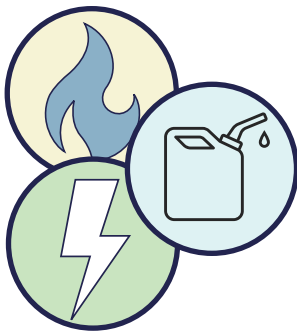


A **tariff** is a price plan for energy costs.



How much energy you use

Different houses use different amounts and types of energy.



Some houses only use gas or electricity. Some use oil.

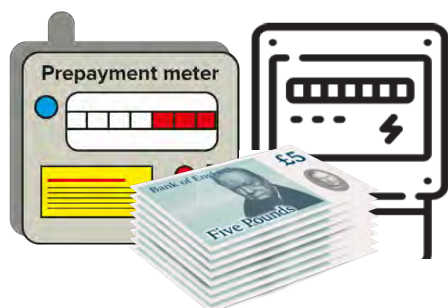


You might use more energy in the winter or if your house is old or not **energy efficient**.

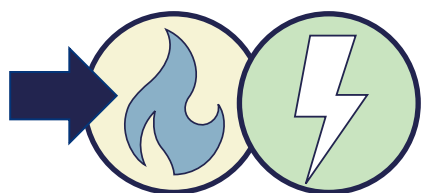


Energy efficient means using energy in the best way.

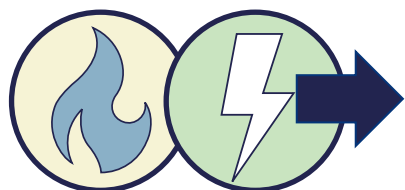
Prepayment or credit



You can pay for the energy you use with a **prepayment** or **credit** meter.



Prepayment means you pay for your energy before you use it.



Credit means you pay for your energy after you have used it. It means you get a bill for the energy you have used.



Prepayment

To use a prepayment meter, you need to top up online or go to certain shops to put money on your prepayment meter.



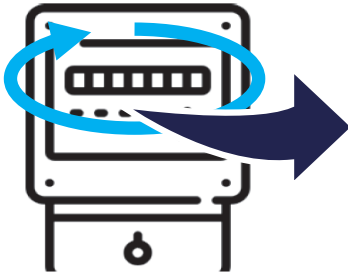
If you have no money on your prepayment meter or you cannot go to the shops, ask your supplier for **emergency credit**.



Emergency credit is money you can borrow from your supplier if you run out of money on your meter. It means your gas and electricity will stay on while you top up. You need to pay this back.

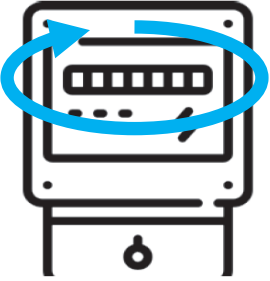


You can look at your prepayment meter or look online to see how much energy you are using.

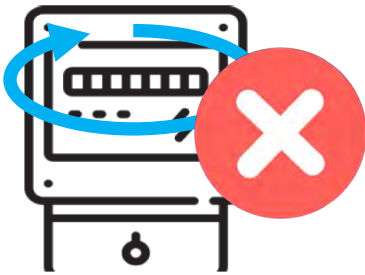


Credit

To use a credit meter, you need to send your energy supplier **meter readings**.



Meter readings are the numbers on gas and electricity meters that show how much energy has been used.



You do not need to send meter readings if you have a prepayment meter.



With a credit meter, you can pay for your energy

- by **Direct Debit** every month or
- when you get your energy bill, every 1 or 3 months.



Direct Debit is when the same amount of money leaves your bank account on the same date every month.



If you pay by Direct Debit, your energy supplier will guess how much energy you use in 1 year.



They will split the cost of your energy across 1 year, so you pay the same amount every month.



If you pay the same amount every month, your **account** might be **in credit** in summer when you use less energy.



Your **account** is what you set up with your energy supplier. It shows how much you pay for the energy you use.

