



Prestel

# What is Prestel?

Prestel is the first of a new kind of instant information service. A system simple and cheap enough to be used by anybody.

Prestel is currently being used by thousands of customers in Britain and overseas, large businesses, small firms, schools, colleges, farms, hotels, high street shops and in a growing number of private homes. They find Prestel a quick and very easy way to get the information they need every day, as well as offering powerful two-way communications.

An adapted television set and an ordinary telephone line link Prestel customers to an enormous range of computer-held information. To call up an item from the thousands available

you simply press the numbered buttons on a keypad the size of a pocket calculator. No complicated codes are required.

The information on Prestel is organised in 'pages'—a page is a screenful of information. As soon as you ask for a particular page, the computer sends it instantly down the telephone line and it appears on the screen of your set.

Prestel can store hundreds of thousands of pages but finding the information is easy. There are special index pages on Prestel to help you, and also printed directories. You can learn how to use the system in a few minutes without any special training.

The information on Prestel is supplied by hundreds of independent organisations called



Information Providers. These include well-known names like the Financial Times and British Rail plus many new organisations set up to exploit the new medium and provide a variety of information services, some of them aimed at specialised business customers, others of more general use.



Information Providers are in direct contact with the central computer and edit their pages to keep them continually up-to-date. Prestel is therefore an important medium for fast-changing information like foreign exchange rates, the availability of airline seats, or the latest sports results. It can also of course bring you company results and analysis, commodity prices, the latest news, detailed guides to the countries of the world, office space to rent, theatre and cinema guides, and more.

### **Prestel is a 2-way system**

With its vast range of topics, Prestel can be thought of as an electronic publishing medium. But Prestel's interactivity makes it something more than that. As well as receiving information, users can send messages both to each other on a special computer, and to Information Providers using Response Pages.

These allow you to order goods via Prestel, book a hotel room or reserve a seat at the theatre.

The dialogues that can be carried on between the user and the computer make Prestel a powerful means of communication. Salesmen who work from home can keep up-to-date with head office and key in their orders directly. Travel agents can make bookings and order supplies of brochures from holiday companies.

Business can also set up private information networks on Private Prestel, keeping their pages confidential to selected users.

The network of Prestel computers covers the major centres of population. Most UK users can get Prestel on a local telephone call without expensive trunk charges or private lines. But if you live outside the local call area of a Prestel computer, you can of course get through on the STD or international telephone networks.



### **Viewdata and Teletext**

Prestel is a viewdata system operating over the telephone lines. It is different from broadcast Teletext systems like Ceefax and Oracle because it is faster, has much more information and allows the user to send as well as receive information. Prestel does of course cost more.

# What information is on Prestel?

The Information Providers (IPs) on Prestel, specialists in their own field, are entirely independent organisations. They rent pages from British Telecom, which operates the service and provides index pages. The IPs have complete editorial freedom in how they use their pages and what they charge for them. With hundreds of providers and many thousands of pages there is therefore an enormous variety of information available.

Some IPs, such as the Consumers' Association, with its Prestel version of Which? magazine and Viewtel 202 with its electronic newspaper, offer information of interest to the public at large.



Other IPs provide services aimed at particular groups of people or organisations, such as travel agencies, farmers, importers and exporters, hoteliers, estate agents, lawyers, traders in commodities and foreign exchange, advertising agencies, the racing fraternity and local newspapers.

Prestel is fast becoming part of the every day working life of these users because it provides them with essential facts they need in their jobs. The number of these specialised information services is growing all the time.

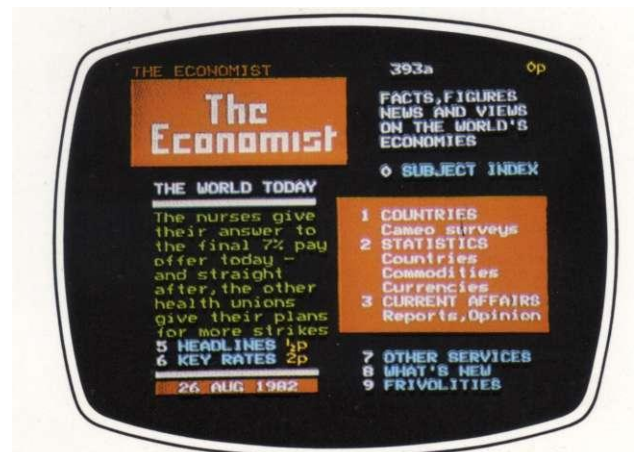


Many IPs aim their information services at the business community as a whole. The Financial Times, for example, through its subsidiary Fintel provides a comprehensive



range of business news, company information and economic analysis as well as many specialised financial services.

