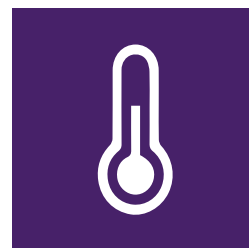
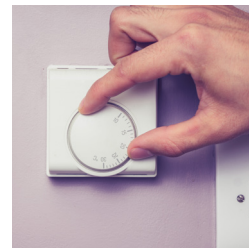
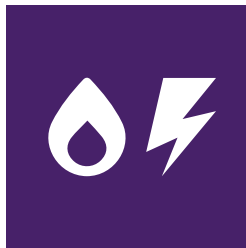
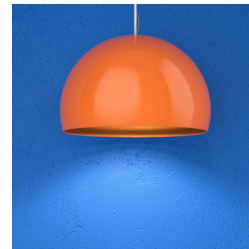




Making a positive difference
for energy consumers



How to save money and use less energy

About this leaflet



This information leaflet is about how you can manage your energy. It shows how you can get support to reduce your costs and what you can do to save energy.



You may like to have someone with you when you look at this leaflet.

Talking to your supplier

Make sure you are on the best tariff

I'd like more detail

About your tariff

This information will help you to compare your current tariff with others available.

Your electricity tariff

Tariff name

Payment method

End date

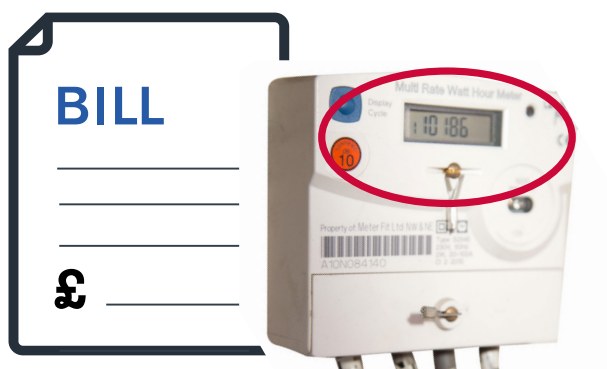
Exit fee (if you switch supplier before end date)



Tariffs are what energy suppliers charge you for gas and electricity.

Talk to your supplier or look at their website to see what tariffs they have available and if you can pay less.

You may want to ask someone to help you do this.



It's useful to have some meter readings, if possible, as well as your latest bill.

This is so your energy supplier knows how much energy you are using, and how much it is costing you.



If you pay for energy using a prepayment meter or by standard credit, ask your supplier to change your payment method to Direct Debit if you can. This can help reduce your tariff.

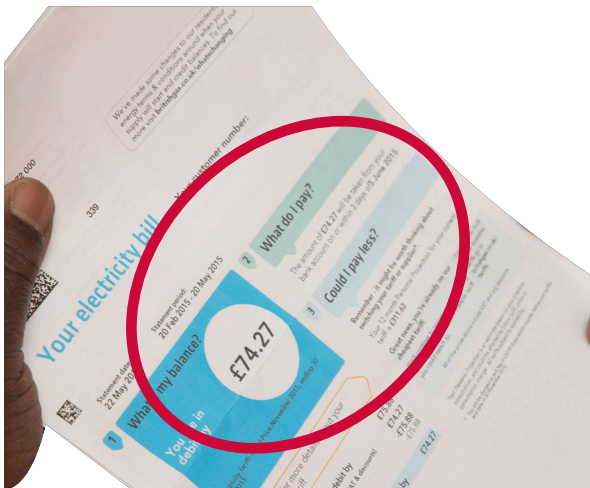


You can also use a price comparison website to see if another supplier can offer you a better tariff.

View a list of comparison services we have approved on our website at [ofgem.gov.uk/confidence-code](https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/confidence-code).

You may want to ask someone to help you do this.

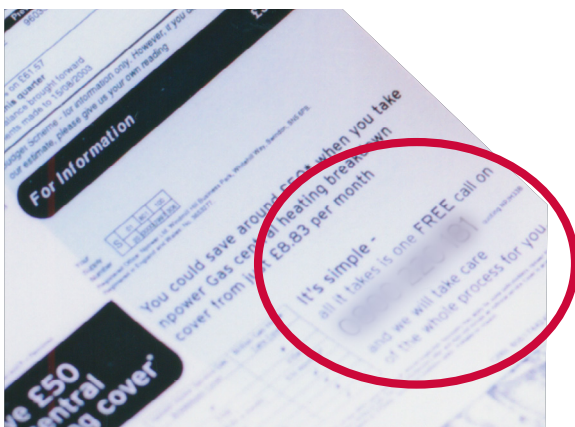
Your energy bill must include information about your supplier's cheapest tariff personal to you and how much you could save. The bill will also give you estimated costs for the next year.



