

# 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.
- Fit energy-saving light bulbs where possible.



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

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.



Economy 7 could suit you if you live off the gas network and can use lots of electricity at night

Turn over for energy saving tips ▶

# Tips for lower energy bills

Happy paying your electricity and gas supplier more money than you need to? Thought not. Here are 10 ways to cut your bills ...

1) 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.



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



3) 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.

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

5) Buying a new washing machine, TV or dishwasher? Look out for the Energy Saving Trust logo.



6) Don't over-fill the kettle (but do make sure you cover the metal element at the base).



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) 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.

9) Wait 'til you have a full load before doing a wash. Two half-loads use more energy (and water) than one full load.

10) Sleep tight. Make sure all the lights are turned off when you go to bed. If you want to light a child's room or a landing, use a low-wattage night light.



This leaflet is one of a series that covers a range of energy efficiency and renewable energy topics, produced by the Sustainable Energy Across the Common Space (SEACS) project, for you to view online or download to share in your community.

SEACS brought together three UK and two French local authorities – Devon County Council, Dorset County Council, Wiltshire Council, le Conseil Général des Côtes d'Armor and Lannion-Trégor Agglomération – to tackle the energy challenge that is faced on both sides of the channel.

The aim was to create opportunities for individuals, households, communities, schools and local authority buildings in both UK and France to reduce their energy consumption, implement energy efficiency measures and use clean/renewable energy where possible. The project has raised awareness of climate and energy issues and encouraged long term behavioural change towards energy use. Cooperation was the ethos of the project and participants had the opportunity to exchange and learn from each other.

For further information about SEACS project, to get ideas and view case studies to help you and your community save energy, and to find out which schools and community groups in your area have been involved, visit the SEACS website or the energy pages of your local authority's website.

[www.seacs.info](http://www.seacs.info)

[www.wiltshire.gov.uk/sustainability](http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/sustainability)

[www.dorsetforyou.com/climatechange](http://www.dorsetforyou.com/climatechange)

[www.devon.gov.uk/energy](http://www.devon.gov.uk/energy)

This leaflet was first produced by the Centre for Sustainable Energy (CSE) and reprinted in this version on behalf of SEACS.

CSE's Home Energy Team offers free advice on domestic energy use to householders in Bristol and Somerset (including the unitary authorities of North Somerset and Bath & North East Somerset).

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