The Economist concentrates on authoritative briefing on the countries of the



world, plus key statistics for the businessman and analysis of current events.

The Stock Exchange has a direct link from its own computer to provide regular updates of share prices, whilst Intercom Videotex pages are updated every few minutes. Guinness Mahon and other leading banks provide the latest foreign exchange rates.



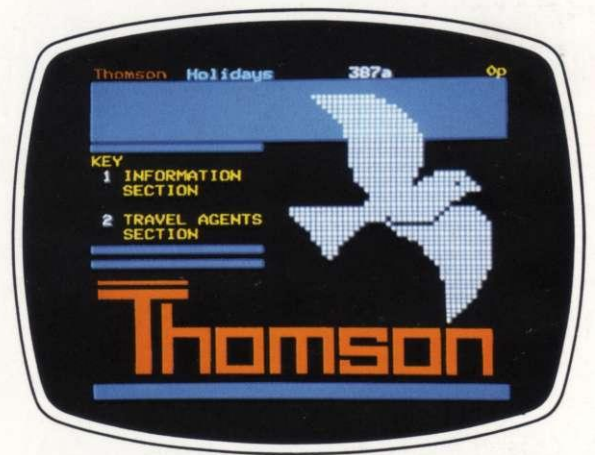
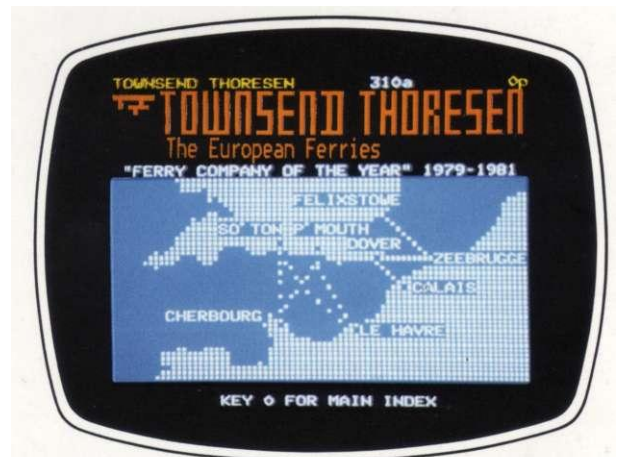
Other import organisations providing business information include American Express, the Central Statistical Office, Datastream, Dow Jones, Dun and Bradstreet, Philips and Drew and The Wall Street Journal.



The first group of people to take to Prestel in a big way were travel agents, and every -go-ahead agency now uses Prestel several times a day. There are over 250 tour operators, ferry companies and airlines on Prestel detailing fares, timetables and up-to-date availability, all at the press of a button. Prestel saves the agent valuable time and money on

long phone calls and helps him to give his clients a better and more comprehensive service.

Most of the travel information is available to all Prestel users and can be invaluable when planning holidays and business trips. Amongst the leading names are British Airways, Thomas Cook, Horizon, Pan Am, P & O, Qantas, Sealink, Thomson Holidays, Townsend Thoresen and TWA.



Some businesses keep their Prestel pages confidential by placing them in Private Prestel. This means that only users nominated by the owner of the page (that is the Information Provider) can look at those pages. This effectively gives them their own private information system, but without all the problems and costs of running it themselves.

Prestel is a highly selective medium. Most customers make regular use of a few pages giving information that they need every day, but they also find Prestel invaluable for information which they only need occasionally: railway timetables, weather forecasts, film and theatre guides, hotel bookings, career and educational advice, and even quizzes and games. The range is enormous and growing all the time.

