



Smart Meter

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

Is smart meter installation compulsory?

Having a smart meter installed is your choice. Some energy providers offer cheaper deals only available to smart meter customers. If your traditional meter starts to give unusually high readings, it might be faulty and will need replacing with a smart meter.

Can you switch energy provider?

New generation smart meters will work with any energy provider so you can switch to get a cheaper deal. Digital readings are re-directed to your new energy company. Check before meter is installed.

Who pays for installation and repairs?

Your energy provider pays for installation, and is responsible for cost of repair or replacement should smart meter becomes faulty. Some energy providers add repair or replacement cost to customer bills. Seek advice if this happens.

Can I trust smart meter readings?

Some early generation smart meters, and meters that become faulty, don't send readings to energy provider which results in high estimated bills. TOP TIP: Take a photo of your smart meter readings on a regular basis as evidence in case you need to challenge a bill.

Can a smart meter save you money?

- Smart meter readings are automatically sent digitally to energy provider. People who have difficulty reading meters regularly can avoid high estimated bills by having a smart meter.
- A smart meter can be set up as prepayment meter on request. This can help to budget if living week to week, but consider that energy unit price is higher with prepayment. Any credit on your energy account will be added to prepayment top-up. For convenience, prepayment meters can be topped up digitally with an app.
- Smart meters are promoted to help households reduce energy usage. But a smart meter can't identify how much you are spending on individual appliances such as oven or washing machine. Following energy-saving advice and tips is a better way of reducing energy usage without compromising health and wellbeing.

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)

Article by Cost of Living, People Participation Team



Visit <https://www.elft.nhs.uk/service-users-and-carers/cost-living> for more tips and advice on how to save on your household bills.