

Nationwide Isa offers top 2.9 pc rate

NATIONWIDE'S new cash Isas went on sale yesterday, with a top rate of 2.9 pc.

Its online E-Isa rate goes up for savers opening an account now. The rate includes a 1.15 percentage point bonus payable until July 31, 2012.

It makes it the top easy access rate around. But to open one you need to have a current or savings account with the building society.

Its Champion Isa rate goes up to 2.7 pc for new savers, including a 1.21 point bonus until June 30, 2012 — a good deal in the High Street.

You have to give 60 days' notice to get your money out, but you are allowed one free, easy access withdrawal a year — which you can use to transfer your money to a better deal if one comes along.

Yorkshire Building Society is launching a top-paying two-year fixed-rate cash Isa tomorrow at 3.5 pc.

Savers have just two months to use their cash Isa allowance — £5,100 for this tax year — or lose it altogether. You cannot carry any unused Isa allowance over to the next tax year.

The advantage of cash Isas is your interest is tax-free.

Expect more new cash Isa deals to appear shortly, as banks and building societies look both to attract savers looking to use this year's cash Isa allowance, and to catch the early birds keen to use their tax break for next year as soon as possible.

The cash Isa limit for next tax year, starting on April 6, is £5,340.

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BEST BUYS: Variable rate savings accounts — easy access

Provider	Contact	Account	Guarantee	Compensation licence	Minimum deposit	Before tax	After 20% tax	After 40% tax
					£	%	%	%
IN THE HIGH STREET								
Halifax	0845 726 3646	Guaranteed Saver Reward	one year	shared	1	2.00	1.60	1.20
Northern Rock	0845 600 4466	Branch Saver 3	no	own	1	1.90	1.52	1.14
Leeds BS	0845 054 0995	Albion Saver	no	own	2,500	1.35	1.08	0.81
Skipton BS	0845 717 1777	Branch Access	no	shared	1	1.20	0.96	0.72
TELEPHONE (T) and POSTAL (P) ACCOUNTS								
ING Direct (b)	0800 376 8877	Direct Savings (T)	for 12 months	Dutch	1	2.80	2.24	1.68
Leeds BS	0845 054 0995	Postal Tracker Bond (P)	yes	own	1,000	2.50	2.00	1.50
Sainsbury's Bank	0500 405 060	Easy Saver (T)	no	own	1	2.50	2.00	1.50
Skipton BS	0845 850 1722	Telephone Saver	no	shared	10,000	2.00	1.60	1.20
INTERNET ACCOUNTS								
ING Direct (b)	ingdirect.co.uk	Direct Savings	for 12 months	Dutch	1	2.80	2.24	1.68
Newcastle BS	newcastle.co.uk	Online Access	no	own	500	2.70	2.16	1.62
Skipton BS	skipton.co.uk	My Saving	to Jan 2012	shared	1	2.50	2.00	1.50
Northern Rock	northernrock.co.uk	E-Saver 3	no	own	250	2.50	2.00	1.50
Barnsley BS	barnsley-bs.co.uk	Online Saver	no	shared	1	2.50	2.00	1.50
CASH ISAS: Branch (B), telephone (T), Postal (P) and Internet (Int)								
Santander (a)	0800 234 6065	Flexible Isa 3 (B/T/Int)	one year	shared	1	2.85	2.85	2.85
Halifax	0845 726 3646	Isa Direct Reward (T/Int/B)	no	shared	1	2.80	2.80	2.80
NS&I (a)	0500 007 007	Direct Isa (Int/T)	no	govt	100	2.50	2.50	2.50
Northern Rock	0845 600 4466	Easy ISA (B)	no	own	1	2.50	2.50	2.50
Intelligent Finance	0845 609 4343	Cash Isa (T/Int)	no	shared	1	2.50	2.50	2.50
FOR PENSIONERS IN THE HIGH STREET								
Leeds BS	0845 050 5075	Flexible Freedom	to Sept 2011	own	500	2.00	1.60	1.20
Skipton BS	0845 850 1722	Pension Plus	no	shared	500	1.45	1.16	0.87
Norwich & Peterborough BS	0845 300 2511	50-Plus Savings	no	own	5,000	1.00	0.80	0.60
BONUS ACCOUNTS					BONUS			
Post Office	postoffice.co.uk	Online Saver	1.25% pt for 1 yr	own	1	2.90	2.32	1.74
Principality BS	principality.co.uk	e-ISA	1% pt for 1 yr	own	1	2.80	2.80	2.80
BM Savings	0845 602 2828	ISA Extra (T/Int)	1% pt for 15mths	shared	1	2.70	2.70	2.70
C&G	0845 602 0022	Cash Isa (B/T)	1.7% pt for 1 yr	shared	1	2.70	2.70	2.70
Northern Rock (c)	0845 600 4466	Save Up (P)	1.5% pt for 1 yr	own	1	2.60	2.08	1.56
AA Savings	theaa.com	Internet Extra 4 (Int)	2.1% pt for 1 yr	shared	1	2.60	2.08	1.56
BM Savings	0845 602 2828	Telephone Extra 3 (T)	2.1% pt for 1 yr	shared	1	2.60	2.08	1.56
Santander	0800 389 9875	Instant Access 3 (B/T)	1.5% pt for 1 yr	shared	1,000	2.50	2.00	1.50

KEY: (a) No transfers from other providers. (b) New savers only. (c) Maximum one withdrawal a month.

TABLE COMPILED BY SYLVIA MORRIS. See www.thisismoney.co.uk for savings updates.

To find out which banks and building societies share a licence, go to www.isa.gov.uk or call 0845 606 12340.