If you give your supplier regular meter readings you will get accurate bills instead of estimates. This means you won't pay more than what you have actually used.



If you are struggling



If you are struggling to pay for your gas and electricity bills or if you get into debt, you should contact your supplier to find out what help they can give you.

Your supplier can:

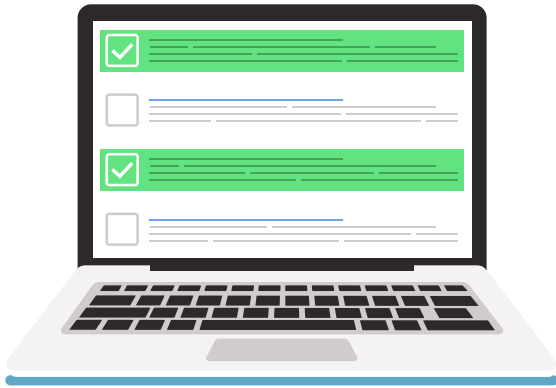
- work with you to agree a regular payment plan (for example every week or month). This can help chunk out your bills so they are more affordable for you.
- put your name on a list of customers who need extra help or support.
- suggest schemes and grants to help with money you may owe them. See **[gov.uk/energy-grants-calculator](https://www.gov.uk/energy-grants-calculator)**

Check your gas or electricity bill for your supplier's contact details.

If you don't know who your supplier is see **[ofgem.gov.uk/find-my-supplier](https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/find-my-supplier)**.

You may want to ask someone to help you do this.

Switching tariff or supplier



There are many energy suppliers who can offer different tariffs and services that suit you.

If you compare tariffs often you can make sure you're getting the best deal.



Doing this can also show if you could pay less by switching to something different.

How to switch



You can phone different energy suppliers or use a price comparison website to find a better tariff or supplier.

A list of Ofgem approved online comparison services are available at [ofgem.gov.uk/confidence-code](https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/confidence-code).

You may want to ask someone to help you do this.

Citizens Advice also publish information on suppliers and have a comparison tool. See energycompare.citizensadvice.org.uk.

It can take up to 21 days to switch and you have 14 days to cancel a contract if you change your mind. Some suppliers also offer a switching guarantee service. Find out more at energyswitchguarantee.com.

What you'll need



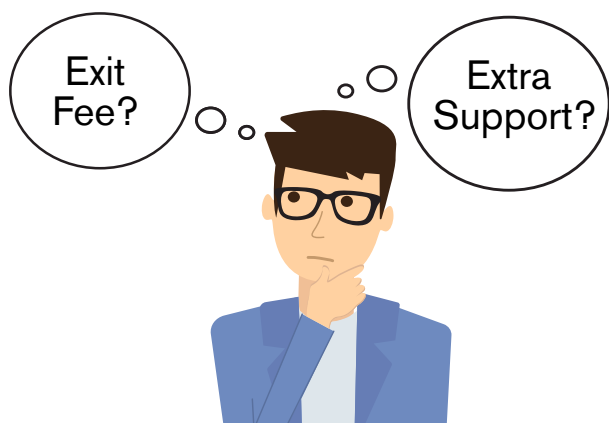
Switching is simple, speedy and safe. It is helpful to have to hand:

- the name of your current energy tariff and energy supplier
- how much you spend on gas and electricity.



Before you switch, you should also check if:

- you could be charged an exit fee from your current contract.
- your chosen new tariff or supplier could charge an exit fee if you choose to leave the contract early.
- you are receiving extra support like the Warm Home Discount or the Priority Services Register, that your new supplier is part of these schemes (see page 14).



Repaying a debt and switching



If you've been in debt to your supplier for less than 28 days you can still switch. Any money you owe will be added to your final bill from your old supplier.



If you've been in debt to your supplier for over 28 days, you'll need to arrange to repay the debt first.



If it's your supplier's fault you're in debt, they can't stop you from switching.

Saving energy

Make your home more efficient



Home improvements such as better insulation can reduce your energy bills. To see what a difference they can make, visit energysavingtrust.org.uk/resources/tools-calculators.

Then look into government initiatives (see page 14) that may be able to help pay for home improvements:

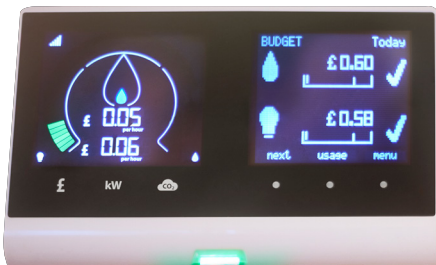
- In England, Wales and Scotland, the Energy Companies Obligation (ECO) and the Green Deal.
- In Wales, Nest.
- In Scotland, the Home Energy Efficiency Programme Scotland (HEEPS).

