

Using Pay As You Go Meters

What is a Pay As You Go meter?

A Pay As You Go (PAYG) meter lets you pay for your natural gas as and when you use it.

The advantages for you PAYG has two main benefits. You can use it to help you budget, as it lets you pay for your natural gas on a more regular basis and allows you to actively monitor your gas usage. PAYG also reduces the risk of disconnection. Please remember that you use more natural gas in the winter than summer. Allow for this extra cost when you budget for your natural gas consumption.

The disadvantages of a PAYG meter

While there are advantages associated with having a PAYG meter you should consider the issues you may experience in the event that you choose to have one fitted:

- > The range of outlets to purchase top-ups or replacement cards may be limited depending on your location.
- > These meters may have limited suitability for customers with medical or other special needs e.g. sight problems, mobility difficulties, medical equipment installed at the home etc.
- > Some homes may not be suitably wired to allow the network operator to install a pay as you go meter.
- > You need to check your meter regularly to ensure you remain in credit.

Free installation

If you are a new customer, PAYG meters are currently installed free of charge. If you are an existing customer, we may be able to change your standard credit meter to a PAYG free of charge. Subsequent alterations are subject to conditions. There are no additional charges for using a PAYG meter.

Who can have a PAYG meter installed?

A prepayment meter may be installed in the following circumstances:

- > At your request and in agreement with us that it is a suitable payment method for you;
- > If you do not satisfy our credit checking requirements;
- > To pay off an outstanding balance and we have agreed it is a suitable payment method for you; or
- > To avoid disconnection of your supply if no other suitable repayment arrangement can be agreed with you.

PayPoint Outlets

You can buy credit for your PAYG meter at PayPoint outlets. In the Greater Belfast area there are over 350 Paypoint outlets where you can purchase gas credit and over 200 Paypoint outlets where you can purchase replacement gas cards. There are over 900 Paypoint outlets across Northern Ireland (usually at petrol stations, convenience stores, supermarkets and newsagents). You can also buy credit at the Post Office but not at Payzone outlets. Contact us on 0345 900 5253 for a list of PayPoint outlets, or alternatively you can use the Paypoint outlet locator at www.paypoint.co.uk/locator

Tariff changes

If we change our tariff price, we adjust the price your meter charges by sending a message to your PAYG meter.

Meter information

It is important to be familiar with the information on your PAYG meter. You can see how much credit you last put into the meter and the amount of credit you have remaining before emergency credit will be offered. We can give detailed information about your PAYG meter and how to access information. Contact our Customer Service team on 0345 900 5253 to find out more. Please also contact our Customer Service Team if you are experiencing difficulty using your meter or you believe there may be a fault with your meter. There are two types of PAYG meter - Libra and Quantum.

Libra PAYG meter

When you have a Libra PAYG meter installed, a 'Payeasy' card will also be supplied. Your 'Payeasy' card is unique to your meter. It will not operate in any other meter. If you lose your 'Payeasy' card, you can purchase a new one at most PayPoint outlets. You will need to register a new card to the meter before you purchase gas credit.

Buying credit for Libra Meters

Take your 'Payeasy' natural gas card to any PayPoint outlet. You can purchase gas credit at any amount from the minimum of £5 to the maximum of £49. Every time you make a payment, you must ensure that you keep the receipt as this is your proof of purchase. PAYG allows you check your natural gas usage and top up the card when you decide.

Credit Reserve

If your Libra meter is displaying between 30 - 15 units, you can access your emergency credit by releasing your 'credit reserve facility'. To do this insert your card, press and hold red button 'A' for 5 seconds until

you hear a beep. Release the button and remove the card. You must then purchase more credit immediately in order to ensure you don't run out of gas.

Quantum PAYG meter

When you have a Quantum meter fitted, we will send you a new Quantum natural gas card. You should receive this within five working days. If you move into a new property, contact us and we will send you a new card. Your Quantum natural gas card is unique to the meter it is registered to and will not work in any other meter.

Buying credit for Quantum Meter

Make sure you look after your Quantum natural gas card, as you will be charged for a replacement. If you lose your card, or damage it, please contact us immediately on 0345 900 5253 to arrange for a replacement card. You can credit your card with the amount you choose. When you receive your new Quantum natural gas card, please insert it into the meter for at least 60 seconds. You should then buy credit for the first time from a PayPoint or Post Office outlet.

Quantum Emergency Credit

Sometimes you may run out of credit at an inconvenient time. Quantum offers 'Emergency Credit' if you have used all of the natural gas you have paid for. Quantum Emergency Credit allows you to borrow an amount of natural gas until you can buy some more credit. Quantum has £2 emergency credit. If you choose to use this, make sure you buy more credit as soon as possible. You should not use emergency credit regularly. Remember, emergency credit is automatically repaid when you next top up natural gas credit. You must pay back the emergency credit owed before you can borrow emergency credit again. You can see how much emergency credit you have used and how much you still owe by checking your meter. Contact us if you are not sure how to do this.

Changing to PAYG Quantum because of payment difficulties

If you have a credit meter and are experiencing payment difficulties, we can arrange to have a PAYG Quantum meter installed. This meter would be set to collect an agreed repayment amount from your top ups and pay for the natural gas you continue to use. Contact us immediately if your circumstances change and we will try to make suitable arrangements with you.

Meter Removal/ Resetting

From time to time your PAYG meter may need to be removed or reset. These changes are carried out by Phoenix Natural Gas on behalf of all suppliers in the Greater Belfast area. In the event that your meter

requires this service we will ensure that this request is forwarded to Phoenix Natural Gas within 5 days of being identified. Any credit on your meter at the time of removal or resetting will be issued to you by cheque within 28 days of confirming the credit value with Phoenix Natural Gas.