



# PRICE COMPARISON SITES

## How to get the best deal



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HARTLEPOOL ADVICE PARTNERSHIP EVOLVING NETWORK



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**Sticking with the same insurance, credit card, utility or savings account provider year after year is likely to mean you don't get the best deal. Price comparison sites are designed to do just what their name implies – compare the price of goods and services from a range of suppliers.**

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## Some examples...

- Pre-ticked boxes stating you have no criminal convictions could leave you with an insurance policy that won't pay out if you do have a criminal record and you didn't untick the box
- Pre-ticked boxes agreeing that you will pay for financial products such as car insurance either annually (in one lump sum) or monthly (usually by direct debit). Paying for insurance monthly is often the most expensive option, so you may want to avoid this if you can.



## Beware of assumptions!

'Standard' situations used by comparison sites when serving up quotations may not apply to you. If you've used a price comparison website and aren't completely confident that the deals it has presented you with are right for your circumstances, phone the product provider directly to be sure.

## Is it really all about the cost?

Quality is as important as cost, so it makes sense to focus on getting value for money - not the very cheapest deals - when you buy financial products. Remember that low-cost insurance policies, for instance, are unlikely to include perks such as the provision of a replacement hire car should your vehicle be damaged in an accident. You might appreciate benefits like this even if they cost a little more.



## Keep your personal details safe

Take a look at the sites' privacy policy, which should include information on how your personal details will be used and stored. It's possible that some boxes, opting you in to receive email marketing, postal marketing or even telephone marketing from the website itself and even third party firms, might be pre-ticked. By unticking these, you can state your wish not to receive marketing materials. The comparison site you are dealing with should respect this and ensure you are kept off its mailing lists.



## Should I haggle with my current provider?

Once you've followed the steps above and got the overall cheapest price, get on the phone and haggle. If your current insurer can beat or match your best quote it saves the hassle of switching your policy.



## Check, check and double check

Always double-check the policy terms. Once you've found the cheapest quotes make two important checks.



## What is the appeal of these price comparison sites?

You can get a quote in a single stroke without having to make several telephone calls and fill in several different forms.



However using a price comparison site isn't always straightforward and so please take note of the following tips on the potential pitfalls of price comparison sites and how to use these sites effectively.

## What will I need to get started?

You will need internet access and knowledge on how to use the internet.

If you need help getting online Hartlepool Library Service run free courses. For more information call (01429) 272905. From January 2015 the HAPEN Advice Network will be running a series of basic I.T. courses. Call (01429) 271275 for more information.



Some products such as car, home and travel insurance will be priced in accordance with individuals' circumstances and so you will need to fill in online forms about yourself and your needs. If you give the wrong information, even accidentally, then you will face problems if you ever need to make a claim!

## Which site should I use?

It is more a question of how many than which one. **Be aware...**

- No two price comparison websites are likely to give you exactly the same results - even if you provide them with identical information.
- Some financial product providers choose not to be featured on price comparison sites. For example, insurance policies from the likes of Direct Line and Aviva won't be included in the results on any price comparison site returns when you search - even if they might have the most suitable deals for you.

To compare products from companies that don't subscribe to comparison sites, you'll have to get quotes from them individually - this shouldn't take more than a few minutes per firm and could be well worth the effort.

## Things to be aware of

There are certain issues you might encounter when using price comparison sites, which are important to be aware of. These can affect the level of cover you receive when buying insurance, the excess you are expected to pay and could see your email inbox clogged up with marketing messages.

### **Make sure the right boxes are ticked**

Pre-ticked boxes often feature on price comparison websites and ignoring them, or failing to amend what has been pre-selected for you, could have serious consequences. It isn't unusual, for example, for a price comparison website to assume that you do not have a criminal record and pre-tick a box automatically.

### **Double-check the quotes.**

Click through to the insurance provider's own website to double-check the quotes, as to speed up searches some comparison sites make a few assumptions (see 'Things to be aware of').

### **Examine the policy's coverage.**

Check whether it's suitable. If you want free car hire if your car is being fixed, is it included? While you're there, it's worth playing with the policy details to see if you can lower the price further. Look at the excess, and whether adding drivers cuts the cost.



**Following the steps above  
often produces  
huge savings,  
Good Luck!!**

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## **MOST POPULAR PRICE COMPARISON SITES**



[www.moneysupermarket.com](http://www.moneysupermarket.com)

[www.gocompare.com](http://www.gocompare.com)

[www.confused.com](http://www.confused.com)

[www.comparethemarket.com](http://www.comparethemarket.com)

[www.uswitch.com](http://www.uswitch.com)

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**Contact the HAPEN Advice Network  
for free and confidential advice.**

**Appointment Line (01429) 271294**

**Monday to Friday 9:00am - 5:00pm**

**[www.hapen.co.uk](http://www.hapen.co.uk)**

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# Want to Get Online

**Contact the HAPEN Advice Network to find out about our basic I.T. skills courses. Call (01429) 271275 Monday to Friday 9:00am to 5:00pm**

## **HAPEN Advice Network**

The Community Centre

Miers Avenue

Hartlepool

TS24 9JQ

Tel: (01429) 271275

**[www.hapen.co.uk](http://www.hapen.co.uk)**

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**First Contact  
and  
Support Hub**

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