See gov.uk/energy-grants-calculator.

For Wales, call **0808 808 2244**. In Scotland, call **0808 808 2282**.

You may want to ask someone to help you do this.

Smart meters



Smart meters are new gas and electricity meters which will replace older, traditional meters in our homes. They:

- have a display screen for your home which can help you track how much energy you are using. This also shows costs in pounds and pence.
- take regular readings and share these automatically with your energy supplier, meaning you don't have to do this manually. This ensures you get accurate bills instead of estimates.

These things could help you save money on your bill.

Every home in England, Scotland and Wales is being offered a smart meter for free. For more information, contact your energy supplier.

You may want to ask someone to help you do this.



General tips

Follow these tips to avoid wasting energy.
Doing so could help reduce your energy costs.



Use a timer on your central heating system. Set heating and hot water to come on only when required.



Close your curtains at dusk to stop heat escaping through the windows. Check for draughts, too. And seal gaps around doors with draft excluders.



When washing up, and washing or drying by machine, try to fully load the appliance. One full load uses less energy than two half loads



If you have a hot water tank, set the cylinder thermostat to 60°C (140°F).



Don't leave appliances on standby or laptops and mobile phones on charge unnecessarily.



Always turn off the light when you leave a room.



Turn taps off properly – in a single week, a dripping hot tap can waste enough hot water to fill half a bath.



If using a kettle, only boil the water you need.



Dry your clothes outside during nice weather.



Use energy-saving light bulbs.

Schemes, grants and price caps



Warm Home Discount scheme

Some energy suppliers offer money back and help to people who are elderly, disabled, have severe health problems or are on a low income.

Call your supplier to see if you qualify or visit **[gov.uk/the-warm-home-discount-scheme](https://www.gov.uk/the-warm-home-discount-scheme)**.

You may want to ask someone to help you do this.



Department
for Work &
Pensions



Winter Fuel Payment scheme

You could get between £100 and £300 to help pay your heating bills if you were born on or before 5 November 1953. This is the Winter Fuel Payment.

You usually get a Winter Fuel Payment automatically if you get the State Pension or another social security benefit (not Housing Benefit, Council Tax Reduction or Child Benefit).

If you qualify but don't get paid automatically, you'll need to make a claim.

Check whether you qualify by calling **0800 731 0160** or visiting **www2.dwp.gov.uk/tps-directgov/en/contact-tps/winterfuel.asp**

You may want to ask someone to help you do this.



Priority Services Register



Priority Services Register

If you have particular care needs (e.g. if you are elderly or have health and disability needs), your supplier can put you on a Priority Services Register.

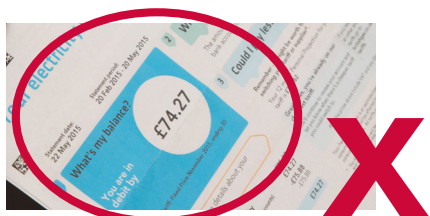
Being on this list gives you access to free, extra services including priority support if your power supply stops working, for meter reading and custom communications.

Contact your energy supplier for more information.

You may want to ask someone to help you do this.

Energy grants

You can find out what government grants and payments are available to help you manage your energy costs through the UK government grants calculator. See **[gov.uk/energy-grants-calculator](https://www.gov.uk/energy-grants-calculator)**.



Price caps

Ofgem, Great Britain's energy regulator, and the UK government have introduced price caps to protect consumers, particularly more vulnerable people.

They found the energy market is not working for everybody. People who have not switched tariff or energy supplier are paying unfair prices.

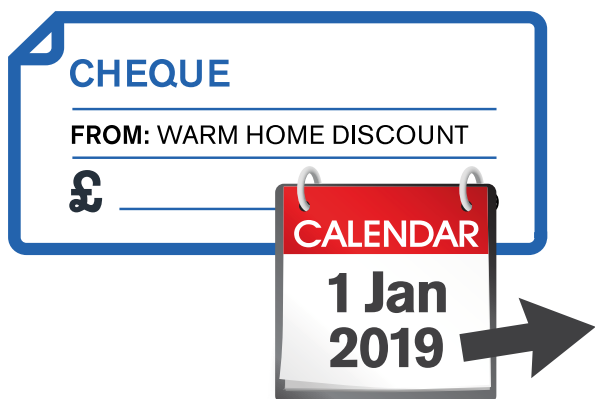
Energy price caps limit how much suppliers can charge you per unit of gas or electricity.

They are based on the costs that Ofgem calculates suppliers need to spend to get energy to your home.

Through the price caps, Ofgem aims to ensure consumers pay a fairer price for their energy and are protected from being overcharged by suppliers.

Price caps don't limit your total bill. This will vary depending on how much energy you use.

For example, you might use more energy in winter so your bill will be bigger.



