Solar panel prices and applications

Overview

To find the most up-to-date solar panel costs in 2025, we compared research from the U.S. Department of Energy and prices from 54 retailers and manufacturers for popular solar panel brands. This chart refers to the average cost range across all common solar system sizes.How much does a solar panel installation cost?

Solar panel installation costs vary by the installation company and project scope, making it challenging to pinpoint exactly how much you'll pay to have a pro install your solar panels. However, the U.S. Department of Energy estimates that installers add around $2.25 per watt to the cost of a solar panel installation.

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.

Are solar installations cheap?

Solar installations aren't cheap, but the actual equipment is a relatively small part of the total cost. It's only 35% of your total installation cost, according to the US Department of Energy. Soft costs, also known as the hidden costs of installing solar, are nonhardware costs, and they make up 65% of your total solar costs, according to the DOE.

Why do solar panels cost so much?

Where you live can heavily influence both the costs and installation practices for solar panels, which is why location is so important when considering your solar investment: Northeast: Generally, this region sees higher installation costs due to labor and equipment expenses.

How much does solar cost per square foot?

The average system cost only drops by $1,000 and the cost per square foot increases to $12.83. Installing less solar will lower your cost but on a non-linear basis as there are a lot of fixed costs for installers to design, permit, and install your system.

How much do solar panels cost per watt?

The average cost per watt for solar panels in the U.S. is $2.84 for residential systems. High-efficiency monocrystalline panels tend to be at the higher end of the price range, but they generate more power with fewer panels—ideal if you have limited roof space.

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