



# How to read your gas meter



**Easy read booklet**



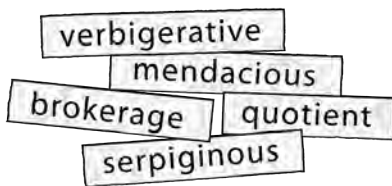
This is an Easy Read version of some information. It has words and pictures.



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.



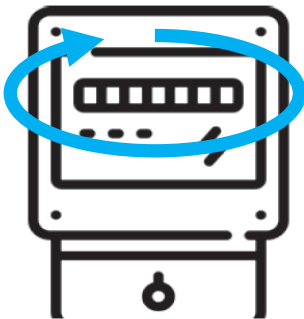
**Vulnerable** means people most likely to be affected by fuel poverty, like older people or people with disabilities.

# What this booklet tells you about

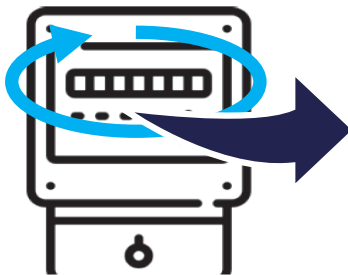


This booklet tells you how to read your gas meter. It tells you

- about different types of gas meters
- how to get **meter readings**
- how to **submit** meter readings to **energy suppliers**.



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



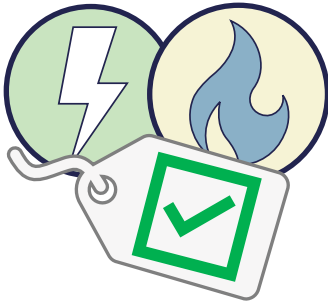
**Submit** means how meter readings are sent to energy suppliers.



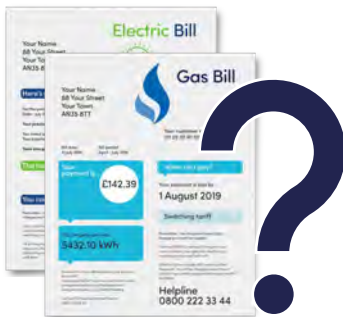
**Energy suppliers** are companies that provide gas and electricity. You pay your energy supplier for the gas and electricity you use.



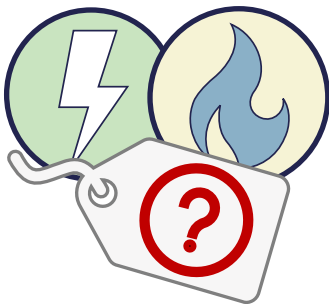
If your energy supplier has your meter reading, you will get an **actual bill**.



An **actual bill** shows the cost for the amount of energy you have used.



If your energy supplier does not have your meter reading, you will get an **estimated bill**.



An **estimated bill** is when your energy supplier guesses the amount of energy you have used.



When you get actual bills, it can make it easier to manage your money.



If you want advice about how to read your gas meter, contact your energy supplier.



## How gas is measured

There are 2 systems gas meters can use, called **metric** and **imperial**.



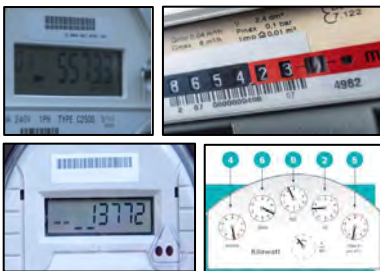
For a metric meter, gas is measured in a unit called **cubic meters**, or **m<sup>3</sup>** for short. A metric gas meter reading has **5 numbers**.



For an imperial meter, gas is measured in a unit called **cubic feet**, or **ft<sup>3</sup>** for short. An imperial gas meter reading has **4 numbers**.



Find out if your gas meter is metric or imperial before you take your meter readings.



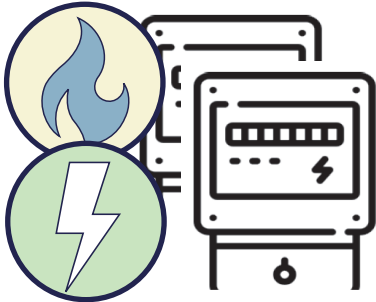
## Pictures of gas meters

In this booklet, there are pictures of gas meters.

