

# Welcome to your new home

Useful information if your new  
home has a water meter



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The Institute of  
Customer Service



Water for the  
North West



# Welcome to your new home

We know that moving is stressful enough without worrying about your water supply and that's why we're here to help things go as smoothly as possible.

We're the North West's water company, keeping the water flowing and the toilets flushing for our seven million customers everyday.

Now that you've settled into your new home, you may have some questions about your water bill, how to pay and most importantly, how to keep your bill as low as possible. This leaflet should help answer these questions, but don't forget we have lots more information at **[unitedutilities.com](https://unitedutilities.com)** where you can also manage your account online.

If you don't already have a payment plan in place we would recommend you set one up as soon as possible and not wait for your first bill to arrive. We've included information about how to set up a Direct Debit on page 5.

## Top money saving tips

**Set up a Direct Debit and get £5 off your annual bill**  
page 5

**Get water fit for cheaper water AND energy bills**  
page 6

**Don't let money go down the drain** page 7

# Getting to know your water meter

Your new home has a water meter and the meter records how much water you use. We use your meter reading to send you a bill for the amount of water you've used. This helps to pay for the services you receive from us (we explain more about our services on page 5).

## What does my water meter look like?

Your water meter is about 10 to 15cm (4"- 6") in size with a row of black and white numbers and red and white dials or numbers. Only the black and white numbers are used to calculate your bill, as these record your water use in cubic metres (see next page for a simple explanation of how much water is in a cubic metre).



## Where is my meter?

You'll usually find your water meter where your water supply enters your home, this could be in a downstairs toilet or under the kitchen sink. It could also be located outside in a box in the footpath (look for a small round plastic lid) or in a box on the outside of your home. If you live in a flat, it may be outside or in a communal metering cupboard.

## When do you read my meter?

In most cases we read your meter every six months (although for some customers this may be every three months). Whenever we read your meter we send you a bill for the amount of water you have used.

If for whatever reason we're unable to read your meter, we'll ask you to provide your own meter reading to avoid receiving an estimated bill.

You can provide your meter reading in just a few seconds using our smartphone app - search 'United Utilities' on the App Store or Google Play to download - or by visiting [unitedutilities.com/myaccount](https://unitedutilities.com/myaccount)

# When will I receive my bill?

We will read your meter within six months of when you moved in and shortly after that you'll receive your first bill. If we're unable to read your meter, we'll ask you to send us a meter reading. If we don't manage to obtain a reading we'll send you an estimated bill.

If you're a tenant, you're also responsible for paying the water bill unless you have an agreement in place with your landlord for them to pay the water bill on your behalf.

If you want to keep an eye on your water usage, you can enter a meter reading online or on our app as often as you like, however, every time you provide a meter read you will receive a bill shortly afterwards.

## How much will my water bill be?

As your home has a water meter your bill will vary depending on how much water you've used. The good news is that this helps you manage the cost of your bill – the less water you use, the less you pay.

We charge you for every cubic metre of water you use. In simple terms a cubic metre is 1,000 litres of water and it goes a very long way!



**1m<sup>3</sup> (One cubic metre) =**

- 13 baths, or**
- 14 washing machine loads, or**
- 28 showers, or**
- 111 toilet flushes, or**
- 3,300 cuppas**

## So what do I pay for?

In simple terms you pay us for the following services:



**Supplying clean water**  
to your home



**Taking away all your used water**  
(which we call wastewater services), cleaning it  
and returning it to rivers and the sea



**Removing the rainwater** that falls on  
your home and the roads (we call these services  
'surface water and highway drainage')

**Standing charge:** we add a charge to cover the cost of  
providing customer related services such as dealing with  
enquiries, managing your water account and preparing and  
issuing bills.

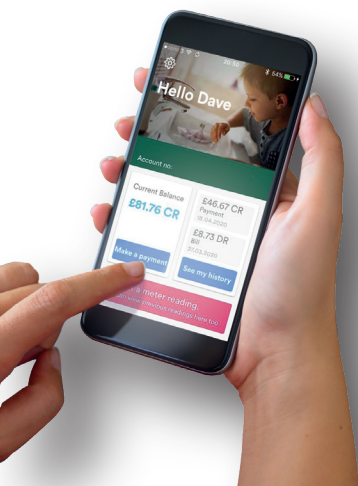
## Watch our video

Please visit [unitedutilities.com/understanding-your-bill](https://unitedutilities.com/understanding-your-bill) to  
watch a short video which explains how we calculate your bill  
when you have a water meter.