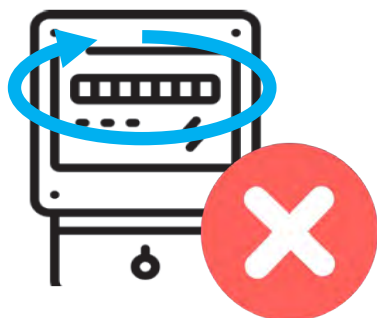


If your account is **in credit**, it means you have extra money in your account. It means you have paid for more energy than you have used.

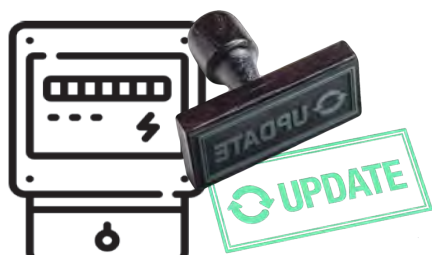
Cr

The word **credit** might be written as **Cr** on your energy bill.

Going smart



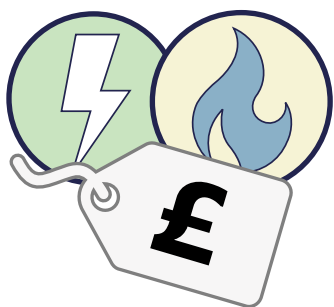
You do not need to send meter readings if you have a **smart meter**.



Smart meters are the latest type of gas and electricity meter.



Smart meters can come with an in-home display that you can use if you want to.



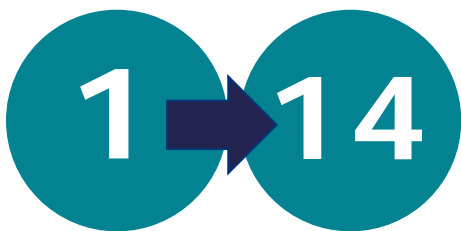
The in-home display can show how much money you are spending on energy in pounds and pence.

Page 1 of your energy bill



The next page shows what page 1 of your energy bill might look like. The picture we have used for our example is a gas bill.

It is much simpler than what your real energy bill looks like. You can ask for help to read your energy bill.



The picture shows numbers that go from 1 to 14. Each number is for a different part of the bill.



We tell you what each part of the bill means on the pages after the picture.

1Account number
123 123 1234 56**2**Gas
Meter point reference
123456789**3**Efficient Energy
0800 00 000
efficientenergy.co.uk
Mon-Fri 8am-8pm**5**

Bill Date: 20 November 2025

424-hour emergencies
Electricity 0800 00 001
Gas 0800 00 002**6**Mrs P Smith
1 Electric Avenue
Brighttown
BR0 0AA

Hello Mrs P Smith

Your gas bill**Could you pay less?****13****Over the next 12 months
Gas personal projection £2018.40**We think you will use this much gas after
looking at how much you used last year.**Our cheapest tariffs**

You are already on our cheapest tariff

14You should check what tariffs
other energy suppliers have**7**

For 20 October 2025 – 20 November 2025 (31 days)

8The balance on your latest bill **£112.36
in debt****9**You paid us
1 payment of £120.00 **£120.00
Credit****10**Your charges for this period
(including VAT at 5%) **£176.61****11****Your new account balance
£168.96
in debt****12****Your monthly payments are increasing**

1

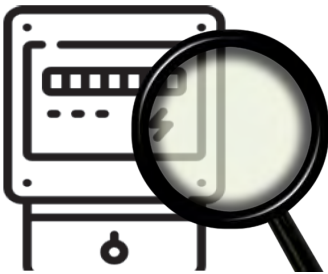


Account number

Your **account number** is a special number set up for you that helps your energy supplier know who you are if you contact them.

Your account number might also be called your **customer reference number**.

2



Meter Point Reference Number or Electricity Supply Number

A **Meter Point Reference Number**, or **MPRN** for short, is a special number given to every gas meter. An **Electricity Supply Number** is a special number given to every electricity meter.

3

Efficient Energy
0800 00 000
efficientenergy.co.uk
Mon-Fri 8am-8pm

Contact details

These are your energy supplier's phone number and email address.

4



Emergency contact details

Emergency contact details

are phone numbers you can use if you need to contact your energy supplier at an unusual time, like in the evening or during the weekend.

