

Frequently Asked Questions

About Utilita

Who are Utilita and why haven't I heard of them before?

Utilita is a dynamic and innovative UK company, licensed to supply gas and electricity to domestic households. We do much the same job as the likes of British Gas, EDF and Southern Electric but we do it better, more efficiently and at a lower cost.

Utilita don't believe in wasting funds on extravagant marketing campaigns when the same monies can be passed directly on to the customer as cheaper prices.

*Utilita has launched **get smart energy** as the only **fair priced, any pay-as-you-go** supply of gas and electricity available to **prepayment customers** that actively encourages **energy efficiency** through the installation of **new smart metering** that gives the **convenience** of **remote top-ups** to the meter, and **Friendly Credit** – no disconnections at night and the weekend*

If Utilita are new, how do I know the supply of gas and electricity is going to be secure?

Utilita is licensed by Ofgem to supply gas and electricity to domestic households and the supplies of gas and electricity are as secure as any of the Big 6 suppliers.

How do I know Utilita are not going to increase prices as soon as I switch suppliers and the new metering is installed?

*We can't guarantee that prices are not going to change, up or down, but we aim to be competitive with direct debit tariffs for British Gas for gas and your local electricity supply company for electricity. This means **Utilita prices being 5-12% lower** than other prepayment tariffs. When combined with changes in energy saving behaviour and use of energy saving products, you can make savings of up to 20% off energy bills.*

What's all this about energy-saving advice?

Utilita is committed to helping households become energy efficient, helping them reduce their energy bills and carbon emissions, now and for years to come.

*We do this through energy saving tips and advice, through giving customers FREE energy saving light bulbs and participation in a unique energy saving rewards scheme called **planetpoints**. We'll be sending you more details about the **planetpoints** scheme and your FREE energy saving light bulbs after your new metering has been installed.*

What's the catch? You're giving me new metering, energy saving light bulbs AND energy prices 5-12% cheaper than I have been paying. Why are Utilita doing this and how can Utilita make money?

There's no catch.

Utilita is an efficient company able to save money that is passed on to the customer in the form of lower prices and energy saving advice and products. Furthermore, prepayment meters generate savings for the supplier through not needing meter readings, and no need to issue estimated bills and quarterly statements. This means Utilita saves costs and in turn the customers pay less.

Do I have to tell my current supplier that I am switching to Utilita and do I have to tell them that I am having a new meter installed?

No – Utilita contact your old supplier as part of the switching process, which in this day and age is very smooth. There will be no interruption to your supply as the same pipes and wires are used by all utility companies.

Can I change my mind?

We hope this won't be the case, but if you decide to cancel your agreement, all you have to do is confirm this in writing within 14 days of entering into the agreement.

How long do I sign-up for and can I easily switch to another supplier?

The energy contract for get smart energy with Utilita is 12 months – just like an insurance agreement or mobile phone contracts. We don't expect you will want to switch back to a more expensive supplier but there is no reason why you can't outside these contracts terms. However another supplier may wish to install a less efficient meter.

Will I get a bill or statement?

As with pay-as-you-go phones, you won't be receiving a regular bill, but a statement will be sent each year.

About Utilita Pay-As-You-Go Metering

Do I have to pay extra for my new metering?

No – Utilita are able to provide you with your new metering as long as you use Utilita get smart energy.

What's the difference between the Utilita metering and my current meter?

It depends on the prepayment meter you already have but on the whole the Utilita metering:-

- allows you to pay in a number of ways*
- are modern and easy to use*
- can be topped-up remotely*
- have 'EMERGENCY' and 'FRIENDLY CREDIT' features (see below)*
- are more secure*
- and give you data enabling you to save energy.*

Can I keep my current meter and just switch to Utilita for gas and/or electricity?

No. The special prepayment rates are designed for the Utilita metering.

Are the Utilita meters easy to use?

Yes – the metering uses a keypad system and model that's already used by 200,000 households in Northern Ireland. We will leave a full instruction pack when the new metering is installed.

About Installation of The New Metering

When will the new metering be installed, do I have to be at home, and how long does it take?

If we have not arranged an installation date already, you will get a call in the next day or so to agree on a convenient date. It takes about 2 to 3 weeks for your supplies to transfer to Utilita. We aim for this to be in the same week that your new metering is installed in your property. The installation should take between 40-60 minutes and someone will need to be at home.

