

# Prepayment meters

## Quick guide

If you use prepayment meters follow these simple tips to make sure you are not paying too much for your gas and electricity.

### Moving in

Get the account set up in your name when you move in to a new property to make sure you are not paying for someone else's debt.

**TOP TIP** Do not buy key or cards from anyone selling them door-to-door. Not only is this illegal but it may cause problems with the meter and end up costing you **MORE** money.

### Remember the standing charge

Be aware that you pay a standing charge every week (around £1.80). Even if you don't use any gas or electricity this money will still come off your meter (usually on Wednesday).

### Debt – don't struggle to pay

If you have a debt with your energy supplier, it is added to the meter and an amount is taken off your credit each week to repay it. This can be set quite high. If you are struggling, your supplier may be able to change the amount. The lowest is around £3.70 for each meter.

### Emergency credit – for emergencies only!

Only use emergency credit when you are unable to get to the shop to top up. If you use emergency credit a lot it can end up costing you more and can be a difficult cycle to break.

**TOP TIP** If you are on emergency credit the standing charge and debt repayment (if any) will not come out and will add up on the meter. Top up often to make sure this does not happen - or you may find your credit is 'swallowed up' when you do finally top up.

### Spread the cost

Paying by prepay means you pay more in the winter than the summer. To help spread the cost try and top up more than you need in the warmer months to build up credit for winter.

### Knowledge is power!

There is a lot of information on your meter and finding it is easy. Just press the button to move through the screens. It will show you:

- how much credit you have left
- the weekly standing charge
- your weekly debt payment
- total debt left on the meter
- the price per unit of energy

Check these screens often to take control of your energy use.

Call the **Energy Advice Team** on **0800 953 1221** or **0207 527 2121** for more information.

Watch our **prepayment video guides** at [www.islington.gov.uk/prepaymentmeters](http://www.islington.gov.uk/prepaymentmeters).

A more detailed written guide is also available on request.



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