BEDFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL

A quick guide on how to read your utility meters

How to read your gas meter

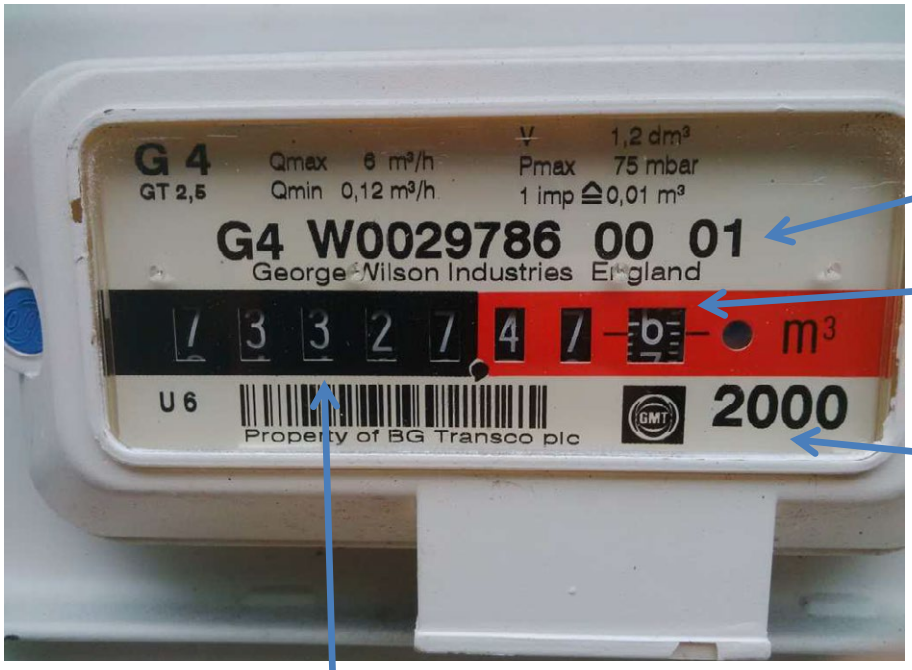
There are different types of gas meter depending on their size or by what units the energy is measured in. All gas meters have a display with 4 - 6 digits indicating the number of gas units you have used.

Gas meters either display units in cubic meters (m^3) or cubic feet ft^3.

Digital metric meter

Digital metric gas meters measure gas usage in cubic meters (m^3) and usually show 'M' or 'M3' on the meter.

1. Write down all the numbers before the decimal point, left to right.
2. Ignore any numbers after the decimal point (which may be shown in red).



Meter Serial Number (MSN)

Ignore the dials in red

Date the meter was installed

This is your meter read '73327'

For more information, please contact
energy.team@bedford.gov.uk

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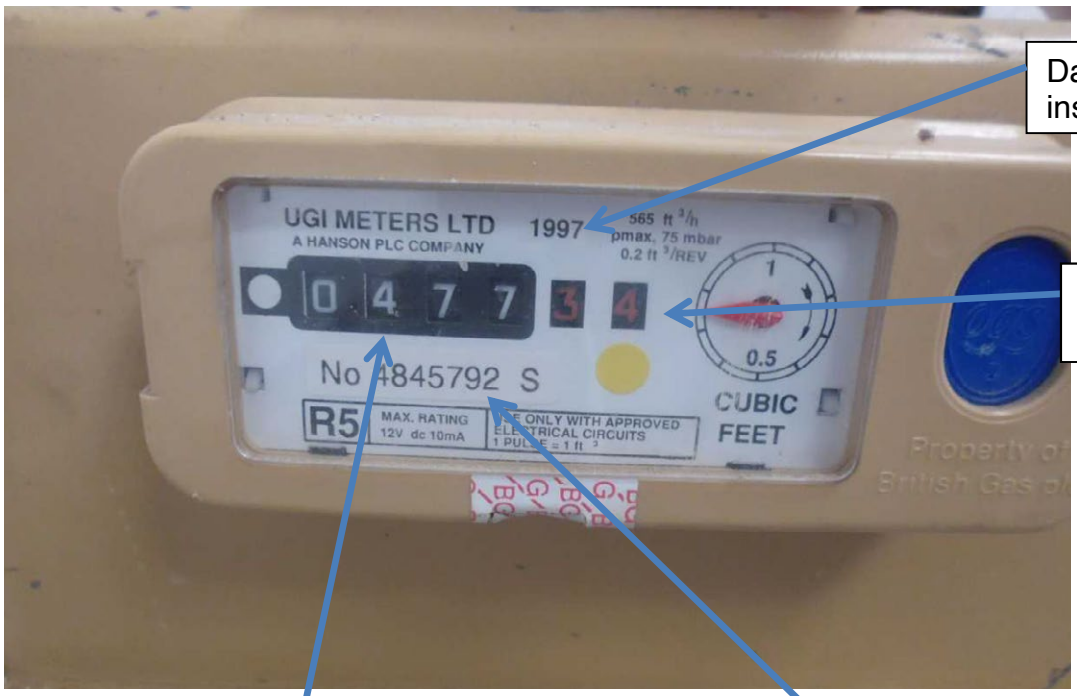
Digital imperial meter

This is an older style of gas meter that measures gas in cubic feet (ft^3) - it will usually show the words 'cubic feet' or the letters 'Ft'.