Will my supply be turned off, and will I have to reset all my appliances?

Your supply will be turned off for a short while but most modern appliances normally cope with such shortages.

What happens to any credit left on my old meter? Does it get transferred automatically to my new meter?

It's best to run your credit down to a minimum, but should there be any credit remaining, you will need to contact your old supplier to get your refund.

Will I need to use my new top-up cards straight away?

Yes, the metering will start working straight away and to make your life easier, each meter will be installed with £2 FREE credit already in place. That should be enough credit to keep you going for a short while, depending on your consumption, but we urge you to top-up quickly.

What happens to my old meter?

The installer will remove the old meter and Utilita are required to return it to the old supplier.

Can I have my new metering installed in a new place?

No. Our qualified engineers are only allowed to install the new metering in the same location as your existing meters.

About Paying For My Electricity and Gas

We will give you full details about the top-up card and meter operation when it is installed, but in the meantime here are the answers to a few questions that often occur.

When do I get my top-up card(s)?

The installer will give you the Utilita top-up card(s) when the metering is installed and will go through how it works.

Does the same card work both my gas and electricity meters?

No – there is one card for your electricity and one card for gas. The cards are linked to only your meters so top-ups cannot be made on one card and “transferred” to a different meter.

How do the cards work? Do I need to get them authorised?

It's quite easy. You take the card and payment to your local PayPoint outlet and once the payment is processed the top-up is sent automatically to the meter. You will be given a receipt with a special 20, 40 or 60-digit code on it, which you can use to key into your meter should the remote top-up fail to arrive at the meter automatically.

The remote top-ups use the same technology as mobile phones, so there may be times when the code does not get to the meter.

Remember you need to use your gas card to top-up your gas meter and your electricity card to top-up your electricity meter.

You can also top-up by setting up a monthly Direct Debit payment scheme and, in emergencies, by credit and debit card for a minimum top-up of £45.00. Full details are given when the metering is installed.

There is no need to get the cards authorised.

Where can I find a PayPoint outlet?

A list of local PayPoint outlets can be found at www.paypoint.co.uk/locator.htm. If you don't have internet access, please call Utilita Customer Services and they will be able to tell you where the nearest PayPoint outlets are.

What happens if I lose my cards or if they are stolen?

Don't worry. The cards cannot be used with any other meter. Just contact Utilita Customer Services to report the loss and they will arrange for a new card to be sent to you. If you lose your cards you do not lose any money.

What happens if I lose my receipt before I've been able to key the code into the meter?

Again, don't worry. You should be able to go back to the PayPoint outlet, explain the situation and they should re-issue the code. Alternatively contact Utilita Customer Services and they can re-issue the 20, 40 or 60-digit code over the phone. The meter won't let you key in the same code twice.

How does the meter remind me that I am low on credit?

We will give you full details about how the new meter works when it is installed but the meter does emit an alarm noise when it needs to be topped-up. The alarm should not sound after 10pm. Once you've stopped the alarm by pressing a couple of buttons, the meter automatically gives you EMERGENCY CREDIT of a minimum of £6. This should give you time to fully top-up the meter.

If the Emergency Credit itself runs out after 5pm, the supply will not go off until 10am the next day, giving you time to buy more credit. This extra Emergency Credit is called FRIENDLY CREDIT and also works at weekends – if your Emergency Credit runs out after 5pm on Friday the supply should not go off until 10am Monday.

What happens if I run out of Emergency Credit and Friendly Credit and get disconnected?

Although it is useful to have the convenience of Emergency and Friendly Credit, the get smart metering works best when you keep the meters topped-up.

However if you do run your credit down to zero and get disconnected you will need to buy a credit at your local PayPoint outlet, reset the metering and top-up manually.

And just like other meters any Emergency or Friendly Credit needs to be paid off first before the meter will be able to work again.

Please note if you run out of credit on your gas supply, for safety reasons your electricity supply will disconnect.

What Normally Happens Next

If we have not arranged a date to install your new metering already, you'll get a call in the next day or so to arrange a convenient date. We will use this opportunity to check your details and ensure our sales representative did their job properly.

Within a week or so you will get a letter from Utilita confirming your application is being processed and the date we have agreed with you for the installation.

At anything from two to four weeks, your new metering will have been installed by our qualified engineer and at the same time Utilita will start providing you with your energy.

You will then be able to start...

Saving Energy and Saving Money