

5 Factors to Consider Before Installing Home Solar

Find out your home's energy use

Look at your energy bill(s) to review kWh usage for the past 12 to 24 months and calculate the average monthly usage.

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Contact your electric utility

Because most residential systems are tied to the power grid, reach out about connection requirements, fees and possible incentives.

Location, location, location

Start considering panel location. Assess the age, size and condition of your roof as well as available ground space.

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Get several quotes

There are costs other than equipment, such as permitting, installation and inspection. Make sure all costs are included in quotes.

Do your homework

Ensure the company you are considering has installers who are specially trained and certified to install solar, among other factors.

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For a cost breakdown, visit www.nrel.gov and search for "solar installed cost analysis." For more information about solar, visit www.citizensutilityboard.org/solar.