

Take back your time

When *Radio Times* reader Alastair had his smart meter installed, it not only helped bring his energy costs down, but gave him more time to do what he wanted to do

We're all used to having our days punctuated by life's little annoyances. A cold call here, an untimely knock on the door there – interruptions that, however brief, keep us from pursuing the activities we would prefer to be doing much more of.

And when it comes to monitoring and paying our gas and electricity bills, so many of us still have to go through the rigmarole of having our meters read, or having to do it ourselves.

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Nevertheless, before his smart meter was installed, *Radio Times* reader Alastair Melville, 76, was sceptical about the benefits of getting one. "At first I thought that it wasn't going to save me any money, just remind me of all the money I was spending."

But after the installation, he and his wife Jane found themselves changing their energy

habits almost immediately. "When we first got it, I became a real nerd. I turned off all the lights in the house, put all the spotlights on in the kitchen and checked to see what it was going to cost for an hour. It was a bit horrifying!"

Alastair was inspired to make some changes, and it wasn't long before he noticed a difference. "We put in low-wattage bulbs, turned on all the kitchen lights again and it was two-thirds cheaper. I soon rushed round the house changing the bulbs in all the rooms. We've saved quite a bit of money by doing that."

What really makes smart meters such a worthy addition to your household, however, is how much less disruption they bring to our lives compared to the old way. Alastair recalls the process of having his meter read by his energy supplier: "I'd have to go into the garage and root around in order to show people where the meter was. It was a pain in the neck, whereas the smart meter is very convenient."

With fewer interruptions, Alastair and Jane are now even more free to enjoy their time at home, especially when it comes to their creative pursuits. Alastair's even learning a new skill, as he explains: "I love to draw and paint, and I'm also currently learning to play the piano. It's going slowly, but I enjoy it and it's very good for the brain!"

NO MORE FUSS

Just like Alastair, you could soon find yourself making more time for your hobbies, by getting your energy supplier to install a smart meter in your home, at no extra cost. Smart meters replace your existing gas and electric meters, while their handy in-home displays show you how much you're spending on energy, in pounds and pence, in near-real-time.

That means no more meter readers calling in unannounced, and no more estimated energy bills. The smart meter sends readings automatically to your energy supplier, without you having to lift a finger. Just like Alastair, you could soon find yourself bringing your costs down, and able to make more time for yourself.



Contact your energy supplier today about getting a smart meter, at no extra cost

To find out who your gas supplier is, call 0870 608 1524

