

FACILITATOR CHEAT SHEET

Saving Money on Utility Bills True or False

Place the True sign on one side of the room, and the False sign on the other. Have the group stand up in the middle of the room. Read out each statement, and ask people to stand by the True sign if they think this is true, or the False sign if False. Ask someone to explain why they are standing where they are, and supplement with additional information if needed.

If you do not have space for this, then read out the statements and have people say if they are true or false.

The only way to save money on my gas or electricity bills is by using less energy.

False: Many people can save money by switching utility provider, or tariff with the same provider. But you can also save money by reducing your usage.

If I'm on a low income I can get help with my bills.

True: If you are on a low income and in receipt of certain benefits you are eligible for the Warm Home Discount. This is a rebate of £140 (for 2016 / 17) off your electricity bill. To find out if you qualify contact your electricity provider.

If you I rent privately the landlord may say in the lease that I cannot switch provider.

False: Revised due to new guidance

Landlords cannot say that you cannot switch. However, they can say that when you move out you must swap back to a set provider. Please note some leases do still say that you cannot switch providers, so tenants may need to get guidance on this.

If I switch utility provider my energy supply could be disconnected.

False: There is no danger of disconnection if you switch.

If I'm on a water meter I could get my bills capped.

True for some people: If you are in the Thames Water area, and on a water meter, you might be eligible to have your bills capped. This can be if you have 3 or more children living at home for whom you receive child benefit, or someone in the house has a medical condition which means they use more water than normal. Other water companies may run the same scheme. Contact your water company for details.

If I switch utility provider my energy supply I need a new meter.

False: Your meter stays the same if you switch.

Switching energy provider changes the gas or electricity I receive into my home.

False: Only your bill will change if you switch.

Turning your thermostat down by only one degree centigrade can cut the cost of your heating by 10 per cent.

True: Turning down your heating just one degree can save you up to 10% of your heating bill. If you have a baby, small children, or someone who is ill at home get advice on the ideal temperature. For others, 21 degrees is said to be a good temperature. Putting on extra clothes will ensure you stay warm.

I can switch utility providers if I have a debt with them.

True depending upon how much debt you have: You can switch even if you have a debt of up to £500 and are on a prepayment meter. If you pay monthly / by direct debit, you will need to speak to your supplier to see if you can switch.

There is no help available if I have utility debts.

False: There are grants available to help clear utility, including water, debts. Not everyone is eligible, but it is worth finding out about. Contact a debt advisor to find out if you are eligible to apply. You can also ask your utility provider who may be able to tell you more.

I can compare energy prices online.

True: There are a number of sites that will help you to compare energy providers prices.

I can't switch providers if I'm on a key meter

False: You can switch tariffs or providers regardless of your payment method.

If we all turned off our TVs instead of keeping them on stand-by, we could shut down a couple of power stations in the UK.

True: Appliances left on standby can use as much as three quarters of the energy they use when they are fully switched on. Turn off items on standby, unplug your phone charger when done, and turn off lights when not in use.