**STOCK EXCHANGE** 520056a 1.5p  
 Time 15.00  
 FT 30 Index 571.0-5.5 568.4-2.6

**F.T. 30-SHARE INDEX A-CK**

Allied-Lyons	123 <sub>2</sub>	3 4 3 <sub>2</sub> 3
B.P.	276	8 60 76 6
BICC plc	296	8
BTR plc	326	4 6 4 2
Beecham	300	297 9 8 7 5 4
Blue Circle	403	4 5 13 11 08
BOC Group	186	4
Boots	244	3 1
Bowater	191	
Cadbury-Sch.	111	10 11 12 11
Courtaulds	78	7 8 7 6
Distillers	198	7 8 7 6
Dunlop	63	
GEC	1083	73,5,2,70,
GKN	144	3 1 39

FRAME UPDATED ON 25/08/82 AT 16:05  
 KEY 0 FOR NEXT PAGE, 9 FOR MAIN INDEX

**FINTEL** 248a 0p

**10 BUSINESS TODAY**  
 Today's news, rates prices

**11 Banking** 18 Gold  
**12 Business ratios** 19 Interest rates  
**13 Economic forecasts** rates

**14 EEC information** 20 Oil industry  
**15 Foreign exchange** 21 Small investors bureau  
**16 FT indices**  
**17 FT information**

**22 What's new**  
**23 Send us a message**  
**24 Clients & services**  
**25 Copyright**

**British Rail** 221002650a 0p

LONDON EUSTON-CARLISLE-MOTHERWELL-GLASGOW CEN MON-SAT 17/5/82-2/10/82

dep	arr	dep	arr	notes
--	0337	0510s	0630	
--	0345	0518	0633a	
80	0451	0610s	0632	29/5-4/9
--	0438	--	0724	£
--	0610	--	0848	
--	0840	--	1114	
--	1021	1139s	1158	b
0650	1112c	1226sc	1244	rbEx
0745	1140	--	1302	r
--	1228	--	1348	29/5 & 26/6-4/9
	1232	1355s	1413	b

BB Index 1. Return to 1. Bus 2. Later trains 3. Fare 6.

NOTES (Standard notes Key 9)  
 a change Motherwell  
 c change Crewe

Roomservice: 678 67821445 0p

**PRESTEL ROOMSERVICE - MAKE A MOVE**

To make a reservation at the ROCK TOWERS HOTEL, WEST LOOE, CORNWALL, fill in the booking form:

NO. OF ROOM REQUIRED  
 SINGLE DOUBLE 1

DATE OF ARRIVAL (ddmmyy) 26. 8 . 82  
 DURATION OF STAY 5 NIGHTS

GUESTS NAME (Alpha) Sheila Mitchell  
 TEL. NO. (if not below)  
 NAME SHEILA MITCHELL  
 ADDRESS 28 BEAUMANOIR MANSIONS  
 EAGLESHAM  
 GLASGOW  
 TEL: 041 862 5941  
 DATE THU 26 AUG 1982 11:15:45  
 KEY 1 TO SEND, 2 TO CANCEL

**Met Office (C)1981** 20911a 3p

Forecast for UK until Midnight TONIGHT.  
 Issued @ 5. am on Thu 26th Aug '82



CONTINUING RATHER COOL GENERALLY.

■ A FEW SUNNY PERIODS & SHOWERS HEAVY AT TIMES WITH THUNDER IN PLACES.

■ MAINLY DRY & BRIGHT AT FIRST, BUT SHOWERS WILL DEVELOP LATER TO AFFECT MOST PARTS THIS AFTERNOON & EVENING.

0 Main Index, 1 Detailed Forecast 3p  
 2 Actual Weather, 3 3-Day Forecast 6p

**PRESTEL** 128211a 0p

**Congratulations**



RECIPIENT'S ACCOUNT NO. 619991906 #  
 TO PETER WYME-DAVIES

FROM SHEILA MITCHELL 819995065

Designed by WMS

KEY 1 TO SEND, 2 TO CANCEL

# How does Prestel work?

The Prestel user needs just a set and an ordinary telephone line.

