



# Simple Steps to Solar Energy

**Power your home, business, organization, or farm with solar!**

**Did you know Minnesota has the same solar potential as Houston, TX?**

Solar energy can be used to generate electricity, provide hot water, and to heat, cool, and light buildings. See how simple solar energy can be with these steps.



## WHERE TO START

### 1 Get efficient

Before adding solar, make sure your building is as energy efficient as possible. Many utilities have incentives for efficiency improvements, so be sure to ask your local utility. Get an energy audit to find opportunities to reduce your energy use and check out our Energy Efficiency Tools ([cleanenergyresourceteams.org/energy-efficiency](https://cleanenergyresourceteams.org/energy-efficiency)) for more efficiency tips.

### 2 How sunny is your site?

You can get a sense for the solar resource at your site by using the Minnesota Solar Suitability App ([solar.maps.umn.edu/app](https://solar.maps.umn.edu/app)). If you don't have a good site, you might consider buying renewable energy from your utility or subscribing to a community solar garden ([cleanenergyresourceteams.org/solargardens](https://cleanenergyresourceteams.org/solargardens)).

### 3 Consider local rules

Your solar installer should have a good handle on these requirements, but it's worth knowing these matters in advance. Check in with your local city or county about ordinances that might impact your solar project.



#### 4 Determine your budget

Installers should be able to provide a good cost estimate for a project you're considering, and incentives can make solar more affordable. Visit our Pay for Your Project page ([cleanenergyresourceteams.org/pay-for-projects](https://cleanenergyresourceteams.org/pay-for-projects)) for available rebates and tax credits.

#### 5 Get bids

Compare bids from several solar contractors. You can use our Solar Directory to help you search for solar installers ([cleanenergyresourceteams.org/tools-guides/directory](https://cleanenergyresourceteams.org/tools-guides/directory)). We also provide a useful set of questions that you can ask companies ([cleanenergyresourceteams.org/questions-ask-companies](https://cleanenergyresourceteams.org/questions-ask-companies)).

#### 6 Ask for advice

We can provide one-on-one assistance. If you are a farm or business looking to implement solar and you want to talk it over, send us an email and we'd be happy to help! [info@CleanEnergyResourceTeams.org](mailto:info@CleanEnergyResourceTeams.org)



#### 7 Install

Select a company, sign a contract, and install your system. It usually takes two weeks to two months from the time you sign an agreement to the time the project is completed, depending on the type of solar technology and the incentive process.

If installing PV, your contractor will facilitate an interconnection agreement with your electric utility that will allow you to track your production and get paid for excess production with net metering.

FIND MORE

[CleanEnergyResourceTeams.org/Solar](https://CleanEnergyResourceTeams.org/Solar)

