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The price of new energy solar panels

Overview

In 2025, solar cell prices for residential users range from $2.80 to $3.80 per watt, but this can vary by the location and size of the system, as well as the complexity of the installation. Thus, a 6 kW solar cell system can cost between $16,800 and $22,800 even before incentives from the government.

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The average 6-kW residential solar panel installation is $17,852 before incentives. Learn about cost factors, financing options, tax breaks and more.

The falling cost of solar panels, coupled with the recent spike in grid electricity prices, have made home solar a reliable means of reducing your essential energy costs.

Each year, the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) Solar Energy Technologies Office (SETO) and its national laboratory partners analyze cost data for U.S. solar photovoltaic (PV) systems to develop cost benchmarks. These benchmarks help measure progress toward goals for reducing solar electricity costs and guide SETO research and development programs.

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The price of solar panels changes depending on where you live, but the average for installation is just under $29,000 or $2.75 per watt. On the high end, we talked to a solar customer in Hawaii who spent $100,000 going solar. Dion in Nevada said their 10-kW system cost about $20,000, which is about the national average price for a 7-kW system.

How much does a home solar system cost?

In 2025, we surveyed 1,000 home solar customers across the U.S. to understand their experience shopping for and installing solar panel systems. Most homeowners said they paid around $16,129 for a solar panel system, with an average of 14 solar panels installed.

How much does solar installation cost?

Installation labor accounts for only 5.5-7% of total cost ($1,375-$2,500 for average systems), while soft costs represent 40-50% of total investment: Solar costs vary significantly by location due to labor rates, permitting requirements, market competition, and local incentives.

How much does a solar system cost in 2025?

Solar panels generate “free” electricity, but installing a system still costs money. A typical American household needs a 10-kilowatt (kW) system to adequately power their home, which costs $28,241 in 2025. That price effectively drops to $19,873 after considering the full federal solar tax credit.

What is the relative cost of solar energy?

Another measure of the relative cost of solar energy is its price per kilowatt-hour (kWh). Whereas the price per watt considers the solar system’s size, the price per kWh shows the price of the solar system per unit of energy it produces over a given period of time. Net cost of the system / lifetime output = cost per kilowatt hour.

How much does a solar system cost per watt?

As of publishing, the average cost per watt is $2.84. Most solar companies set the price according to the solar system's wattage. A solar installation's “cost per watt” is a little like the “price per square foot” when you buy a house. It helps compare the value of solar energy systems in different sizes.

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