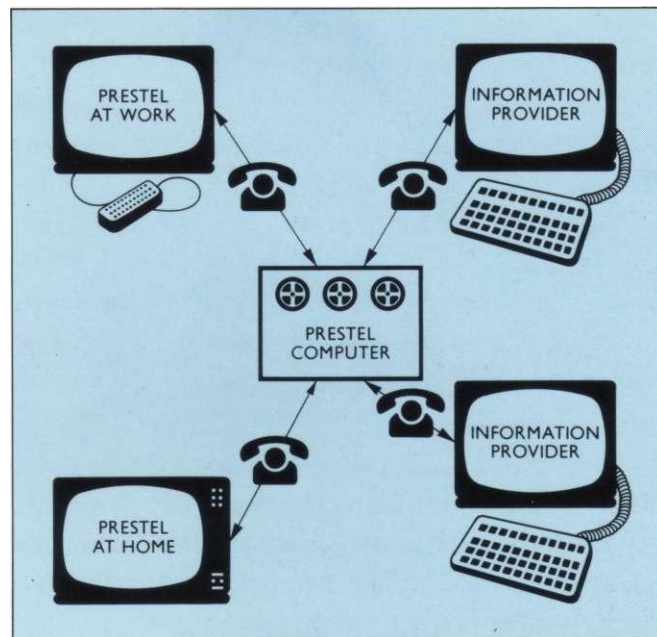
The Prestel set is normally an ordinary TV set with additional electronics to allow it to display Prestel characters and to communicate over the telephone. These electronics may either be fitted in the set or be held in a separate adaptor which plugs into an ordinary TV set. All sets and adaptors come with either a keypad or a keyboard for the user to select information and send messages.

The telephone line is fitted with a simple jack socket into which the set plugs. This telephone can of course be used for making and receiving ordinary calls when Prestel is not in use.

The user telephones his nearest Prestel computer just by pressing a single button on the keypad. No need to remember a telephone number or to identify himself—each user is 'registered' on at least two computers.

The pages of information are linked together so that each page can lead to other pages. Working through a logically connected sequence of index pages, just pressing a single digit each time, is often the easiest way of finding information on Prestel.

Users can also get straight to any Prestel page by keying its full number which should appear in the printed directories. Users can



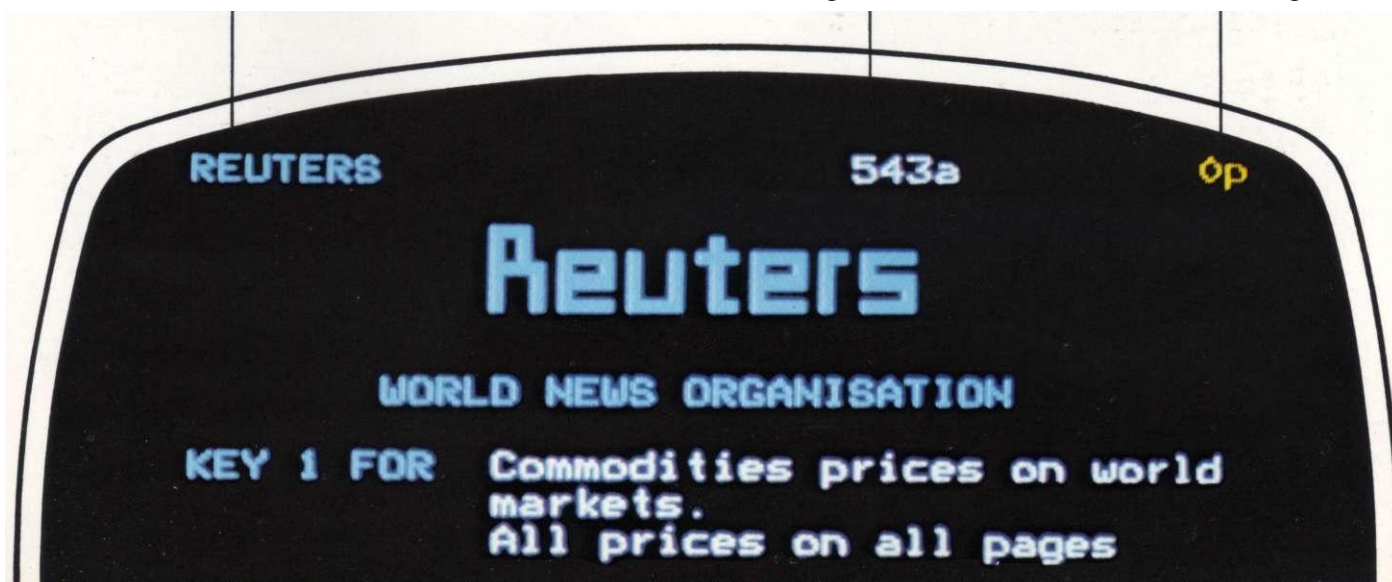
also note frequently used page numbers. The directories describe all the information available and are published quarterly. (The electronic index pages on Prestel are of course updated every day).

The Prestel computers are linked together in a network and all changes to the information are distributed rapidly to all the computers around the country via high-speed links. Information providers can update their pages at any time either using editing terminals over normal telephone lines or with special links from their own computers.