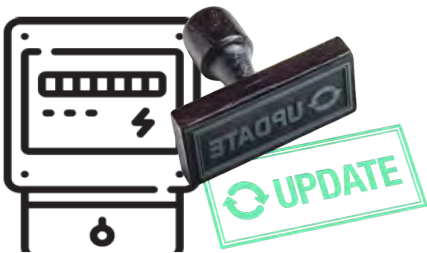


There are lots of styles of gas meter. This means the one you have might look a bit different.

# Types of gas meter



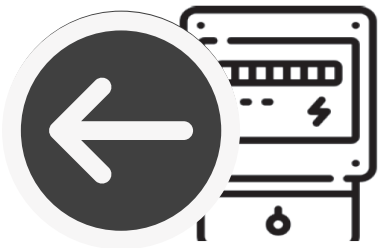
All gas and electricity meters are either **smart** or **traditional**.



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



We tell you more about smart meters on **pages 10 to 12** of this booklet.



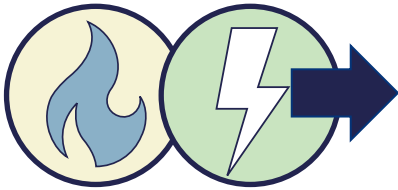
**Traditional** meters are the older type of gas and electricity meter.



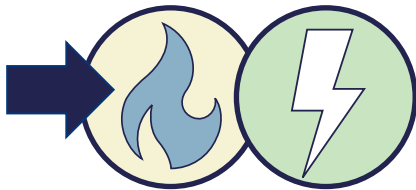
We tell you more about traditional meters on **pages 13 to 17** of this booklet.



Smart meters and traditional meters can work in 2 ways for payment, called **credit** and **prepayment**.



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

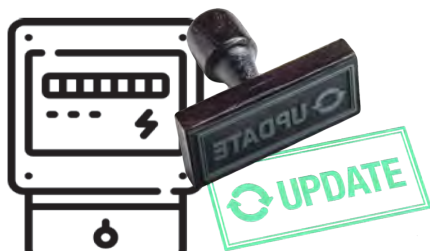


**Prepayment** means you pay for your energy before you use it.



We tell you more about prepayment meters on **pages 18 to 19** of this booklet.

# Smart meters



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

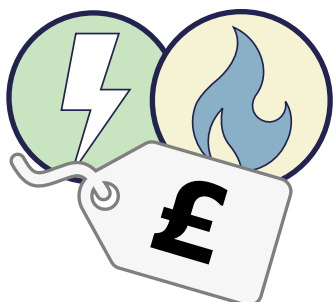


They tell your energy supplier how much energy you are using. This means you do not have to do this.



## In-home display

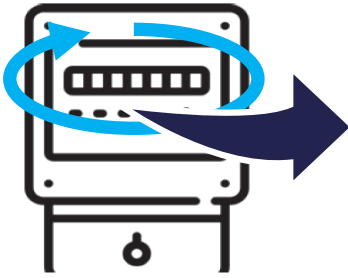
Smart meters can come with an in-home display that you can use if you want to.



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

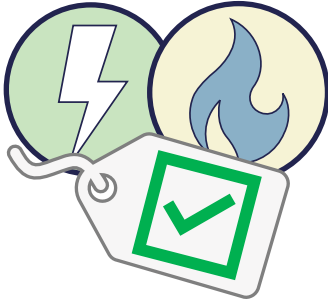


This can make it easier to see how much energy you are using.



## Meter readings

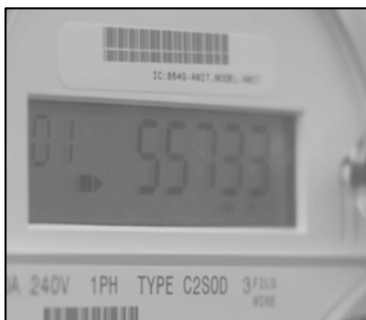
Smart meters send meter readings direct to energy suppliers.



This means you do not need to read your meter. It means you will always get actual bills.



You should not need to read your smart meter, but if you do, you can get the number from your smart meter or from the in-home display.



Gas smart meters are metric. This means meter readings are in  $m^3$  and have 5 numbers. This picture shows a meter reading of **55733**.



