



# Your Pay As You Go traditional meter

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**Pay As You Go is a simple way to stay in control of your energy.**

You can keep an eye on your credit, as you use it, then top up when you need to.

In this guide, we'll explain the essentials – like topping up, using emergency credit, and getting help when you need it. We'll show you how to get the most out of your meter and make your home more energy efficient.

OVO Energy is a signatory of the Ofgem-approved Smart Metering Installation Code of Practice (SMICoP). For more info, visit [ovoenergy.com/smicop](https://ovoenergy.com/smicop)

Smart meters let you track your energy use, and they send data to us here at OVO Energy too. This helps us keep your meter in good working order and make sure you're being charged correctly. For everything you need to know about the data we collect from your smart meter, how we keep this data safe, and your rights, read our data guide at [ovoenergy.com/privacy-policy](https://ovoenergy.com/privacy-policy)





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# All about credit

In the next few sections, we'll talk through the basics: how to top up, what to do if you lose power, and how to activate emergency credit. We'll also cover where to go for help, as well as how to get support from us if you ever can't afford to top up.

## How to top up your meter

### Topping up for the first time

To register your new electricity key or gas card, put it into the correct meter for at least a minute. The electricity meter will show a message to let you know it's registered, and the gas meter will beep.

### Amount of credit you can top up in one go

This depends on where you're topping up, as different shops can have different minimum amounts. But these are the usual top-up limits:

- The minimum you can top up is £1
- The maximum you can top up your gas meter in one go is £49
- The maximum you can top up your electricity meter in one go is £50
- You can only top up in full pounds
- The maximum amount a payment card can hold is £249 and the most a key can hold is £250

### Adding credit to your meter

To top up, take your top-up card or key to:

- Any PayPoint shop. Find your nearest at [paypoint.co.uk](https://www.paypoint.co.uk) or call **0330 400 0000**.
- Any Post Office. Find your nearest at [postoffice.co.uk/branch-finder](https://www.postoffice.co.uk/branch-finder)
- Any Payzone shop. Find your nearest at [storelocator.payzone.co.uk](https://www.storelocator.payzone.co.uk)

Once you've topped up, follow the instructions on the following page.

## For gas meters

- Insert your card into the gas meter and follow the instructions on the screen.
- Make sure the gold-coloured chip is facing the meter display. Press and hold the red '**A**' button, and the credit will appear on your meter.

## For electricity meters

- Insert your key into the electricity meter, and follow the instructions on the screen.
- Make sure the arrow on the key is facing upwards. The new credit should show automatically.

If you've topped up at a PayPoint shop, keep your receipt each time just in case. If the money doesn't appear in your meter, we'll need to look into it for you.

## What to do if you run out of credit

If your balance drops below £1 on your electricity meter and £2 on your gas meter, you'll be able to activate your emergency credit.

To activate the emergency credit:

- Put your card or key into the meter.
- You might need to remove the card or key and reinsert it again.
- For your **gas meter**, once you've put your card in, press the red **A** button to move through the menu. When you reach a screen saying **Accept Emcr?**, press **B** – you'll then see **EmCr Accepted**.

Please know, if you don't top up in time, you'll lose power. So if you're able to, make sure you top up before your emergency credit runs out. It'll need to be paid back before it can be used again.

## We don't ever want you to be without power

If you ever need more emergency credit, please chat with us at [help.ovoenergy.com/payasyougo](https://help.ovoenergy.com/payasyougo) and we'll be able to help.

## How to pay back any credit you needed to borrow

If you use any emergency credit, you'll need to pay it back in full from your next top-up. So if you can, make sure you buy enough credit to pay back the emergency credit, and still have some left for you to use for energy.

If you're paying back a bill debt or we lend you some credit when you contact us, we'll agree how you'll pay it back at the time. We can spread the cost and you won't need to pay it back in one go. You can pay it off gradually through your meter, a week at a time. Part of your gas top-ups will be used for your weekly repayments. This is collected from the first top-up you make from Wednesday each week. Your electricity repayments will be spread out evenly throughout the week. So please make sure you're making regular top-ups to cover these repayments and the energy you use.

