



Solar Checklist

Questions to ask before going solar

If you've been thinking of going solar, here is a great way to get started! Your answers to these questions will help you determine if solar is a good option for your home or business:

Is your home or office as energy efficient as it can be?

- Yes** - You've done an energy audit and made all the improvements you can to reduce your electricity needs. Way to 'Reduce before you Produce!'
- No** - A great way to find out what improvements you can make to reduce your electricity needs is to get an [energy audit](#). This will help you identify the best energy improvements for your money, and will also assess health and safety of your combustion appliances. Decreasing your electricity use now is the wisest investment to make before going solar, as it will decrease the size of the solar array you will need to offset your electrical use.

Is your home or office fully or partially shaded?

- Yes** - If your roof is only shaded for part of the day, solar may still be a viable option- you just may need to increase the number and/or output of your panels to generate as much electricity as you need. Other options may be to install a [ground mounted system](#) on your property that isn't shaded. That isn't an option? You can always purchase panels from a local community [solar garden](#).
- No** - Great! Continue with the next question.

Is your home or business heated using electricity?

- Yes** - You will likely benefit greatly from solar through significantly reduced heating costs. This is especially true if electricity prices rise as predicted.
- No** - You may be seeing high electricity bills for reasons other than heating. The best way to determine your potential savings is to provide at least two years worth of electricity data to a solar installer so they can help you calculate your required system size. Another way to estimate your system size and cost is to use [PVWatts](#), an on-line calculator.

Is your roof south or west facing?

- Yes** - Great- these are the best aspects from which to capture year-round sunlight.
- No** - Other options may be to install a ground mounted system on your property that is facing the correct direction. That isn't an option? You can always purchase panels from a solar garden.

Will you own your home for the next 5 - 7 years?

- Yes** - Great! This is usually the span of the "payback period", or the amount of time it would take to accrue electricity bill savings that total the cost of your new solar array.
- No** - If you are planning to sell your home within this time frame, don't fret: solar is an attractive feature to new home buyers. In fact, a [report in Colorado](#) states that homes with solar sell faster and for more money than homes without.

Do you want to tie into the existing grid?

- Yes** - This is a great option if you would like to use the grid as a your back up system. However, you need to contact your local utility for a preliminary assessment before proceeding.
- No** - You will need to purchase an additional battery system so that you can use power when the sun is not shining. This will add extra cost and maintenance, but affords you true energy independence. Some people are even exploring the use of their electric vehicles as a battery bank!

Ready for the Next Step?

Connect with Solar Installers Here



For more information:
visit www.fourcore.org, email info@fourcore.org,
or call 970-259-1916