Information Provider

Page number

Frame charge



# How do you use Prestel?

When you call up your local Prestel computer the first page you will see is the one that welcomes you individually. You can then go either straight to the page you want or you can work your way through the index pages. These show lists of information headings each with a number. As soon as you key that number, Prestel sends you the page with that topic on it.

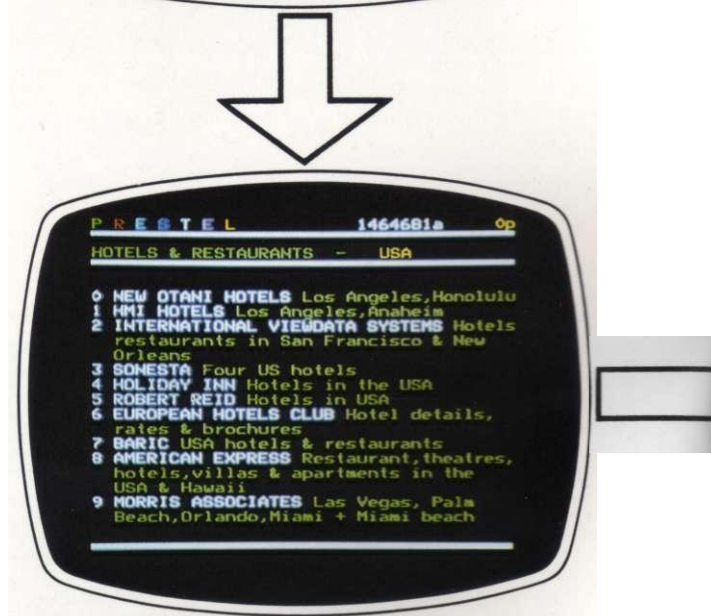
Say you are planning a trip to the USA. You would start with the General Interest index page. Amongst the headings is Holidays, Transport and Travel, and by keying 4 you get the main Travel index page. There are probably several routes to the pages you want—one way to start is by looking up information about the US. Pressing 7 takes you to an index of foreign countries and by choosing from an alphabetic list you will get to page 1467.

Depending on your interests, you might now want to look up key statistics on the US economy, check on standby flight availability from one of the many airlines on Prestel and after looking through the hotels available you might care to book a room directly.

The last page in the sequence is a response page. All you need to fill in this 'electronic coupon' are the normal buttons on your keypad. The computer inserts your name and address automatically.

When you have checked that all the details are correct, it is sent straightaway to the Prestel computer where it is picked up by the Information Provider.

Response pages can be used for a variety of messages—reservations, ordering of goods (with credit card number in many cases), requests for further information, etc. Prestel sets with full alphabetic keyboards can send very detailed communications.





PRESTEL 1a Op  
 GENERAL INTEREST INFO.  
 1 NEWS & WEATHER  
 2 SPORT & HOBBIES Taking part, events, results, pastimes  
 3 ENTERTAINMENT Media, events, places to visit, quizzes, eating out, jokes, games  
 4 HOLIDAYS, TRANSPORT, TRAVEL Rail, road, air, travel agents tourism, cars, hotels  
 5 MARKETPLACE Shopping, classified ads., consumer advice etc.  
 6 ADVICE Medical, legal, education, money benefits, family, telecomms etc  
 7 GOVERNMENT INFORMATION Government dep'ts & services, Parliament  
 8 EMPLOYMENT Jobs, careers, training  
 9 BOOKS & REFERENCE Libraries, facts & figures, reviews, magazines, miscellany  
 0 OTHER INFORMATION Business, property, science, food & drink, agriculture

PRESTEL 14a Op  
 TRAVEL HOLIDAYS TRANSPORT  
 1 RAIL TRAVEL Timetables, historic lines, rail/hover/sea timetables  
 2 AIR TRAVEL International & UK internal flights  
 3 COACH TRAVEL Scheduled service & coach tours UK & overseas, coach hire  
 4 OTHER TRANSPORT Travel agents, river & sea transport, shipping & removals  
 5 HOLIDAYS & TOURISM Holidays available insurance, accommodation, coach tours places to visit, advice, complaints  
 6 CARS & MOTORING Motoring advice, routes, car buying, motoring holidays, motor sport, car rental  
 7 INFORMATION ON FOREIGN COUNTRIES  
 8 HOTELS  
 9 INFORMATION FOR TRAVEL BUSINESSES  
 0 INFORMATION FOR OVERSEAS VISITORS