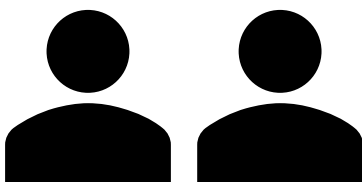
5



Date

This is the date your energy bill was sent by your energy supplier.

6



Your name and address

This is the name and address of the person who has the energy account.

You can have more than 1 person on an energy account.

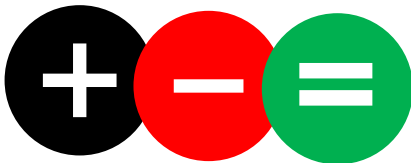
7



Billing period

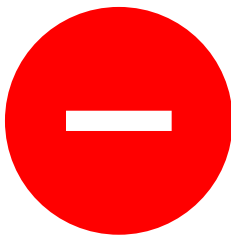
This shows your energy costs for the last month or few months.

8



Balance on your last bill

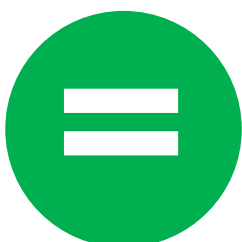
This shows how much money you had in your account from your last bill. You will have credit, **debit** or no money in your account.



If your account shows a **debit**, it means you owe money. It means you have used more energy than you have paid for.

Db

The word **debit** might be written as **Db** on your energy bill.



If you have no money in your account, it means you do not owe your supplier money.

9

Your last payment

This is the last payment you made to your energy supplier.



10

Total cost

This is the total amount of your energy costs for this billing period.



11

New account balance

This shows how much money is in your account now.



12

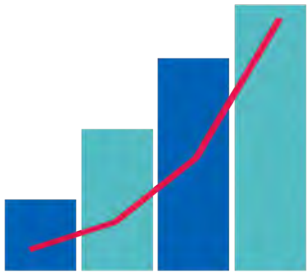


Your Direct Debit

If you pay by Direct Debit, your energy bill will tell you how much you pay each month.

Your energy supplier can ask you to pay more or less, so it matches how much energy you use.

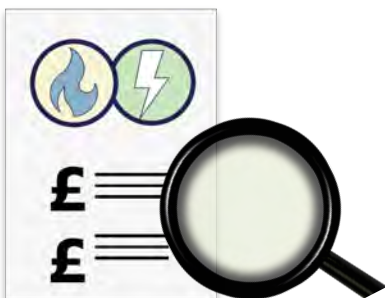
13



Personal projection

Your **personal projection** shows how much energy your energy supplier thinks you will use in a certain amount of time, usually in 1 year.

14

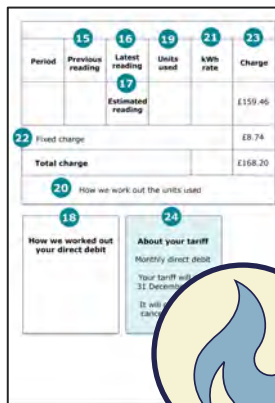


Cheaper tariffs

Your energy supplier must tell you if they have a cheaper tariff.

You should check what tariffs other energy suppliers have. You might have to pay to end the tariff you are on.

Page 2 of your energy bill



15	16	19	21	23
Period	Previous reading	Latest reading	Units used	Rate
		17 Estimated reading		£159.45
22	Fixed charge			£9.74
Total charge				£168.20
20 How we work out the units used				
18 How we worked out your direct debit				
24 About your tariff				



The next page shows what page 2 of your energy bill might look like. The picture we have used for our example is a gas bill.



It is much simpler than what your real energy bill looks like. The real energy bill has lots of numbers



The picture shows numbers that go from 15 to 25. Each number is for a different part of the bill.



We tell you what each part of the bill means on the pages after the picture.

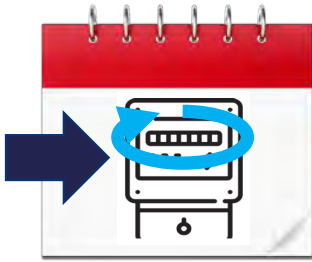
	15 Previous reading	16 Latest reading	19 Units used	21 kWh rate	23 Charge
		17 Estimated reading			£159.46
22 Fixed charge					£8.74
Total charge					£168.20
20 How we work out the units used					

18
How we worked out your direct debit

24
About your tariff
Monthly direct debit.
Your tariff will end 31 December 2025
It will cost £30 to cancel your tariff

25
Priority services register

15



Your previous reading

This is the meter reading you did at the start of this billing period.

