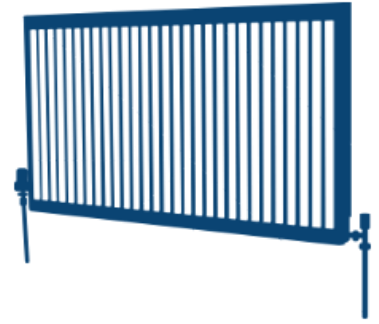


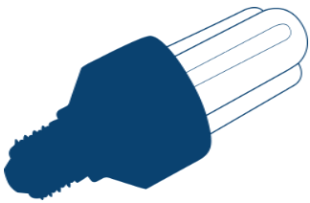
# Switching gas and electricity tariffs

Friday 26th February is Fuel Poverty Awareness day.

Are you spending too much on energy? Or turning off the heating to save money?



With the cost of living increasing, Birmingham Citizens Advice want to ensure that you are getting the best deal for your gas and electricity. One way to save money on gas and electricity bills is to make sure you are on the right tariff for you. This could be with your current supplier(s), or maybe you want to switch.



## You can stick or you can be savvy

Have you had the same fuel provider for three years? Have you been with the same supplier ever since you moved to your property?

If so, you may wish to review your tariff and see what else is available.

## What should I consider?

There are some key points to consider before you start comparing prices, for example:

- You may already be eligible for extra support
- You may be on a fixed-term contract where fees apply if you switch early
- Tenancy arrangements might affect your situation
- You may have a pre-payment meter

In many cases you can still switch, but check first!

**TOP TIP:** Find out [here](#) whether your situation impacts on whether you can switch

## OK! I'm ready to see what deals are out there!

It's good to have copies of your last few bills or an annual summary to hand.

These should have useful information about who your supplier is, your tariff, how much energy you use, and how much you currently spend.



**TOP TIP:** you can usually compare tariffs either based on your energy use, or on your spend.

## Where do I start?

There are a number of on-line comparison services, which are a good place to compare deals.

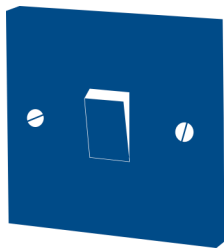
**Approved websites** operate in accordance with the energy regulator **Ofgem's Confidence Code** and can be trusted as a source of information when you are looking at different deals and tariffs.

**TOP TIP:** here's the [list](#) of Ofgem-approved sites on the Be an Energy Shopper website

Citizens Advice even have our own comparison [tool](#)



## I've compared tariffs and I've found a better deal!



Making the switch?

Contact the supplier(s) you want to change to, and they are then responsible for managing your switch.

You can contact your old supplier(s) too, to confirm that you are leaving them, although this isn't essential.

**TOP TIP:** Check whether a cooling-off period will apply before you sign or agree to any new contract.

**TOP TIP:** Ofgem have a useful [leaflet](#) with more help about switching

## What happens when I agree to a new contract?

Your old supplier(s) will continue to provide your energy until the day of the switch.

The switch will normally take 21 calendar days, but can take up to eight weeks.

**TOP TIP:** note your meter reading(s) on the day your new contract starts.

And here's how to [read](#) your meter!



## Still looking to save more?

If you are on the cheapest tariff but still want to save money on fuel bills, taking energy efficiency measures could help.

The Energy Saving Trust have [information](#) and support.

## **JUST IN CASE....**

Most switches take place without any problems and you can start enjoying the benefits of your better tariff.

If you do think something has gone wrong – you receive an unexpectedly low or high bill, for example – Citizens Advice can help you resolve any issues with template letters and guidance on the complaints procedures.

Click [here](#) for more advice.

## **Other ways to get advice**

If you or someone you know wants help with switching but cannot normally access the internet, use the Citizens Advice consumer service on **03454 04 05 06** (English language) or **03454 04 05 05** (Welsh language).

For textphone, dial **18001** followed by the helpline number.

## **Other useful online resources**

National Energy Action—[nea.org.uk](http://nea.org.uk) >[link](#)

Industry regulator Ofgem—[ofgem.gov.uk](http://ofgem.gov.uk) >[link](#)

Energy Saving Trust—[energysavingtrust.org.uk](http://energysavingtrust.org.uk) >[link](#)

Go Energy Shopping—<http://www.goenergyshopping.co.uk/en-gb> >[link](#)

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