

# Economy 7

## For heating and hot water

Economy 7, is an electricity tariff that means you pay a different price for your electricity at different times of day, a bit like on-peak and off-peak phone calls.

With Economy 7, the electricity you use at night costs about a third of the price of the electricity you use during the day – a big difference. The hours of cheap electricity are normally from 12 midnight until 07.00 in winter, and from 01.00 to 08.00 in summer, although this can vary between suppliers.

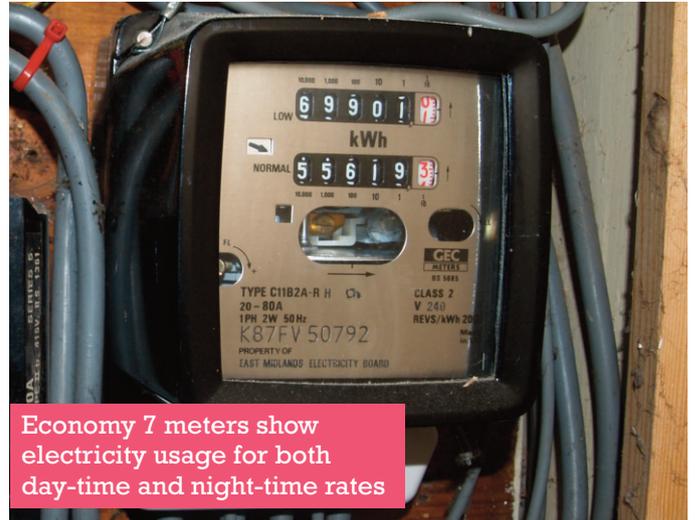
Economy 7 tariffs use a different kind of electricity meter, which, unlike a standard meter, can track the electricity you use during the day and at night separately.

### Is Economy 7 right for me?

Whilst Economy 7 gives you seven hours of cheap electricity at night, the downside is that for the other 17 hours the electricity costs more than normal – higher than the standard tariff rate. This suits certain customers, but not others. If you are paying more for your day-time electricity, you should think about running appliances like your washing machine and dishwasher at night.

### Tips for saving money if you're on an Economy 7 electricity tariff

- Use appliances like dishwashers, washing machines and tumble dryers at night when electricity is cheaper. You could buy timers for them if this helps.
- Similarly, if possible, set the timer on your hot water tank so that the immersion heater comes on during the night, even if you use the hot water during the day.
- Consider investing in a 'slow cooker'; they use far less electricity than an oven.
- Use a microwave instead of the electric hob where possible.
- Use energy-saving light bulbs where possible.



Economy 7 meters show electricity usage for both day-time and night-time rates

Photo: NilesUK

As a rule of thumb Economy 7 will be cost-effective if you use electricity (not gas, which is a much cheaper heating fuel) for your heating and hot water, and if you use more than 80% of your electricity at night.

For this to be the case, you're almost certainly using electric **storage heaters** (inset picture) for warming the house and have a hot water tank that is heated by electricity. This is because both storage heaters and hot water tanks can be timed to use cheap, night-time electricity and store this as heat until needed during the day.



If you heat your home and water with electricity, but don't have storage heaters or a hot water tank, Economy 7 probably won't be cost effective for you.

If you are on an Economy 7 tariff, your electricity bill will show a day-rate and a night-rate. Your electricity meter will likewise show two sets of numbers, one marked 'low' and one marked 'normal', or else there may be a set of figures marked 'day rate' and a red button, which you press to get your night reading.

If you are in any doubt whether or not you are on Economy 7, call your electricity supplier.

# Tips for lower energy bills

Happy paying your gas and electricity supplier more money than you need to?

Thought not. Here are 15 ways to cut your bills ...

1) **Keep the oven door shut as much as possible;** every time you open it, nearly a quarter of the heat escapes.



2) **Give your clothes a day in the sun;** and give your tumble drier a break. Clothes dried in the fresh air feel great, and there are drying days in winter, too.

3) **Food in the oven cooks faster when the air inside flows freely,** so don't put foil on the racks.

4) **Don't leave your phone on charge all night.** It only needs three hours – and try not to leave the TV and other kit on stand-by.

5) **Be a friend to your freezer.** Defrost it regularly to help it run more efficiently.

6) **Catch 'em young.** Encourage your children to switch off electric toys and lights that they're not using. They'll soon get the hang of saving energy.



7) **Dodge the draught!**

Fit draught-excluders to your front door, letter box and key hole, and draw your curtains at dusk to keep the heat in.

8) **When boiling water, only fill the kettle with as much as you'll actually use** (but make sure you cover the metal element at the base).

9) **Buying a new TV, washing machine or dishwasher?** Look out for the Energy Saving Trust 'recommended' logo, and remember: the bigger the TV, the more energy it'll use.



10) **Dimmer is smarter.** Use your dimmer switches to reduce the amount of energy used to light your room.

11) **Wait until you have a full load before putting on a wash.** Two half-loads use more energy (and water) than one full load.



12) **Sleep tight.** Make sure all the lights are turned off when you go to bed, or use a low-wattage night light if you do need to leave one on.

13) **Turn your heating down by 1 degree.** You'll hardly notice the change in temperature, but it'll make a big difference to your heating bill.

14) **Put your fridge in a good spot.** Somewhere the air can circulate behind it, but not next to a cooker or radiator.

15) **New computer?** Remember a laptop typically uses around 85% less energy than a new desktop PC.



This leaflet was originally produced by the Centre for Sustainable Energy, a national charity (no. 298740) that helps people change the way they think and act on energy | [www.cse.org.uk](http://www.cse.org.uk)

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