1. Write down the four numbers from left to right.
2. Ignore any numbers shown in red.



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Dial meter

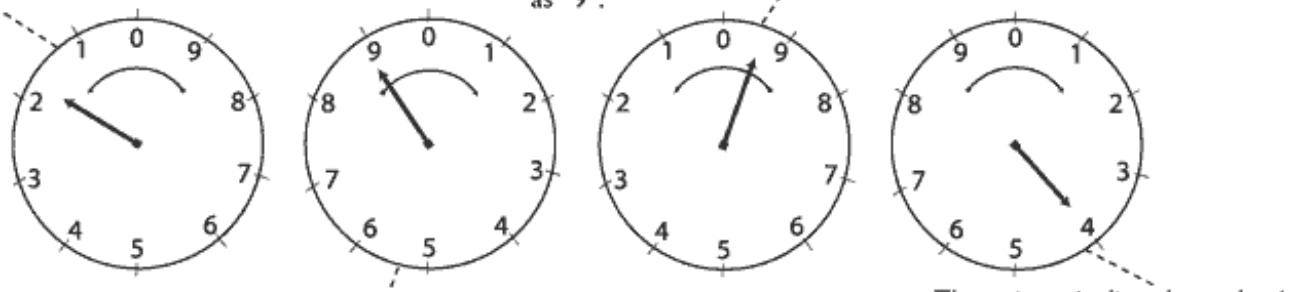
This type of gas meter shows a series of clock-style dials with numbers from zero to nine.

1. Start with the left dial and write down the number indicated by the pointer, moving towards the right.
2. If the pointer is between two numbers, record the lower of the two.
3. However, if the pointer is between nine and zero, record it as nine.
4. If the pointer is exactly on a number and the following dial reads '9', you need to take one away from the number.
5. Ignore any red dials and the last dial on the right

A typical gas meter has four dials. The first and third dials spin counter clockwise, while the second and fourth dials spin clockwise. When reading the meter, if the arm is between two numbers ALWAYS use the lower number.

Here, the pointer is between the 1 and the 2. This dial would be read as "1".

On this dial, the pointer is between the 9 and 0. Whenever the pointer is between 9 and 0, 9 is actually the lower of the two numbers. This dial would be read as "9".



Even though the pointer is near the 9, it still hasn't made it to the "tick" mark on the outside of the dial.* This dial would be read as "8".

The pointer is directly on the 4. This dial would be read as "4".

1 8 9 4

* If you are having trouble telling if the pointer has passed a number, look at the dial to the right of the dial in question. If the dial to the right has passed the 0, use the higher number. If the dial to the right has not passed the 0, use the smaller number.

You may also find Dial meters for electric, these work the same as gas.

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AMR Loggers

Some gas meters are fitted with Automatic Meter Reading devices (AMR's) which remotely read your gas meter via a pulsed output and send the reads back to the supplier. This enables your supplier to bill you to actual reads rather than estimated readings. The loggers generally look like this

This logger is a Cello logger installed by IMServ on behalf of Bedford Borough Council

This logger is an Energy Assets data logger installed by Energy Assets on behalf of British Gas

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To calculate your gas usage into kWh

- Subtract your current gas meter reading from your previous reading to work out how many cubic meters or feet you have used (units)
- If your measure is in cubic feet, multiply by 2.83 to convert to cubic meters.
- Multiply by 1.02264 (volume correction factor)
- Multiply by the 'calorific value' (find this on your bill, or ask your gas supplier).
- Divide by 3.6 to work out your kWh figure

To calculate your gas cost

- Multiply the kWh figure by your pence per kWh rate (find this on your bill, or ask your gas supplier) to give the cost of gas used.

The below example is taken from a British Gas bill (usually found on the back page):

How we calculate your gas cost?

Gas is a natural product. One unit does not always produce exactly the same amount of energy. In order to price energy from gas consistently, we convert your units used into kilowatt hours of energy, using the following formula:

a. metric units used e.g. 26
b. x calorific value e.g. 39.1
c. x volume correction 1.0226400
d. ÷ metric conversion 3.6
e. = 288.78 **kWh**

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How to read your electric meter

There are also different types of electricity meters for example you could have a single rate meter or a two rate meter (displaying day and night reads).

Single-rate digital electricity meters

Electricity meters measure energy use in kilowatt hours (kWh). A single-rate meter has one set of numbers to refer to.

1. Write down all the numbers before the decimal point, from left to right.
2. Ignore any numbers after the decimal point (which may be shown in red).