The in-home display will show

- the meter reading
- hourly costs
- daily costs.

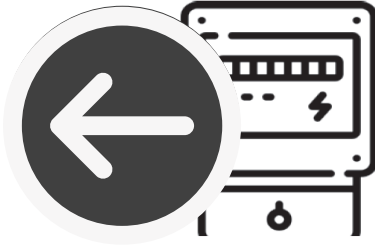


If you want to find out more about your smart meter and the in-home display, read the instructions that came with your smart meter.

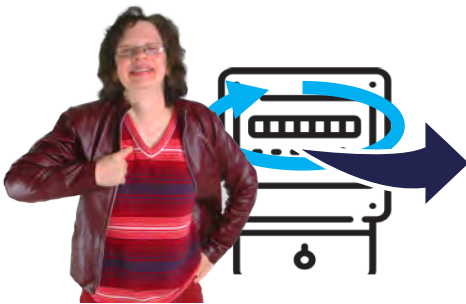


If you want to get a smart meter, contact your energy supplier.

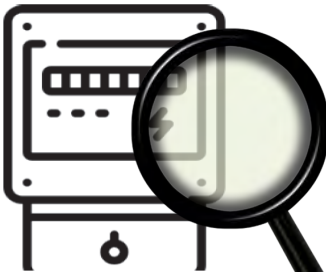
# Traditional meters



Traditional meters are the older type of gas and electricity meter.



If you have a traditional meter, you need to submit meter readings to your energy supplier.



We tell you about types of traditional gas meters in the next part of this booklet.



We tell you about

- analogue meters
- digital meters
- dial meters.



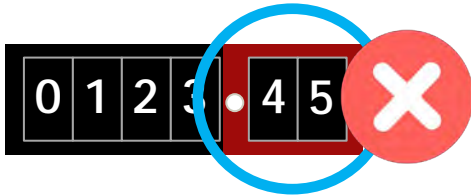
## Analogue meters

Analogue meters have dials that move round to show each number for your meter reading.



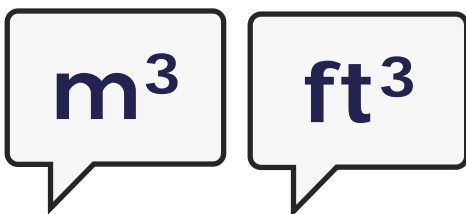
To read an analogue gas meter,

- write down the numbers from left to right
- include any zeros at the start
- do not include any numbers that come after the **decimal point** or that are shown in red.



2.5

**Decimal points** are dots that go between whole numbers and part numbers. For example, **two and a half** would be **2.5**.



Analogue gas meters can be metric or imperial.

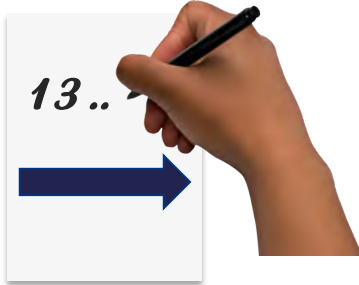


The gas meter in this picture is imperial. This means meter readings are in  $\text{ft}^3$  and have 4 numbers. This picture shows a meter reading of **8654**.



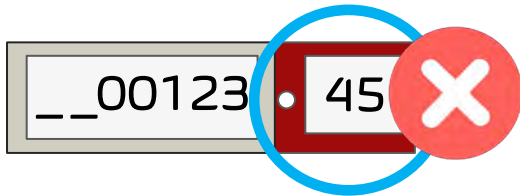
## Digital meters

Digital meters show an electronic number.

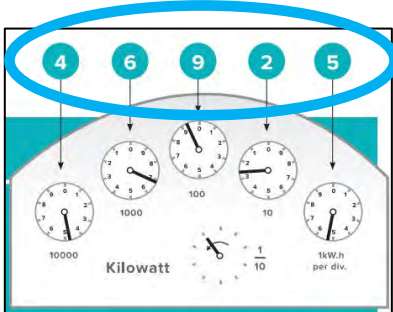
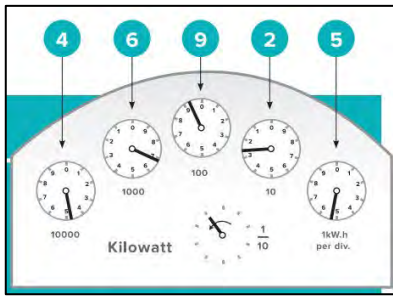


To read a digital gas meter,

- write down the numbers from left to right
- include any zeros at the start
- do not include any numbers that come after the decimal point or that are shown in red.