THE ECONOMIST 3931365a 10p  
 USA/Statistics  

	1981	1980	1979
POPULATION (m)	229.8	227.7	225.1
Growth % pa	+1.2	+1.2	+1.1
NATIONAL INCOME			
Total gnp (\$bn)	2922	2626	2414
Gnp growth %	+1.9	-0.16	+3.2
Gnp/head (\$)	12715	11788	10976
BALANCE OF PAYMENTS (\$bn)			
Exports fob	233.7	221.8	182.1
Imports cif	273.4	253.0	218.9
Trade bal fob/fob	-40.3	-27.4	-29.4
Current account	+ 6.6	+ 0.1	- 0.6
RESERVES (\$bn)			
	18.9	15.6	7.8
PRICES % change	+10.4	+13.5	+11.8
EXCHANGE RATE (\$/£)	2.03	2.33	2.12

9 USA: political/economic survey  
 1 Stats: related countries 0 Moies

PRESTEL 1467a Op  
 COUNTRIES T-2  

10 TAIWAN	30 VENEZUELA
11 TANZANIA	31 VIETNAM
12 THAILAND	32 WALES
13 TOGO	33 WEST GERMANY
14 TRINIDAD & TOBAGO	34 YEMEN N
15 TUNISIA	35 YEMEN S
16 TURKEY	36 YUGOSLAVIA
20 UAE	40 ZAIRE
21 UGANDA	41 ZAMBIA
22 UPPER VOLTA	42 ZIMBABWE
23 URUGUAY	
24 USA	
25 USSR	

KEY 0 COUNTRIES A-Z B P-S

LHC 2000899a Op  
 Holiday Inn Hotels - HOTEL RESERVATIONS  
 After each reply Key #  
 Hotel reference no: 104 #  
 (Key ## to check hotel no.)  
 Enter the number of rooms required:  
 Singles: # Twins: 1 #  
 Date of arrival: day 21# month 7 #  
 Number of nights: 4 #  
 Daytime phone no: 015832790 # Ext #  
 Request made TUE 08 DEC 1981 14:14:28#  
 SHEILA MITCHELL  
 14 TRINITY COURT  
 KELVINSIDE  
 GLASGOW  
 \* We will confirm by telephone within one working day.  
 KEY 1 TO SEND, 2 TO CANCEL

LHC 2000899a Op  
 Holiday Inn Hotels - HOTEL RESERVATIONS  
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 Request made TUE 08 DEC 1981 14:14:28#  
 SHEILA MITCHELL  
 14 TRINITY COURT  
 KELVINSIDE  
 GLASGOW  
 \* We will confirm by telephone within one working day.  
 SENT, PRESS # TO CONTINUE

# How much does Prestel cost?

With Prestel you pay for what you use and no more. It's not a single information service, but hundreds of separate information and communication services. So you are not charged a large subscription fee but pay according to what information you use and when.

Each cost is separately identifiable: the set, the computer time, the information and the telephone line.

## The set

Prestel sets, or adaptors for existing TV sets, can be rented or bought from a large number of independent suppliers around the country. Even the most expensive cost less than a good electric typewriter, and adaptors can be obtained for as little as £170.

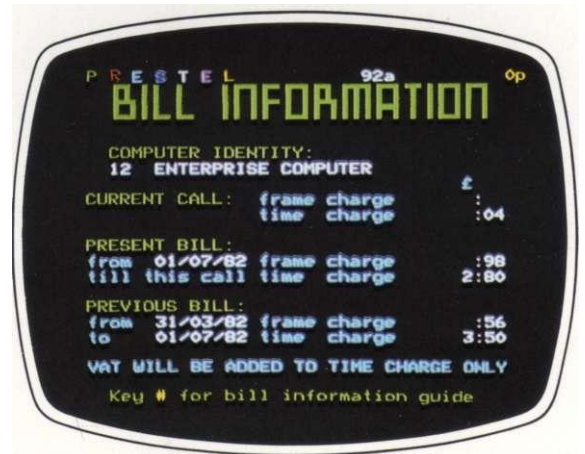
## Computer time

You pay for using the Prestel computers according to the length of time you are connected to them. As with the telephone, there is a small unit charge which buys more time at evenings and weekends than during the business day. (Business users also pay a small, fixed quarterly charge).

