

Frequently asked questions Solar PV

Is my house suitable for photovoltaic?

You need much more roof space for solar PV than for solar water heating (around 10 to 20 square metres). The roof should be south facing with the roof angle at about 30° – 50° above horizontal. An unobstructed sight of the sun between 9am and 3pm from February till October will provide the optimum results.

Do the panels require any maintenance?

Solar panels should be virtually maintenance free, although if you live in a city or area with dirty/dusty air the panels may require extra cleaning as the rain may not clean them sufficiently.

What can I do with any electricity I do not use?

Excess electricity can be stored in batteries for use when either not enough is being produced or at night. Alternatively, excess electricity can be sold back to the national grid.

Will I require any extra equipment if I want to sell electricity back to the grid?

Yes, you will require an export meter which can be installed and provided by your energy supplier. It may increase costs as the connection must be fully approved by the local electricity distribution network however costs may be offset with the tariff that many energy companies offer when importing your electricity.

Do solar panels have to be roof mounted?

No, they can be mounted on a free-standing frame in the garden or a vertical wall or on a flat roof (the performance may be affected if not at the optimum tilt – between 30 and 50 degrees)

How do solar PV panels work?

Photovoltaic (PV) systems use cells to convert solar radiation into electricity. The PV cells consist of one or two layers of semi conducting material, usually silicon. When light shines on the cells it creates an electric field across the layers, causing electricity to flow. The greater the intensity of light, the greater the flow of electricity.

What do solar PV cells look like?

PV cells look just like larger versions of the panel you would find on a solar powered calculator.