## Knock £5 off your bill every year

Why not pay your water bill in smaller chunks over the year by  
setting up a Direct Debit? It's better than having to pay in one  
lump sum and we'll even knock £5 off your bill every year for  
paying in this way. You can choose to pay weekly, fortnightly,  
monthly - the choice is yours.

Visit [unitedutilities.com/directdebit](https://unitedutilities.com/directdebit) or call **0345 672 2999**.



## Why not go paperless?

Register at [unitedutilities.com/myaccount](https://unitedutilities.com/myaccount) to view your  
bills on your phone or PC  
rather than receiving printed  
copies in the post.

# Save water, save money!

As you have a water meter in your new home, it makes sense to use water wisely so you're not paying more than you need. Small changes can make a big difference:

- **Switch off the tap when brushing your teeth** – a family of four can save up to £100 off their annual water bill
- Only switch on the dishwasher and washing machine **when you have a full load**
- Use all that lovely rainwater in the garden by installing a **water butt** and water with a **watering can** rather than a hosepipe.
- **Spend a minute less in the shower** – you'll make a saving on your energy bills too

Visit [getwaterfit.co.uk](http://getwaterfit.co.uk) for hints, tips and FREE water saving gadgets.



Don't let your new home get ruined by blockages and flooding - it's really easy to keep your pipes and drains blockage-free by following our simple tips:

- **Only flush the three Ps** - that's Pee, Poo and (toilet) Paper. Put all other unflushable items such as wet wipes, sanitary products and nappies in a bag and into the bin.
- **Pour cooled fat, oil or grease from cooking into a heat-resistant container** and then empty the contents into the bin.

Visit [unitedutilities.com/stoptheblock](http://unitedutilities.com/stoptheblock)

## It pays to be winterwise!

Now you've moved in, why not check to make sure all the pipes in your new home are lagged, especially those in the loft and other cold places? It will help to prevent the expense and hassle of frozen and burst pipes in the winter. Visit [unitedutilities.com/winterwise](http://unitedutilities.com/winterwise)





## Help when you need it most

We can all benefit from a bit of extra help at some stage in our lives. This could be due to age, ill-health, disability, mental health problems, financial worries or language barriers.

Registering for Priority Services is free and it means that you will benefit from additional services to support your particular needs.

So if you, or someone you know, would appreciate a little bit of extra help, please call us on **0345 072 6093** or visit **[unitedutilities.com/priorityservices](https://unitedutilities.com/priorityservices)**

## Difficulty paying your bill?

If you're going through a tough financial patch and finding it hard to pay your water bill please get in touch on **0800 072 6765**. We're easy to talk to and we have a range of support schemes depending on your circumstances. Our support schemes are available for both homeowners and tenants. Visit **[unitedutilities.com/difficulty-paying-bill](https://unitedutilities.com/difficulty-paying-bill)** for further details.

## Don't let money go down the drain

As you pay for all the water you use, it makes sense not to let it leak away.

The problem is – unless you've got water pouring through your ceiling – leaks are good at hiding. Check overflows to see if any water is dripping out of them. Also, modern toilet cisterns tend to overflow into the toilet bowl rather than outside so check these carefully as they can waste a lot of water.

Our leaflet '**How to check your water usage**' contains lots of hints and tips on how to spot leaks in your home. You can download this at **[unitedutilities.com/leaflets](https://unitedutilities.com/leaflets)**



## Manage your account online

With our free online My Account service, you're in control. Once registered you can:

- Pay your bill
- Set up a Direct Debit
- Switch to paperless billing
- Let us know you're moving

Visit [unitedutilities.com/myaccount](https://unitedutilities.com/myaccount) to register

## 'Appy days!

You can pay your bill or provide a meter reading in just a few clicks with our app, search 'United Utilities' on the App Store or Google Play to download.



Download on the  
**App Store**



GET IT ON  
**Google Play**

## Getting in touch



To speak to us about your bill: **0345 672 2999**

If you have any issues with your water or wastewater services, such as discoloured water, low pressure or no water: **0345 672 3723**

## Follow us on social media



@OfficialUnitedUtilities



@unitedutilities

## Acres of nature to enjoy!

We own reservoirs in some of the most scenic parts of the North West, many right on your doorstep. So whether it's running, cycling or just having a gentle stroll, there's something for everyone to enjoy at one of our recreation sites free of charge. To find your nearest location please visit [unitedutilities.com/acresofnature](https://unitedutilities.com/acresofnature)

# Acres of Nature