If the repayment rate is ever set too high, please get in touch at [help.ovoenergy.com/payasyougo](https://help.ovoenergy.com/payasyougo) (for information on how to check your repayment rate, see "Understanding your meter screens" below). We're here to support you and we'll always find a repayment plan that works for you. Once you've repaid the credit we lent you, your meter will automatically stop taking repayments. You'll just pay for the energy you use from then on.

## Times when your electricity stays on, even if you run out of credit

If you've got a traditional electricity meter, at certain times of the day you won't lose power – even if you run out of credit and emergency credit. This is called your "**non-disconnect hours**". You shouldn't lose power, as long as you have credit at the start:

- Between 6pm and 9am on weekdays
- From 6pm on Friday until 9am Monday
- Winter and Easter bank holidays



### Please remember

If you've run out of credit, you need to top up before these non-disconnect hours are over to avoid losing power.

Unfortunately, non-disconnect hours don't cover traditional gas meters. However, smart meters have non-disconnect hours for both gas and electricity meters. You can find out more about smart meters and getting one installed on page 12.

## How to get your power back on

If you ever lose your power supply because you don't have enough credit, you'll need to make a top-up payment to get it back. This will cover your daily standing charges, energy use and debt repayments (if you have any). There's no minimum credit amount to get your power back, as long as it takes your balance to above £0. Before reconnecting your gas supply, please make sure all gas appliances are switched off for safety.

To get your power back once you've topped up, just put your payment key or card into the correct meter. Your power will come back on automatically. If it doesn't, or there's a message on your meter, please call us right away on **0330 175 9669**.

## Understanding your meter screens

You can find out lots of useful info from the display on your meters.

### Your electricity meter

Use the blue button to move through the displays.

If you have an Economy 7 or Economy 10 meter, you'll have two rates for electricity (day and night, 1 and 2, or peak and off-peak). They also have more information than a standard meter (see the table below).

Here's what the display symbols mean:

Display	What it means for Standard	What it means for Economy 7 or 10
<b>A or 1</b> <b>£005.00</b>	Amount of credit left in meter	Amount of credit left in meter
<b>Debt £</b> <b>£005.00 E</b>	You've run out of normal credit. The E shows you've activated your emergency credit	You've run out of normal credit
<b>Debt £... E</b>	You've run out of emergency credit	You've activated your emergency credit
<b>888.888</b>	Test screen (for engineers to use)	Test screen (for engineers to use)

<b>B</b>	The minimum amount you need to top up to reset your emergency credit	The minimum amount you need to top up to reset your emergency credit
<b>C</b>		The current time, and the unit rate you're using at the moment
<b>D</b>		The current time, and the unit rate you're using at the moment
<b>E or 3</b>	Total credit added to the meter since it was last reset by an engineer	Total credit added to the meter since it was last reset by an engineer
<b>F or 4</b>	How much standing charge and debt your meter collects each week	How much standing charge and debt your meter collects each week
<b>G</b>	Total kWh recorded by the meter since it was manufactured	Total kWh recorded by the meter since it was manufactured
<b>H or 5</b>	Meter reading	Meter reading for day rate
<b>I or 6</b>	Price per kWh	Price per kWh for day rate
<b>J</b>		Meter reading for night rate
<b>K</b>		Price per kWh for night rate

You'll need to put your payment key into the meter to see the next information displays:

<b>R or 7</b>	Amount of emergency credit available on your meter	Amount of emergency credit available on your meter
<b>S</b>	Your total debt	
<b>T</b>	The amount of debt you've agreed to pay off each week	



## Your gas meter

Just press and hold the red “A” button until it beeps to get to the next display.

Here’s what the display symbols mean:

Display	What it means
00	Amount of emergency credit available on your meter
01	How much of your last top-up is being used to pay off debt on your meter
02	How much of your last top-up is being used to pay back any emergency credit you may have used
03	How much of your last top-up is being used to pay for your gas supply

The amounts shown on 01, 02, 03 will add up to the amount of 00.

