

SENSIBLE SOLAR AZ™

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Sensible Solar Az
Business ID: 1000036348
BBB Rating: A+

BBB Tip: A consumer's guide to going solar

By [Better Business Bureau](#)



(Getty Images)

Many homeowners are going solar to save money, to go “off the grid,” or to make a positive impact on the environment. No matter the reason, installing a solar system is a big purchase with many aspects to consider. **If you're thinking about adding solar panels to your roof or property, BBB recommends the following tips to help you get the best deal on quality equipment that will save you money long-term.**

What to consider before going solar

- **Consider improving your home's energy efficiency.** According to [Energy.gov](#), it's important to consider potential energy efficiency upgrades before you go solar. A home energy audit can help you understand where your home loses energy and where you can make simple, yet effective improvements. For example, you could [switch out older appliances and electronics for high-efficiency products](#). Heating and cooling takes a large amount of energy, so consider [weatherizing](#) your home by checking seals around windows and doors, controlling moisture and checking ventilation. An energy-efficient home will use much less energy and will impact how much solar energy you will need.

- **Consider the condition of your roof.** Most solar systems are installed on rooftops. They use mounting hardware, which needs to be installed on sturdy materials like asphalt shingles, standing-seam metal, or concrete tiles. In addition, [the best solar panels last 40 years or more](#), so you need to make sure your roof will last just as long. If your roof will need repairing or replacing before then, prioritize a new roof before installing solar panels. If for any reason your roof is not ideal for solar panels, but you have a decent amount of land, you could consider installing solar panels on the ground instead.

- **Research your energy needs.** Contractors need to know how much energy you require in order to give you a recommendation on solar energy systems and an accurate quote. Review your electric bills, paying close attention to how many kilowatt-hours you use each month. Keep in mind that the amount can vary at different times of the year, for example, if you run an air conditioner in the summer months.

- **Understand alternative solar energy options.** If installing solar panels on your own property isn't an option, get to know the alternatives. In many communities, you can subscribe to [“shared solar,”](#) which means you pay a monthly rate to benefit from a solar array in your community.

Each month, your portion of its electric output shows up as a credit on your electric bill, which saves you money on energy costs. In some areas, you can also [lease solar energy](#) by renting equipment and paying a set rate each month. [Power purchase agreements](#) are another option, in which you rent the equipment and pay for only the energy you use. If you choose one of these last two options, read contracts carefully before signing up. Contracts are usually long-term and interest rates can increase over time.

Select a solar power equipment system. There are [three kinds of panels](#) commonly used by solar installers in the industry. **Amorphous solar panels** are the most economical option, but they are less durable and have lower efficiency rates. **Polycrystalline** panels are more effective, but take up a lot of space. **Monocrystalline** solar panels require the least amount of space and have the highest efficiency rates, but they are also the most expensive to purchase. Research each option, choose the option that is best for your needs, and make sure the installers you contact offer the kind of solar panel you need.

Find out what financing options and incentives are available. In the U.S., check to see if the [federal tax credit](#) for installing small solar energy systems is available; there may also be local incentives available to you. Contact your utility company or a reputable solar installer to ask about incentives.

Next, if you don't plan to pay for your solar system outright, look into financing. The [Clean Energy States Alliance guide](#) can help you get familiar with your options. In fact, a study by the [Solar Energy Industries Association \(SEIA\)](#) found that 21 million United States homeowners live in a city where solar systems are purchased with a low-cost financing option that costs less than their current utility rates.

Ask for referrals and research local solar installers. Ask friends and family members who already went solar for referrals. Search online for local solar installers and research each company carefully.

Read customer reviews and check out the company's business rating at [BBB.org](#). As you learn more about each installer, pay attention to the cost of installation, the equipment they use, the quality of their work, and how many years of experience they have with solar systems.

Inquire about warranties. Solar panels can easily last decades, but that doesn't mean you shouldn't have a warranty. A reputable company will offer you an equipment warranty, usually lasting 10 to 12 years, and a performance warranty that should last up to 25 years.

Begin the installation process. The actual installation of solar panels usually only takes a day or two, but keep in mind that the process also involves getting permits and connecting your system to the local electric grid - tasks your [solar installer](#) will take care of.

SERVICES AND SERVICE ENHANCEMENTS



Solar Service



Solar + Battery Storage Service



Add-on Battery Service



Protection Service



ROOF REPLACEMENT



EV CHARGERS



STANDBY GENERATORS

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SCAN QR CODE
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Business ID: 1000036348

BBB Rating: A+



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you on your solar journey.