Smart meters for small businesses

The current economic climate has proved challenging for many small businesses across Great Britain, with increases in energy costs more front of mind than ever. We know from our research that small business owners are doing all they can to reduce their energy usage, but energy is the bill over which they feel they have the least control.

What is a smart meter?
Smart meters are the new generation of gas and electricity meters that measure energy use in near real-time, sending automatic meter readings directly and securely to your energy supplier. At the end of 2022 there were 31.3 million smart meters in homes and small businesses across Great Britain, with over half of all meters now smart.

Smart meters put you in greater control and give you visibility of your energy use, which can help with managing finances and cashflow.

Smart meters are currently available and installations are happening now. Many small businesses can get a smart meter installed at no extra cost.

Eligibility
Eligibility is based on the number of employees a business has, annual turnover and energy consumption. You may be eligible for a smart meter if your business:

- has fewer than ten employees, or their full-time equivalent (including the business owner)* or
- has an annual turnover less than £1.67 million or
- uses no more than 100,000 kWh of electricity per year or
- uses no more than 293,000 kWh of gas per year

* You may also be able to get a smart meter installed if you have a small business with more than ten employees based on the annual turnover and energy consumption criteria listed above.

To find out if your business is eligible for a smart meter, contact your energy supplier or broker for more information. You can find your supplier on our website at smartenergyGB.org/about-smart-meters/get-a-smart-meter
Smart meter benefits for you

- **Accurate billing**: a smart meter measures energy usage in near real-time, putting an end to manual meter readings and estimated bills. This means you only pay for the energy you use, which can help with managing cashflow.

- **Control**: smart meters can give you more control over your business’ energy spend, thanks to the data they provide. This can help you monitor your energy usage, give you more control over your business’ energy spend and identify where cost savings could be made.

- **Access to historic energy usage data**: small businesses with a smart meter are able to request free access to 12 months of smart meter data from their energy supplier, which can help you with budgeting for future bills, and help reduce bill shock.

Smart meter benefits for everyone

**Less fossil fuels and more green energy**: the smart meter roll out is the most ambitious upgrade to our energy system in a generation, helping us move to a more efficient, cleaner and more responsive energy system. This will enable us to rely less on imported fossil fuels such as oil and gas, and increase our use of cheaper, greener energy like wind and solar power.

Recent research of small business owners found:

- **89%** feel they have done as much as they can to reduce their business’ energy costs
- **41%** of those who have a smart meter at home and at work said the data they get from it has helped them to better control their energy usage and bills
- **66%** say they have adopted cost saving working practices in the last 12 months to reduce their business’ energy usage
- **61%** say they are more likely than ever to consider energy efficiency when buying new equipment or appliances
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Advice for small business owners who rent their premises

Whether you own or rent your premises, you may be eligible for a smart meter. If you pay your own energy bills, you can ask your supplier to install a smart meter — you may also be offered one by your supplier.

You may need to check with your landlord that changes to your meters are allowed within your rental contract.

Alternatively, if your landlord pays the energy bills, contact them and ask if they are planning to get one for your building.

If your business is based at home

As every home across Great Britain will be offered a smart meter from their energy supplier by the end of 2025, you will be eligible for a smart meter if your business is run from domestic premises. If you have a separate meter for your small business in your home, you may also be able to upgrade that to a smart meter.

Getting a smart meter installed

- installations usually take about two hours and need to be booked in advance
- your engineer will need to turn off your electricity and/or gas supply to complete the installation
- your energy supplier will work with you to find a convenient time to cause minimum disruption to your business
- smart meter offerings may vary between suppliers, and each supplier could have different terms and conditions relating to these offerings
- if working with a Third Party Intermediary (TPI) or broker, contact them directly

1 Smart Meter Statistics in Great Britain: Quarterly Report to end December 2022, BEIS, published 21 March 2023
2 Depending on your business’ energy supplier and tariff, you may be charged for part of the upgrade. Your supplier will let you know about any charges up front
3 OnePoll research 500 small business owners across Great Britain, April 2023
4 OnePoll research 500 small business owners across Great Britain, January 2023

About Smart Energy GB

Smart Energy GB is the independent, non-profit organisation that helps households and small businesses across Great Britain to understand how smart meters can benefit them, their families and the environment.