

# How to change your meter for free

A guide to help you change  
your electricity and gas  
pre-payment meter to a credit  
meter

The Home Energy Team is a free and impartial energy advice service brought to you by the Centre for Sustainable Energy.

0800 082 2234

[home.energy@cse.org.uk](mailto:home.energy@cse.org.uk)

Visit our website for information and advice

[www.cse.org.uk/loveyourhome](http://www.cse.org.uk/loveyourhome)



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# How to change your meter

This simple guide is designed to help you change your pre-payment electricity and gas meter to a credit meter.

Firstly check the following:

- Yes, I pay my own bills
- I have no, or minimal fuel debt
- My other debts (if any) are well managed
- I am happy with monthly budgeting
- I have a bank account

If you are unsure about any of the above steps please refer to our guide ***Lower bills and better budgeting*** and contact the Home Energy Team for further advice.

Visit [www.cse.org.uk/meters](http://www.cse.org.uk/meters)

If you have met all of the above steps turn over and follow our simple 3 step guide to changing your pre-payment meter to a credit meter.

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# First step

See the enclosed supplier list for details of costs and credit checks. Visit [cse.org.uk/meters](http://cse.org.uk/meters) to download a copy.



The colours here match the supplier sheet

Some suppliers may claim to charge but will actually remove them for free if you or someone in your home is elderly or disabled, so if you think this applies to you it is worth calling them to ask.

## Supplier charges to change the meter

If your current supplier will not remove your meter for free you will need to change to a supplier that doesn't charge.

You can switch to this supplier either by contacting them directly or using a comparison website – please refer to the enclosed supplier list or download a copy at [cse.org.uk/meters](http://cse.org.uk/meters)

Changing supplier should take about 5 weeks. Once your account is set up, you will be able to request a meter exchange after about 3 weeks.

## Free to change meter, credit check required

Some suppliers will not charge to have a meter removed but will carry out a credit check before doing so. If you fail the

credit check the supplier may refuse to remove it or might ask for a deposit which will be refundable after 6-12 months (provided your payments are up to date).

Free to change meter, no credit check required



Now you can change your meter

Call through to your supplier - refer to the enclosed supplier sheet. They should be able to book you in for a meter exchange within a few weeks.

You are usually put onto a standard tariff or a standard variable tariff where you pay on receipt of your bill. After 3-4 weeks of the new meter being installed, you should be able to change tariff/set up a direct debit. Here are some tips to help lower your bill:

- Request dual fuel (both gas and electricity with the same company) as this is usually cheaper
- Pay by direct debit
- Use paperless billing
- Look at finding a cheaper tariff

If you need any further help, contact the Home Energy Team on **0800 082 2234** and ask to speak to a member of the pre-payment team.

# Second step

Here are a few pointers to help minimise any problems with the new credit meter.

## 1 Monitor your energy use

Your direct debit payment has been calculated based on your energy consumption as a prepayment meter customer, so if you end up using more fuel than you were previously, you may receive a bill for the outstanding amount or your monthly payments will go up. Try and take regular monthly meter readings and compare how much you use every month. Using an energy monitor can help you see how much electricity you are using in the home at any one time. These monitors can be provided by the fuel suppliers or can be borrowed from your local library.

## 2 Check your direct debit

If your energy supplier has increased direct debit payments but you don't feel that your usage has increased, please contact them as they may have put them up automatically, if this is the case you may be able to negotiate a reduced monthly direct debit amount.

## 3 Review your payments

Are your direct debits too high or too low? If your account is in credit, you should ask to have this refunded and your direct debit payments reviewed and reduced. The timing of this should be at the end of the winter period – around

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March/April time. Your direct debit payments take your total energy consumption for the year and divide it by 12. This means that in summer you are using less energy than you are paying for but this balances out in winter when you are using more.

#### 4 Do you owe any money?

If you owe your fuel supplier money at the end of the year please contact them straight away to negotiate how you can catch up with the payments, they tend to be much more flexible if you show that you are trying to do something about it, rather than letting the debt build up.

#### 5 Compare tariffs

Once a year it is always worth checking that you are on the cheapest tariff or with the cheapest supplier. If you are on a fixed tariff you usually have to wait for the fixed period to end before you can change fuel tariffs or suppliers. Visit our independent switching site to check for cheaper companies you can change to: [cse-switch.org.uk](http://cse-switch.org.uk)

## Third step

You've successfully changed your meter. Find out how to read your meter, understand your bills and other useful advice at [www.cse.org.uk/meters](http://www.cse.org.uk/meters)

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