You could be protected by:

- a **'prepayment' price cap** (sometimes called a 'safeguard tariff'). This applies if you use a prepayment meter to pay for your energy.
- a **'default tariff' price cap**. This applies if you are on a 'standard variable' energy tariff or a tariff you haven't chosen (a 'default' tariff). This cap started on 1 January 2019.

If you get the government's Warm Home Discount and are on a 'standard variable' or 'default' tariff, you were protected by the prepayment price cap until the end of 2018. This protection transferred to the default tariff price cap on 1 January 2019.

I'd like more detail

About your tariff

This information will help you to compare your current tariff with others available.

Your electricity tariff

Tariff name

Payment method

End date

Exit fee (if you switch supplier before end date)

Based on your actual usage to date

2498.00 kWh



Your prices will not be protected by the caps if you have chosen to be on a fixed-term energy tariff.



These tariffs are more likely to be good value.

I'd like more detail

About your tariff

This information will help you to compare your current tariff with others available.

Your electricity tariff

Tariff name

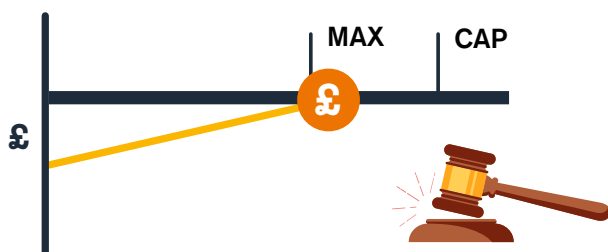
Payment method

End date

Exit fee (if you switch supplier before end date)

Based on your actual usage to date

2498.00 kWh



DISADVANTAGE

NOT AVAILABLE

Tariffs are what energy suppliers charge you for gas and electricity.

A 'default' or 'standard variable' tariff is a basic energy tariff from your supplier. They tend to apply if you haven't shopped around for a better deal. They are often poor value and more expensive than a non-default, fixed-term deal, which you can choose to switch to.

You could be put on a default tariff if your fixed-term contract ends and you've not shopped around to choose a new one.

Fixed-term contracts can mean the price you pay for each unit of energy you use for a year or more can't change. You have to renew fixed-term contracts.

You don't need to do anything to be price protected – your supplier must apply the caps.

Your supplier can tell you if your energy tariff is covered by a price cap. They must also write to tell you if your tariff is changed in a way that could disadvantage you, or if the tariff you are on is no longer available.



Even if you are covered by a price cap, you should still shop around to see if you can save more money by switching to a different tariff or supplier.

You may want to ask someone to help you do this.

It is likely gas and electricity suppliers will be able to offer different tariffs that could save you even more money than staying on an energy contract covered by the price caps.

Your supplier can tell you about ways they can give information for disabled people.

Other help

Local charities and advice centres may be able to give grants to people who need help with their energy costs. Contact your local council for more details. Visit [gov.uk/find-local-council](https://www.gov.uk/find-local-council).

You may want to ask someone to help you do this.



Further information and support

The following organisations can help you with more information. You may want to ask someone to help you contact them.



Consumer support

Citizens Advice

For general help on consumer issues including energy, debt and legal information.

www.citizensadvice.org.uk

Tel: 03454 404 0506

Ombudsman Services: Energy (England, Scotland and Wales)

If you can't settle a dispute with a supplier.

www.ombudsman-services.org/energy

Tel: 0330 440 1624

Scope UK


Provides information and advice for disabled people.

www.scope.org.uk

Tel: 0808 800 3333



SCOPE

 Equality for
disabled people



**energy
saving
trust**

Age UK

Provides information and advice for older people.

www.ageuk.org.uk/

Tel: 0800 055 6112

Energy saving

Energy Saving Trust

Provides free advice on home heating and energy efficiency in the UK.

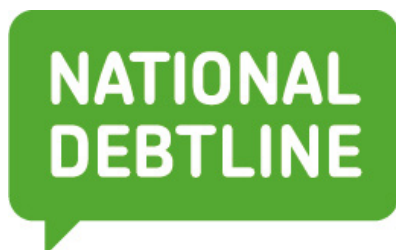
www.energysavingtrust.org.uk



Department
for Work &
Pensions



the **Money**
Advice Service



Financial support

Department for Work and Pensions

For information on benefits and how to apply.

www.gov.uk/browse/benefits

Money Advice Service

For information and tools to help you manage money and debt.

www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk

National Debtline

Free debt advice, tools and tips.

www.nationaldebtline.org/

You can find out more about managing your energy costs and get this leaflet in different formats on the website ofgem.gov.uk/energy-support.

v1.2

This leaflet was written by people at Ofgem. They are the energy regulator in Great Britain. Information correct at December 2018.

www.ofgem.gov.uk