09 or 10	Price you pay per unit of gas
17	Your standing charge (per day)
21	How low your credit needs to fall before you can access your emergency credit
22	How much emergency credit you can access
24	What percentage of credit will be used to pay back the money you owe

Put your payment card into your meter to see the next displays:

25	Minimum debt repayment the meter will take each week
26	Maximum debt repayment the meter will take each week
27	Total amount of debt that still needs to be paid back through your meter
32	Your registered gas card number

## Help if you can't afford your energy

If you ever can't afford to top up and your emergency credit has run out, please get in touch. We'll listen to you and do all we can to help. We might be able to lend you more credit too. Head to [help.ovoenergy.com/payasyougo](https://help.ovoenergy.com/payasyougo) to chat with us online.

Here are some of the other main ways you can get support from us – and from other organisations too.

### The Warm Home Discount

- This is a one-off payment of £150 to help eligible customers manage the higher cost of energy this winter.
- Check the government website at [gov.uk/the-warm-home-discount-scheme](https://gov.uk/the-warm-home-discount-scheme) to see what changes have been made, and whether you need to apply or will get the payment automatically.

### The Priority Services Register

This is available to anyone who might need help managing their energy. It's completely free and confidential.

Visit [ovoenergy.com/help/priority-services-register](https://ovoenergy.com/help/priority-services-register) to see if you qualify and to sign up.

## Independent help and advice

It's important you know your rights when it comes to energy. You can get free, independent energy advice from a number of official services if you have questions about your meters, discounts, grants or energy plans.

### Citizens Advice

If you live in England or Wales, go to [citizensadvice.org.uk/energy](https://citizensadvice.org.uk/energy) or call **0808 223 1133**, Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm. Relay UK: 18001 followed by **0808 223 1133**. Calls are free.

If you live in Scotland, go to [energyadvice.scot](https://energyadvice.scot) or contact Advice Direct Scotland on **0808 196 8660**, Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm. Relay UK: 18001 followed by **0808 196 8660**. Calls are free.

### National Debtline

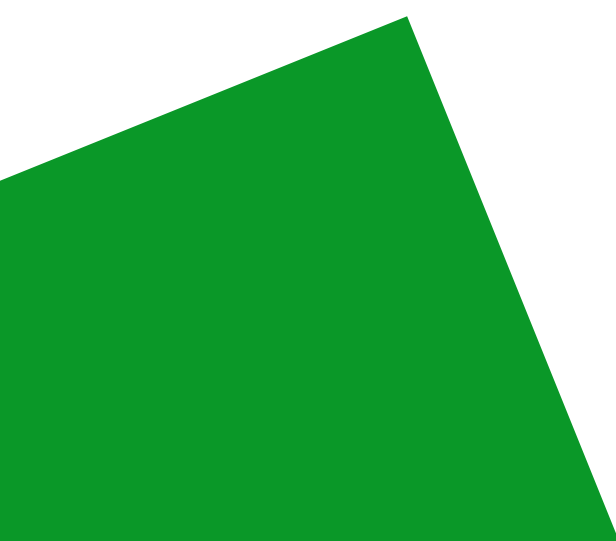
If you live in England, Wales, or Scotland, you can call **0808 808 4000** or visit [nationaldebtline.org](https://nationaldebtline.org) for debt advice.

### StepChange Debt Charity

For free debt advice in the UK, visit [stepchange.org](https://stepchange.org) or call **0800 138 1111**.

### Energy Saving Trust

The Energy Saving Trust has lots of advice on being energy efficient. Visit their website at [energysavingtrust.org.uk](https://energysavingtrust.org.uk) to find out more.



# What it's like being on Pay As You Go

Pay As You Go is quite different to paying monthly. Here are the main differences.