16



Your latest reading

This is the last meter reading you did for this billing period.

17



Estimated reading

An **estimated reading** is when your energy supplier guesses how much energy you have used.

You will not get an estimated reading if you send your energy supplier meter readings, or you have a smart meter.

E

Your estimated reading might be written as **E** on your energy bill.

18



Information about Direct Debits

If you pay by Direct Debit, this part of your energy bill shows how your energy supplier works out the amounts you pay.

19

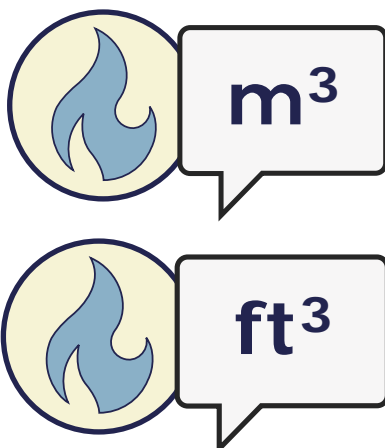


Units used

This shows how many **units** of gas you have used in the billing period.

Units are how energy is measured.

20



Units for gas meters

There are 2 systems gas meters can use to work out how many units of gas are used. They are called **metric** and **imperial**.

For a metric meter, gas is measured in a unit called **cubic meters**, or **m³** for short.

For an imperial meter, gas is measured in a unit called **cubic feet**, or **ft³** for short.

21



kWh rate

This shows how much you pay for energy.

The amount you pay is decided by if you are on a **fixed tariff** or a **standard tariff** with your energy supplier.

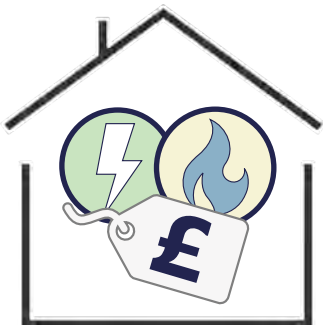


A **fixed tariff** means you pay a set amount that might be more or less than the price cap.



A **standard tariff** means the price you pay changes with the price cap.

22



Standing charge

A **standing charge** is an amount your energy supplier charges to provide energy to your home. It is different from the cost you pay for the energy you use.

23



Charge

This shows the amount you need to pay. It includes the cost of the energy you have used, your standing charge and **VAT**.

VAT is a type of tax people must pay when they buy certain things or use certain services.

24



About your tariff

This part of your bill tells you about your tariff.

25



Priority Services Register

You can ask to be on your energy supplier's **Priority Services Register**.

A **Priority Services Register**, or **PSR** for short, is a free service that lets energy suppliers know you might need extra help.

National Energy Action's Energy Advice and Support Service



Our **Energy Advice and Support Service** is a free service set up to help people with energy bill problems.



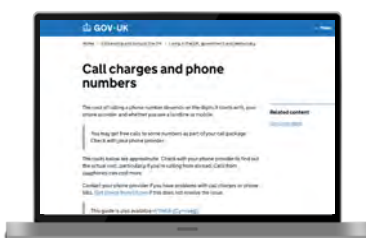
The service can give you advice about

- your energy bills
- how to keep warm in your home
- benefits you might be able to get.



To contact our Energy Advice and Support Service,

- call this number **0800 304 7159**
- or go to this website www.nea.org.uk/get-help.



Some calls might cost you. Go to this website to find out www.gov.uk/call-charges

About National Energy Action's website



You can

- read our website in more than 160 different languages
- ask our website to read the words aloud in more than 100 different languages
- change the way our website looks to make it easier to read if you have certain conditions, like ADHD and dyslexia, or if you have problems with your eyesight.

About this booklet



This booklet was written by National Energy Action in **April 2025**.



National Energy Action

Our website is www.nea.org.uk.

Our charity registration number is **290511**.

Thank you to A2i for the words
www.a2i.co.uk (reference **42592f**)