

Smart meters: the misconceptions

Here is some information to help you understand the facts about smart meters and answer some of the questions you might have.

I don't see the point of smart meters. What are the benefits for me?

Smart meters have lots of benefits for people who rent their home. We know that people with smart meters have a better idea of how much energy they're using and what it costs.

They provide accurate, automatic meter readings which mean that there are no surprise bills at the end of the month, or the tenancy. This can help you to stay on top of your bills so you're less likely to fall into debt.

Smart meters show you your energy use in near-real time on the in-home display. Having this information can help you to make small changes around your home to use energy more efficiently.

If you take steps to make your home more energy efficient and adjust your energy use, you could use your smart meter data to see the difference these actions are making.

How can I get a smart meter installed in my rented property?

If you pay for the gas or electricity in your rented property, you can choose to have a smart meter. We recommend you tell your landlord before you get one.

That's because there may be rules in your tenancy agreement about how energy is supplied to the property, including the type of meter that can be installed.

If your tenancy agreement says you need your landlord's permission to change the meter at your property, they should not unreasonably prevent it. You can direct them to our website to learn more about the installation process and the benefits for you and any future tenants.



I'm nervous about speaking to my landlord about smart meters. What do landlords think about them?

Our research shows that the majority of landlords are open to smart meters, and wouldn't prevent their tenants from having them installed. In fact, some landlords have said that they assume their tenants don't want them simply because they haven't asked about them!

If you pay for the gas or electricity in your rented property, you can choose to have a smart meter. We recommend you tell your landlord before you get one.

Will a smart meter make switching energy suppliers difficult in future?

No. If you have a smart meter the process for switching suppliers is exactly the same as it is with a traditional meter, and you don't need to get new smart meters in the property if you switch suppliers.

Do smart meters work with prepay?

Yes. All smart meters can work in credit or prepay mode. There are lots of benefits for people using smart prepay, including topping up online or over the phone, as well as opportunities for additional, remote support from your energy supplier if you're struggling to top up your meter.

Is my personal data at risk with a smart meter?

No. Smart meters are very secure. This is because they have a security system developed by leading experts in industry and government including GCHQ's National Cyber Security Centre.

The bill payer's name, address and bank account details are never stored on the meter, only how much energy you use.

Do smart meters need a broadband connection to work?

No. Smart meters use an entirely separate, bespoke wireless system. You don't need Wi-Fi for it to work and it won't use Wi-Fi if you have it. The smart meter and in-home display communicate via a secure national network which is solely for smart meters.

Is there a cost to getting a smart meter?

There is no additional cost for installing a smart meter and the offer of an in-home display. Just like traditional meters, the cost of running and maintaining the smart meter network is spread across everyone's bills.

What if there is damage during installation?

Smart meters are installed by installers who have a formal qualification to meet specific national standards, as set out in the Smart Meter Installation Schedule. All energy suppliers have signed up to this code, which is regulated by Ofgem, who have powers to enforce it. In the unlikely instance damage occurs to the property during installation, the supplier will rectify this.