



Worried about... rising costs?

Understanding your energy bills

We've got the information you need to understand your energy bills.

Whether you've just received your first ever energy bill, moved to a new supplier or just want to stay on top of your payments, check out our bill breakdown below which covers everything you need to know about your energy bills.

No matter which energy supplier you're with, the following information will be on your bill, even if the bills look different — and your costs for gas and electricity will be separated out even if you receive one bill.

The key things you need to know

- 1. Bill number and account number** - if you have any questions or issues you need to talk to your energy supplier about, it's easier if you have these details. The bill number lets your supplier know exactly what bill you are contacting them about.
- 2. Your bill period** - this will tell you the period of time you're being charged for on the bill, for example the past month or 3 months, as well as when your meter readings were taken. This information lets you check if you're being billed for the correct length of time - especially if you're moving into or out of a house.
- 3. When your payments are due** - there are various ways you can pay your bills, including direct debit, standing order, etc. If you're paying by direct debit then you should be able to change your payment date by getting in touch with your supplier.
- 4. Tariff information** - your tariff information gives you an overview of how much you will be charged per unit of gas and electricity used (gas and electricity are both measured in kilowatt per hour), as well as your daily standing charges.
- 5. Standing charges** - as well as paying for the gas and electricity you use, you pay a daily fee for being connected. This is called a standing charge, and is added to your bill even if you have not used any gas or electricity.
- 6. Your usage** - if you or your smart meter are not sending your energy supplier regular meter readings, then they will bill you based on estimated usage. This could be more or less than you're actually using, which could result in you needing to pay extra when you move out and pay your final balance.
- 7. Amount due** - this is worked out using your usage and tariff information, giving a final cost for all the energy you used in this bill period.

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8. Account balance - this section highlights your previous payments, as well as if you still owe your energy supplier any money. If you pay by direct debit, it's normal to have a negative balance over the winter and a positive balance over the summer due to changing energy needs, but over the year this should balance out.

9. Tariff end date - you can use this information to know when your current energy rates will come to an end, as well as if there are any exit fees, and so when you might want to start doing research into other energy suppliers or tariffs.

We're here for you if you need us. You can find all of our advice on our website, and we've also got tips for you if you're moving into a new house or will be splitting your energy bills with housemates.

'Top Tips' to lower your energy costs

Take control of your heating - install a room thermostat, a programmer and thermostatic radiator valves and use these controls efficiently could save you around £85 a year.

Don't 'Standby' - by turning equipment off instead of leaving it on standby mode, you could save as much as £40 a year.

Keep Radiators Clear - if you have the space, try and avoid putting a sofa in front of the radiator as this blocks the heat to the room.

Smarter Showers - spending one minute less in the shower each day will save up to £5 a year off your energy bills, per person. With a water meter this could save a further £7 off annual water and sewerage bills.

Only Boil What You Need - get into the habit of only boiling as much water as you need. Keeping the kettle full can be costly.

Turn off lights - many washing machines work just as efficiently at 30 degrees as they do when running on high temperatures.

Replace Your Lightbulbs - if you still use old fashioned lightbulbs, don't wait for them to blow. Buy energy efficient replacements and start saving now. These bulbs can save you £45 over their lifetime.

Draught-proofing - unless your home is very new, you will lose some heat through draughts around doors and windows, gaps around the floor, or through your chimney. Draft proofing your home could save around £20 a year.

Careful in your kitchen - you can save around £28 a year from your energy bill just by using your kitchen appliances more carefully; cutting back your dishwasher and washing use to one cycle per week you save you £20 a year.

Wash at 30 - save around £34 a year by using your washing machine more carefully. Wash at 30 and reduce your washing machine use by one run a week.

Ditch the tumble dryer - Dry clothes on racks inside a well-ventilated room, or outside in warmer weather to save around £70 a year.



If you find yourself in a crisis situation and you are unable to top up your prepayment meter please contact your supplier in the first instance to see what support they can offer. Contact your local Citizens Advice or you may also be able to get a fuel voucher from your local council.

Carbon Monoxide and Gas Safety

What is carbon Monoxide?

Carbon Monoxide is a colorless, odorless, tasteless, poisonous gas produced by incomplete burning of carbon-based fuels (including gas, oil, wood, petrol and coal).

Because you can't see it, taste it, smell it, it is highly dangerous and in certain conditions can kill quickly without warning.

Follow these simple tips to stay safe:

- Have your gas appliances checked every year by a Gas Safe registered engineer.
- Check for warning signs on or around gas appliances (like soot or staining, increased condensation, floppy yellow flames, the boiler pilot light keeps going out).
- Don't DIY or use an illegal gas worker. If they're not on the Gas Safe Register, they're working illegally and could be putting you at risk.
- Carbon monoxide is a highly poisonous gas that you cannot see, smell or taste. Fit an audible CO alarm marked EN50291 to alert you if it's present.
- Know the signs on CO poisoning seek help immediately if you're experiencing headaches, dizziness, nausea, breathlessness, collapse and loss of consciousness.

Follow these 6 steps if you smell gas:

- Do open windows and doors to help ventilate the gas.
- Do turn off the gas supply at the meter and make sure any gas appliances are turned off.
- Do call the National Gas emergency Number on 0800 111 999. Lines are open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.
- Don't smoke or use any naked flames.
- Don't touch any electrical switches. Turning a switch on or or could ignite a gas leak.
- Don't enter a cellar if you smell gas, even if your gas meter is located in the cellar.



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Citizens Advice Copeland **01946 693321**

Citizens Advice Allerdale **01900 604735**

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