## Information pages

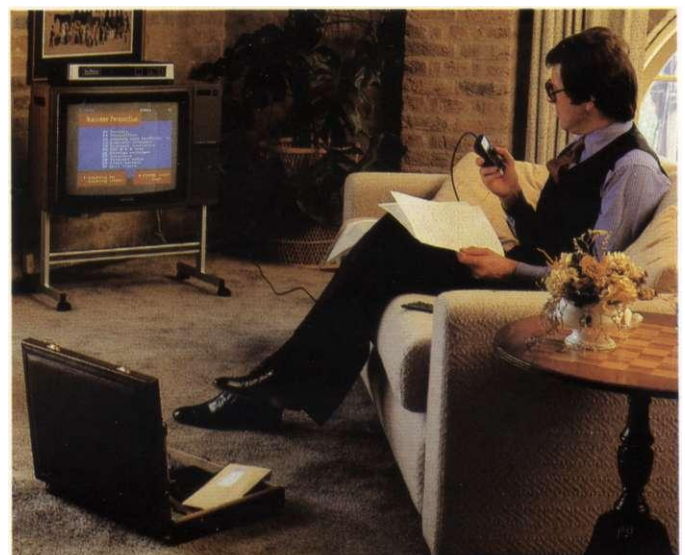
The information charges depend on the policy of the Information Provider. He can put a separate price on each of his pages if he wishes, and the user's account will be debited at the price shown on each page used. The vast majority of information pages, and all index pages, are in fact free. The user will always be advised of the price of the page before looking at it. The computer and information charges are accumulated on the Prestel computer and each Prestel customer gets a quarterly bill.

(He can also see how much he is spending on Prestel by looking it up on page 92).



## Telephone costs

Telephone costs are included in the normal telephone bill. For the 62% of the population who are now within local call range of a Prestel computer, the cost will be that of a local telephone call. More remote customers pay the appropriate STD rates. (There is also a small installation and rental charge for the 'jack socket' which allows the telephone line to be used for Prestel). For precise details of all current charges, ask your local Prestel Office for our tariff sheet.



# What about the future?

There is no doubting the enormous potential of Prestel and other viewdata systems. Electronic information and communication have already begun to influence the way many people live. Eventually, everybody's working and private lives will be affected.

The simplicity and low cost of viewdata systems with their potential for storing large quantities of up-to-date information, available at the press of a button, together with their power and convenience as a means of communication are what makes them so important a breakthrough.

Computing power is taken outside the control of the specialist so that almost anybody can use it.

Prestel was the world's first viewdata system. Others have followed both in this country and abroad as part of the growth of an important new industry. Prestel however remains by far the largest of these systems in terms of breadth and quantity of information and its thousands of customers. It is available now to virtually any telephone subscriber in this country and to a growing number overseas.

Prestel is also developing new facilities. Users can already leave messages for each other on one of the Prestel computers. By 1983, this Electronic Mailbox will be extended so that users can employ their local Prestel computer to send messages to the local computer of any other Prestel user.

In 1982 a major step forward was taken with the introduction of Gateway.

This new Prestel application opens the way to other computer systems. Prestel users are now able to make more use of a whole range of services from Information Providers.

They can, for example, book flights directly on airline computers or holidays with tour operators; and will soon be able to check their

account balances through bank computers with absolute security. They will probably also be able to link up with the viewdata systems of other countries.



Prestel users will even be able to do the shopping via supermarket computers. Examine the choice, check the prices, make a note of the special offers and then order the goods.

That's just a sample of what Gateway makes possible. All this simply by using a standard Prestel set linked by phone in the usual way to a Prestel computer which switches the user through Gateway to other computers.

Then there are all the extras you can attach to a Prestel set. Already there's a wide range of accessories available: print out machines, tape recorders and full alphanumeric keyboards among them. Pages can be printed at the press of a button and the more frequently used can be stored on ordinary audio cassettes.

The potential is enormous, but the power of Prestel is available today. For further information ring Freefone 2043.

# Further information

If you would like to know more about Prestel and how to obtain sets or adaptors, ring 100 and ask the operator for Freefone 2043.

If you want to use Prestel outside the U.K. please contact: —  
Prestel Enquiries, Prestel, Temple Avenue, London EC4Y OHL.

If you are interested in becoming an Information Provider, please write to: —  
Information Provider Services, Prestel, Temple Avenue, London EC4Y OHL.