## The advantages:

- You always pay in advance, which means you know exactly how much you're spending on energy.
- You can top up at over 27,500 PayPoint shops.
- You'll be able to pay off your debt through your meter(s), gradually.
- You can top up from as little as £1.
- You have access to emergency credit on your meter(s), to keep you going until you can top up again.

## The disadvantages:

- You need to regularly check your credit and keep your meter(s) topped up.
- If you're using more energy than usual, you can't spread the costs over time.
- If your credit goes below £0, your power might be disconnected until you can top up again – but we're here to support you and stop this from happening. Please contact us if you can't afford to top up or if you're ever unable to.
- The rates tend to be a bit higher than when you have a credit meter and pay by Direct Debit.

## Switching to a smart meter

You might be able to switch to a smart meter – just get in touch and we'll check this for you.

Here's why that's a good idea:

- Top up anytime and anywhere with the OVO Energy Top-up app – or at PayPoint shops (using a payment card or a barcode in the app).
- You can add £5 to £200 credit, track all your top-ups, and store bank cards to make things quicker.

- You'll get a new smart meter installed for free.
- Smart meters help you save energy. By allowing you to track your energy use, they encourage you to make small changes to use less energy – cutting bills and carbon emissions too.
- You'll get an In-Home Display to easily understand your smart meter.

Visit [ovoenergy.com/pay-as-you-go-smart](https://ovoenergy.com/pay-as-you-go-smart) for more information.  
To book your free smart meter installation call us on **0330 175 9669**.

## **Making sure Pay As You Go is right for you**

### **If you need power 100% of the time**

If you rely on a constant electricity supply for medical equipment in your home, please tell us straight away. If there's any other reason you feel it won't be safe for you to use Pay As You Go, please let us know – we're here to help.

### **If you can't get to your meter easily**

Your meter should be in a place where you can easily reach it. If it's not, please let us know.

### **If you can't get to a PayPoint store to top up**

Please get in touch with us if you're not able to access a PayPoint store – we're here to help.

### **If you'd like to switch energy suppliers**

We hope you're happy with OVO Energy, but if you'd like to switch, this isn't a problem. It's important to know that if you have a debt of over £20, you'll need to pay it off before you switch. Or you can ask your new supplier to take over the debt (this is for any debt of up to £500 for each energy type). This is called the Debt Assignment Protocol. Please get in touch if you're worried about anything or if you're struggling financially.

# Troubleshooting

## Error codes and what they mean

**RESET, TOKEN NO or ERRORS 1, 2, 3, 50 or 99:** We need to change your meter – please call **0330 175 9669** as soon as you can, so we can sort it out.

**Blank screen:** If the red light isn't flashing, there's no power getting to your meter. Please contact your District Network Operator (DNO). The easiest way to contact them is to call the power cut helpline on 105.

If the red light is flashing, insert your key in the meter and hold down the blue button to wake up your meter. If this doesn't work, give us a ring on **0330 175 9669**, as something might be wrong.

**ERROR 6:** You're using the wrong key, or your key has stopped working. Please get in touch and we'll tell you how to sort out a new one.

**ERROR 10:** This can mean your key needs a clean – so try wiping the chip with a clean, dry cloth and then put it back in. If that doesn't work, you'll need to pick up a new key.

**ERROR 11 to 44:** You need a new key. Please get in touch so we can arrange for you to pick one up from your local PayPoint.

If you see any other onscreen error messages, it probably means you need a new key. Write down the error message on your meter display and get in touch with us on **0330 175 9669**, so we can arrange a new key for you.

## If your meter says HELP

Please call us on **0330 175 9669** right away so that we can send out an engineer to reset your meter before it runs out of credit and disconnects.

## Got a question? Let's find an answer

- If you have any other questions, [help.ovoenergy.com/payasyougo](https://help.ovoenergy.com/payasyougo) is a great place to find answers.
- Or chat with us online at the same webpage. Just click the green chat icon on the bottom right of your screen. We're here to help anytime from 8am to 8pm Monday to Friday and 9am to 5pm on weekends.
- Or call us on **0330 175 9669** during the same times.