This screen is showing the date. Be aware that you may have to cycle through the displays until you find one with kWh or a R1

Meter Serial Number (MSN)

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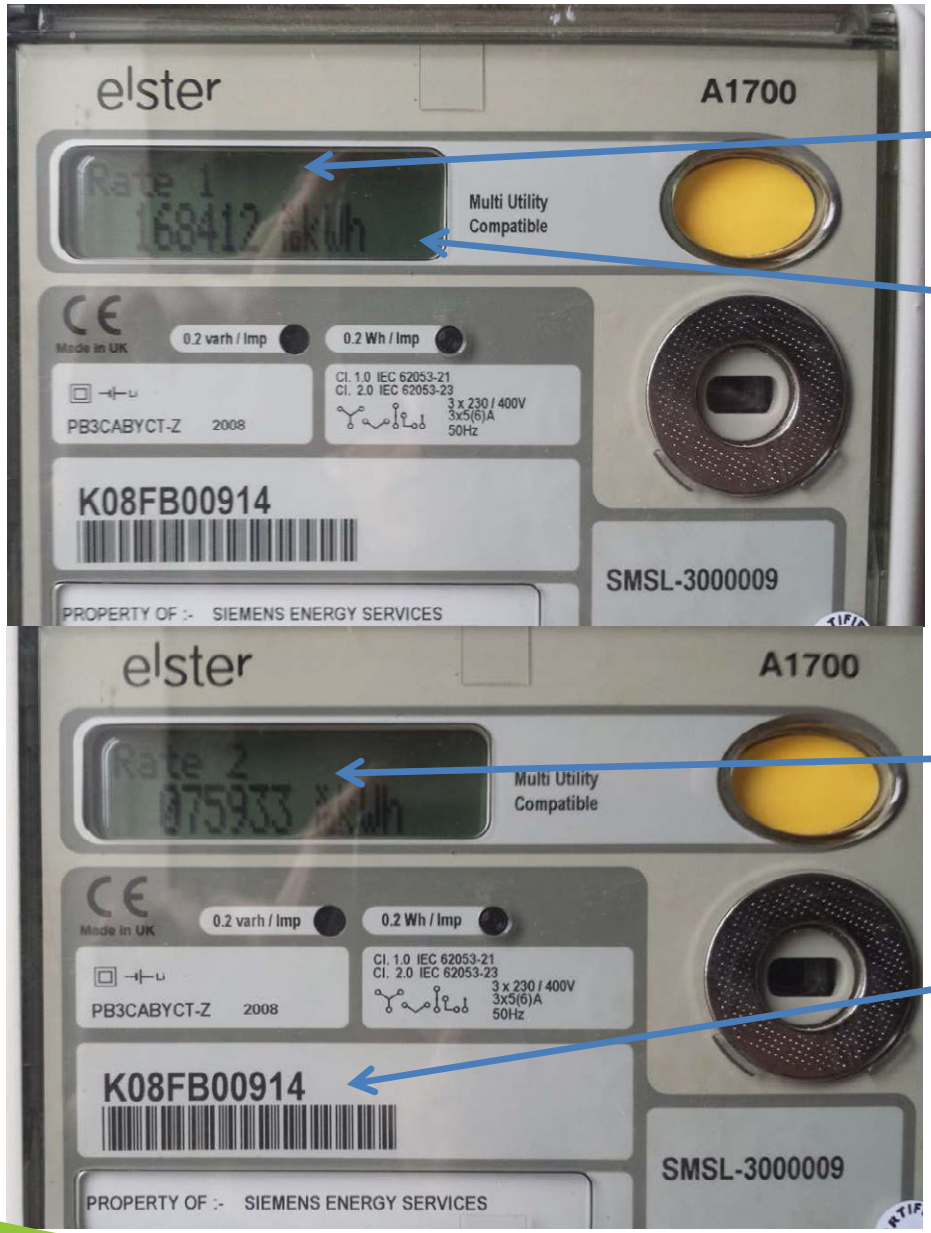
Variable-rate electricity meters

Two (or more) rate electricity meters will have the ability to change the display on the meter to show different rates (often seen on the display as R1 and R2). These relate to your day and night (or sometimes even day, night and weekend usage rates). To identify if your meter is two rate, it may have a red light on the meter next to '2 pulse' and when you press the display button you can cycle through the options.

It is important to take a reading for both rates to ensure accurate billing.
1. Write down all the numbers before the decimal point, from left to right.
2. Ignore any numbers after the decimal point (which may be shown in red).



Rate 1 reading

The display may automatically cycle through

Rate 2 reading

Meter Serial Number (MSN)

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Your electric meter may also look like this. You may be able to cycle through until you see a 'total' screen which gives you the total kWh usage to date. Use this button to cycle through the displays

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How to read your water meter

Water meters aren't the easiest or most accessible meters to try and read but they are even more important to get regular reads from, due to common problems such as leakage. By reading your meter regularly you can monitor usage and look out for any leaks on your site; ensuring you are paying only for what you are using. By reading your meter regularly, you will also be able to monitor your bills more accurately.

Water meters are typically located on the boundary of your property and depending on the size of the meter, under a plastic or metal drain cover.

Your water meter serial number can usually be found on the meter

Water usage is measured in m^3 which is equivalent to 1000 litres.

Like gas and electric, only read the numbers in black, not in red.

For more information, please contact
energy.team@bedford.gov.uk

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