

What is a Smart Meter?

A smart meter replaces old gas and electricity meters that are usually kept under the stairs or on the outside wall of a property.

A smart meter's only function is to automatically send meter readings to your supplier.



Myth Busting

Smart meters don't store any of your information. They only send your meter readings along with their own serial number that your supplier can then link to your account.

Old smart meters (Gen 1) run on mobile signal, but newer smart meters (Gen 2) run on their own encrypted signal.

Smart meters do not use your Wi-Fi. Smart meters don't run on your electricity. They are completely free to use.



In-Home Display Unit

This is **not** a smart meter. This is an in-home display unit and works as an accessory to your smart meter.

This can be used to view your current energy usage, or break it down by day, week, month or year.

Some people enjoy being able to view their current energy usage, as it makes them more aware of what they are using and reminds them to switch things off.

Some people feel anxious when they see their current energy usage and feel like they need to reduce their usage beyond a reasonable level due to the display showing a high usage.

If you do not find the in-home display useful, then you can unplug it. Your smart meter will still work without the in-home display.

How much energy does my in-home display use?

Your in-home display does use your electricity when it's plugged in. It uses about 1kWh of electricity per year. This will cost around 2p per month.

Why does my supplier want meter readings?

Your electricity and gas meter (smart or not) has a series of numbers on it that tells you how many units of energy you used.

Each unit of energy that you use, costs a certain amount. E.g. 1 unit of electricity might cost 24p and 1 unit of gas might cost 6p.

To make sure that your supplier charges you the correct amount, they need to know how much energy you've used.

It is recommended that you tell your supplier your meter readings every month. You can do this by phoning your supplier directly, or by submitting the reading through an online account.

If you have a smart meter, then you don't need to submit meter readings because your meter has already sent them to your supplier.

If your supplier does not receive meter readings, then they will guess how much energy you've used and charge you an estimated amount.

Estimated bills can be dangerous because your supplier could overcharge you or undercharge you.

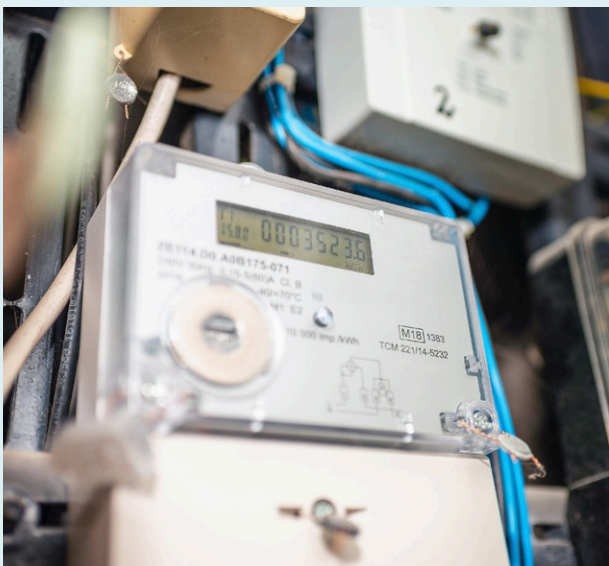
E.g. You used £50 of energy but your supplier charges you £200 OR you used £200 but your supplier charges you £50 and then you end up in debt.



Should I get one?

Suppliers will install smart meters for free. The engineer will usually turn your power off for around 30 minutes. If the engineer encounters a problem, then they will discuss it with you.

If your current meter is in a hard to reach area, then having a smart meter will mean that you don't need to access it every month.



If you get a smart meter installed but then change your mind, then your supplier can just turn it off. This is called putting it into “dumb” mode, so it'll work just like a standard meter where you read the numbers yourself.

You can read the numbers on your meter manually to compare with the smart meter readings on your bill, if you want to double check the accuracy.

Most smart meters send meter readings every 30 minutes, which means that users can often qualify for time-of-use tariffs. This means having cheaper energy at certain times of the day and night.