Digital gas meters are metric. This means meter readings are in  $\text{m}^3$  and have 5 numbers. This picture shows a meter reading of **13772**.

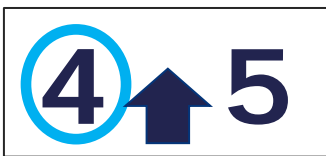


## Dial meters

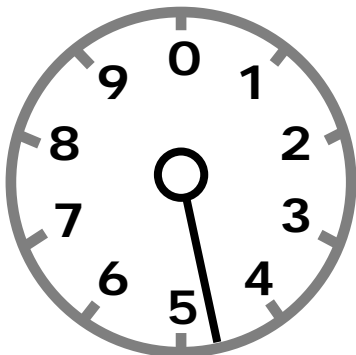
Dial meters show dials that look like clocks.

There are 5 dials. The dials go from 0 to 9.

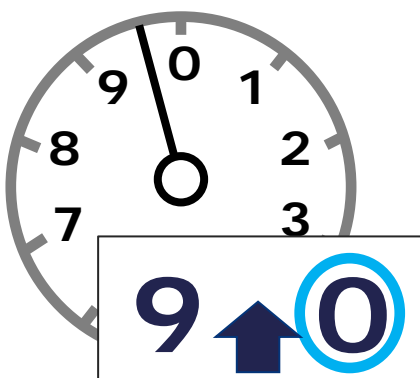
You take the number from each dial to get your meter reading.



**If the pointer is between 2 numbers**, write down the lower number. This might not be the number closest to the pointer.



In the picture, the pointer is between 4 and 5, so you should write down 4, even though the pointer is closer to 5.



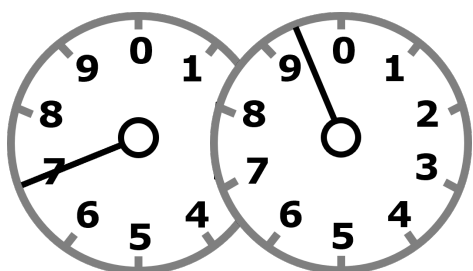
**If the pointer is between 9 and 0**, write down 9.



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



If the number that comes after an underlined number is 8 or 9, you must take 1 away from the underlined number.



In these pictures, the pointer on the first dial is exactly on 7 and the pointer on the second dial is on 9.

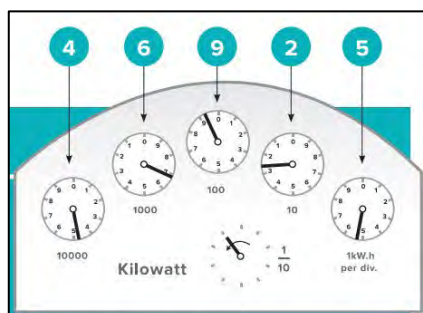


This means you must take 1 away from the 7 so the reading for these 2 dials is **69**.



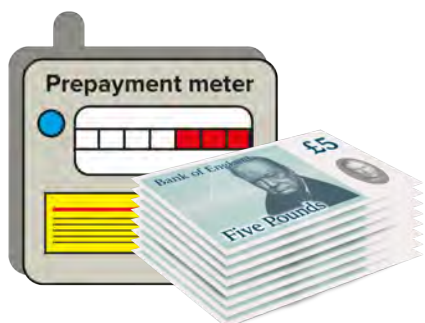
To read a dial gas meter,

- read the dials from left to right
- do not read the dial called  $\frac{1}{10}$ .



This picture shows a meter reading of **46925**.

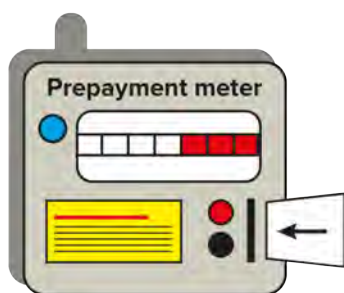
# Prepayment meters



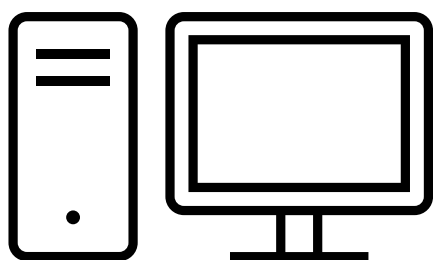
Prepayment means you pay to top up your energy before you use it.



