

THINKING ABOUT
SOLAR 
ENERGY?

7 HELPFUL TIPS TO KNOW!



SOLAR ENERGY



Thinking about solar energy for your home?
Here are seven helpful tips to get you started.

1

LEARN THE BASICS

Research how solar works and determine if you have a good (sunny) location. Resources can be found at: **[energy.gov/solar](https://www.energy.gov/solar)**



Check for incentives and tax credits. The Database of State Incentives for Renewables and Efficiency is a good source: **[dsireusa.org](https://www.dsireusa.org)**



2

EFFICIENCY FIRST

Reducing the amount of energy you use will reduce the size of solar array you need. For ideas and tools, visit **[energystar.gov](https://www.energystar.gov)** and **[energy.gov/save](https://www.energy.gov/save)**.

Our utility offers rebates on energy-efficient equipment. Learn more at **[brightenergysolutions.com](https://www.brightenergysolutions.com)**.

3

LEARN YOUR UTILITY'S REQUIREMENTS

Your solar system needs to interconnect to your utility's system to ensure you have electricity when your solar array is not producing enough power.

Learn about the interconnection requirements your local utility and community have in place to keep the electric grid safe and reliable.

Solar panels are also called photovoltaic (PV) panels. (Photo meaning “light” and voltaic meaning “electricity.”) PV panels absorb light and convert that energy to electricity.



4 ESTIMATE YOUR SYSTEM SIZE



Using past electric bills, estimate your monthly and annual energy usage in kilowatt-hours (kWh).

Determine the size of system you want to install. Here is a free online tool to estimate how much energy your system will generate: pvwatts.nrel.gov

5 CHOOSE A REPUTABLE VENDOR

If you proceed, choose a reputable vendor to help you understand the sizing, equipment and economics of the array. Ask for references and check online reviews.

To find a certified professional, visit the North American Board of Certified Energy Practitioners' website: directories.nabcep.org.

Review your proposal to make sure assumptions about future electric rates and potential revenue from selling excess generation are accurate.



6 UNDERSTAND THE FINANCIAL IMPACT



Estimate the cost of your solar system over the life of the panels, including maintenance.

Solar will reduce your energy purchases from your electric utility, and energy that you don't use will be purchased by Missouri River Energy Services, our utility's wholesale power provider, at its avoided cost. Talk to your electric utility about how you would be compensated if your system generates more energy than you use.

Compare your average monthly kWh usage to the estimated monthly generation of your solar array to get an idea of how your utility bill might be impacted.

A solar system might reduce some parts of your bill, but not others.



7 BEGIN THE INTERCONNECTION PROCESS

Provide a completed interconnection application and related documents to your utility. A fee will be charged to cover the cost of application review.

Additional utility charges could apply, depending on metering requirements and local policies.

If your application is approved, obtain any required permits before beginning construction.

The local utility must test and approve your solar array before it goes live.