

Solar Systems

Using the sun's energy to help reduce your energy bill

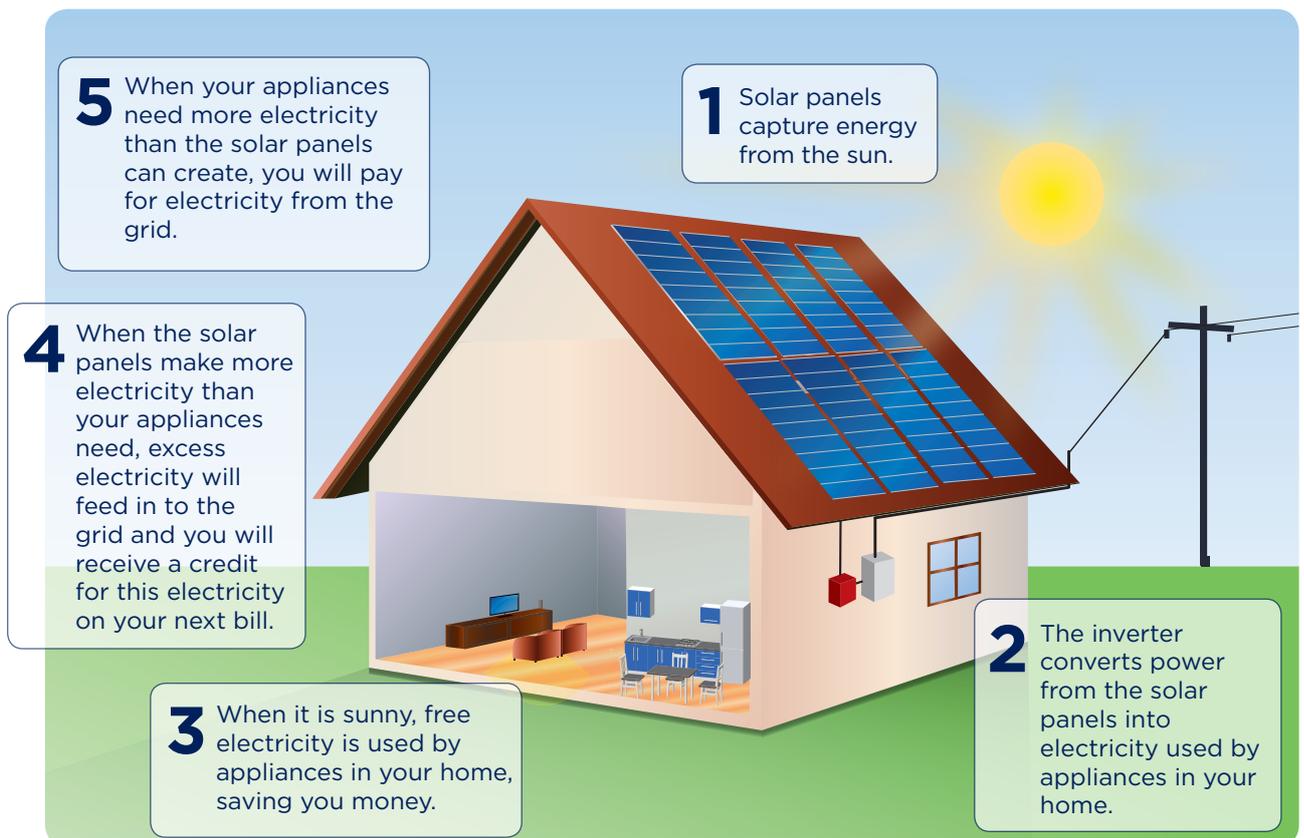
Your solar system will help you reduce your electricity bill, particularly on hot summer days when you need to use your air conditioner.

The solar system **generates electricity for your home on sunny days** and helps you avoid paying for electricity from the grid. Using high energy usage appliances during daytime hours when solar energy is being generated will help you get the most benefit from your solar system.

How the system works

The solar system will operate when the sun is shining. It has two main parts:

- **Solar panels on the roof** – transfer the sun's energy into an electric current
- **Solar energy inverter** – converts the electric current into electricity that can be used by appliances in your home (located near your electricity meter).



The solar system operates when the sun is shining. It will generate more electricity on sunny days than cloudy days and more in summer than winter. Most solar energy will be generated between 10am and 3pm, when the sun is directly above the solar panels.

Additional electricity generated by your solar system that you do not use will feed into the electricity grid.

You will pay for electricity from the grid to run your appliances when the sun is not shining and at night.

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Here are some tips to help you maximise the benefit from your solar system:

Do	Use high energy appliances - air conditioner, oven, vacuum cleaner, washing machine, dryer, and iron between 10am and 3pm on sunny days. Change your energy use to allow your solar system to power as much of your daytime electricity usage as possible.
Don't	Use more energy than you need to, as the amount of money you will save depends on how and when you use energy. Allow sports equipment (cricket balls) to damage solar panels on the roof. Plant any trees or shrubs that may grow to shade the solar panels.

How do I check if my solar system is working?

Check your electricity bill to ensure that you are receiving a solar feed-in credit and that your electricity usage hasn't increased compared to your usage 12 months ago.

Your electricity usage tends to be higher in summer and winter, when you need to cool and heat your home. Your electricity bill includes details of your average daily usage and usage for the same time last year.

Check that your solar inverter displays a green light. Call the Maintenance Line on 1800 422 322 if the inverter displays a red light or fault message. Also call the Maintenance Line if you notice any damage to the solar panels on your roof.

How can I save money from my solar system?

This depends on a range of factors including:

1. Your electricity usage patterns – Use high energy usage appliances when the sun is up – your solar panels are producing free energy for you.

2. Your electricity and solar feed-in tariff – Contact your electricity retailer to find out if you are on their best deal. Each electricity retailer has a range of price plans, called energy offers. Visit www.energymadeeasy.gov.au to find the best energy offer for you.

Questions to ask electricity retailers:

- What is your best energy offer for my energy usage?
- What is your best solar feed-in tariff?
- Will I save the most money on a Single Rate or Time of Use tariff?
- What discounts, flexible payment options and hardship programs do you offer?

If you need independent advice about an issue you are having with an electricity retailer, or if you are having problems paying your bill, contact the Energy and Water Ombudsman NSW (EWON) on 1800 246 545 or visit www.ewon.com.au