If you have a smart prepayment meter or a traditional prepayment meter, you will have a card that you can use to top up your gas.

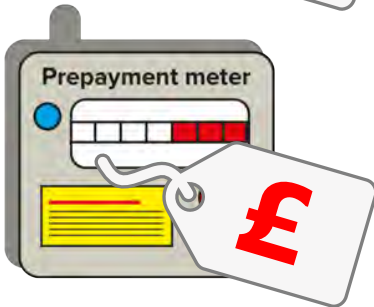
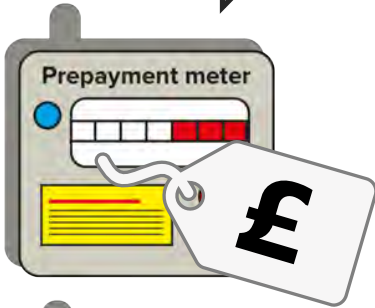
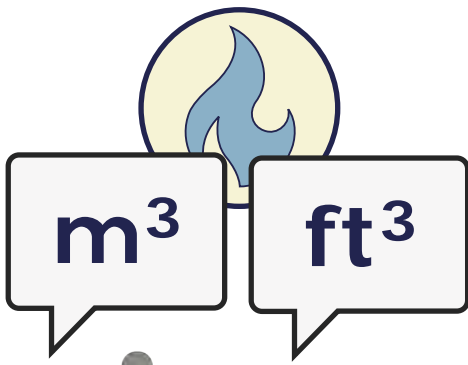


You can top up at Post Offices, or at shops that have PayPoint or PayZone. When you put the card into your meter, the top-up amount will be added.



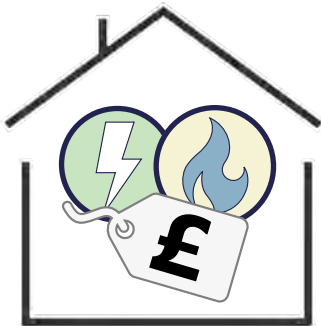
If you have a smart prepayment meter, you can also top up

- by phone
- online, using your energy supplier's app or website.



The display on prepayment meters can show

- units of energy you have used
- any **fixed charge** from your energy supplier
- how much you are charged for each unit of energy
- the amount you have topped up
- how much money you have left on your meter
- any debt you have
- any debt you have paid back
- any **emergency credit** you have left.



A **fixed 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.



**Emergency credit** is a type of credit you can borrow if you run out of money on your meter. It means your gas will stay on while you top up.

# Information about gas costs



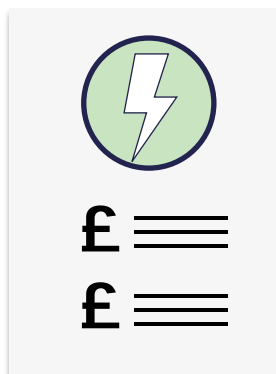
Every 3 months, **Ofgem** decide the highest cost energy suppliers can charge for a unit of gas. This is called the **price cap**.



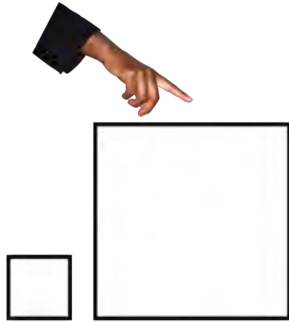
**Ofgem** is in charge of energy costs in Great Britain.



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



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



## Gas costs in winter

Electricity is about 4 times more expensive than gas.



This means it can be cheaper to use gas central heating than plug-in electric heaters when it is cold.



This means you use more gas in winter.

# 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](http://www.nea.org.uk/get-help).

# 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](http://www.nea.org.uk).

Our charity registration number is **290511**.

Thank you to A2i for the words  
[www.a2i.co.uk](http://www.a2i.co.uk) (reference **42592e**)