

Energy switching factsheet

Hello, I'm Ann Robinson,
Director of Consumer Policy at uSwitch.com.



Our company was initially set up to help people choose the best energy supplier for their household and to help them make the move.

At the time, switching energy suppliers was a fairly new idea – previously none of us had a choice – it was British Gas and your local electricity company or nothing!

Now we have plenty of choice – energy companies want our custom and are competing with each other to offer cheaper and better deals. But choice can sometimes be confusing, especially if you've never switched before. So, this factsheet is designed to answer the questions I am most frequently asked by people who haven't yet switched, but who are interested in knowing how they too could **save up to £425*** on their gas and electricity bills.

Ann Robinson

How do I know I'm getting a good deal?

We suggest following the **three golden rules** of switching:

- 1 - Move to dual fuel:** this means getting both your gas and electricity from one supplier.
- 2 - Pay by direct debit:** most suppliers offer a discount for paying by direct debit.
- 3 - Sign up to an online plan:** online plans are far cheaper than energy suppliers' standard plans, and yet most of us are still on standard plans.

Switching energy: the facts

Switching is a simple and painless process. There is no danger of your gas and electricity being cut off and it certainly doesn't involve pipes being dug up:

- **Choose a new supplier and complete an easy application form.**
- **The paperwork is then handled for you by your new and old supplier.**
- **Both suppliers arrange your transfer - this can take up to six weeks.**
- **Your new supplier will keep you updated and confirm your switch date.**
- **Your old supplier will send you a final bill – pay this and cancel any direct debit.**
- **Take a meter reading on your switch date to give to both suppliers.**

That's it!

Will I be breaking a contract with my current supplier?

Most energy contracts can be cancelled with 28 days warning – your new supplier will take care of this for you. However, some plans, especially fixed and capped tariffs, have cancellation charges. If you are on a fixed or capped plan check your terms and conditions for more information.

Ann's top tip for comparing energy suppliers' prices and services:

Make sure the comparison is based on your individual circumstances – where you live, your actual energy usage and how you like to pay – so you can be sure that you are getting the right deal for you. If you use a price comparison service, check that it is Consumer Focus accredited, impartial and upfront about how it earns its money.