

HOMEOWNER'S GUIDE

Everything You Need To Know Before Speaking To An Installer





WELCOME

A Message From Lisa

If you are reading this, there is a good chance you are considering solar panels for your home, or perhaps you have already started collecting quotations and are wondering where to begin. For many homeowners, solar is a significant investment and not a decision that should be rushed.

Over the years, I have advised hundreds of homeowners, and one thing has become clear. The solar industry can sometimes feel confusing. Quotations can vary dramatically, different companies often provide conflicting advice, and it is not always easy to know who to trust.

The good news is that you do not need to become a solar expert overnight. By understanding a few key principles, asking the right questions and taking the time to compare your options properly, you can make a much more informed decision and avoid some common and costly mistakes.

My aim with this guide is to explain the basics in plain English, helping you understand how solar works, what influences savings and what to look for when comparing quotations. I hope you find it useful.

Lisa's Tip - "Do not focus solely on price. The cheapest quotation is not always the best value, and the most expensive is not always the best system. Understanding exactly what is being offered is often far more important than the figure at the bottom of the page."



HOW SOLAR PANELS WORK

Solar panels convert daylight into electricity that can be used to power your home. Contrary to popular belief, solar panels do not require direct sunshine to generate electricity and will continue to produce energy even on cloudy days.

The electricity generated by your solar panels is used by your home first. Any excess electricity can either be exported to the grid or stored in a battery for use later in the day, helping to reduce your reliance on electricity purchased from your supplier.

Generate Electricity From Daylight

01

Solar panels capture energy from daylight and convert it into usable electricity. The more daylight available, the more electricity your system is likely to produce.

02

Power Your Home First

Any electricity generated is automatically used by appliances and devices within your home before electricity is imported from the grid.

03

Export Or Store The Surplus

If your solar panels generate more electricity than your home requires, the excess can either be stored in a battery or exported to the grid, potentially earning additional income through an export tariff.

Lisa's Tip - "One of the biggest myths regarding solar panels is that they only work on sunny days. Whilst production is naturally higher during the summer, solar panels continue to generate electricity throughout the year, even during the winter months."



ARE BATTERIES WORTH IT?

Battery storage can be an excellent addition to a solar system, but it is important to understand that not every home will benefit in exactly the same way. The value of a battery depends on factors such as your electricity usage, when you use electricity and the tariff available from your energy supplier.

For many homeowners, a battery helps increase self consumption by storing excess solar energy for use later in the day. It can also provide additional savings by allowing electricity to be purchased and stored overnight on cheaper off peak tariffs.

01 Store Excess Solar Energy

01

Rather than exporting surplus electricity to the grid, a battery allows you to store it for use later in the evening when solar generation has reduced or stopped altogether.

02 Reduce Reliance On The Grid

02

By using stored energy during peak periods, you can reduce the amount of electricity purchased from your supplier at standard daytime rates.

03 Take Advantage Of Smart Tariffs

03

Many modern batteries can be charged overnight using cheaper off peak electricity tariffs, helping to reduce energy costs even during the winter months when solar generation is lower.

Lisa's Tip - "One of the biggest misconceptions regarding battery storage is that bigger automatically means better. The most cost effective battery is usually the one that matches your household's energy usage and lifestyle, not necessarily the largest available."



TYPICAL COSTS AND SAVINGS

The cost of a solar and battery system can vary significantly depending on factors such as system size, roof layout, equipment choice and battery capacity. Whilst cost is important, it should never be the only factor considered when comparing quotations.

Savings are influenced by a range of factors including your electricity consumption, energy tariff, export payments and how effectively the system is designed for your home. This is why two households with similar systems can achieve very different results.

01

System Size Influences Cost

Larger systems generally cost more but also have the potential to generate more electricity. The right system size should be based on your household's energy requirements rather than simply maximising the number of panels installed.

02

Savings Depend On Usage

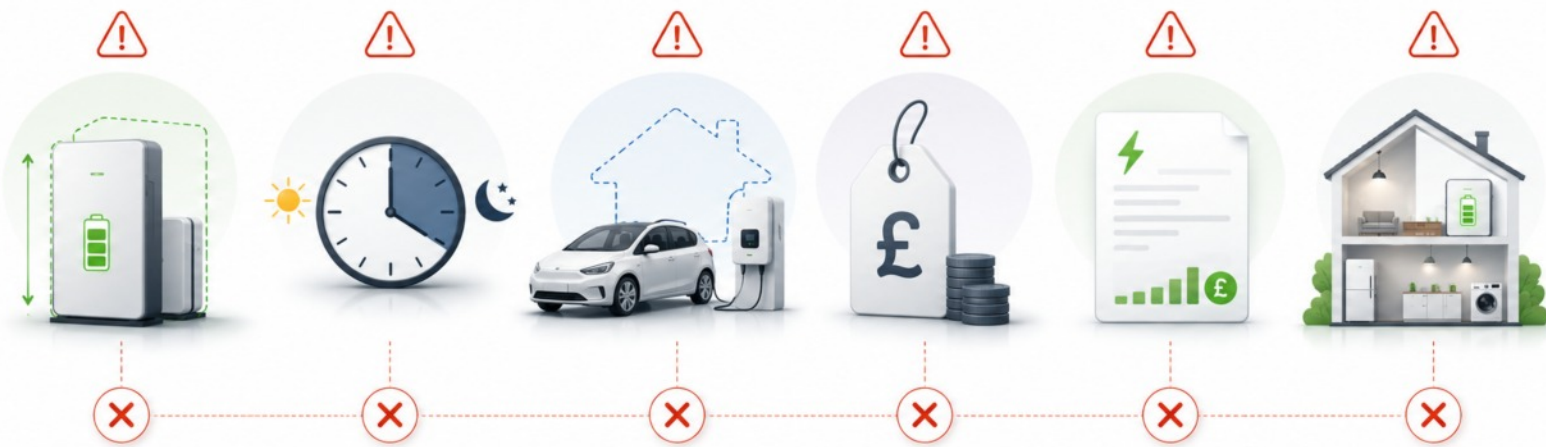
The more of your solar electricity you use within your home, the greater your potential savings. Homes that use more electricity during the day often see the biggest reduction in grid imports.

03

Tariffs Matter More Than Ever

Modern export and smart battery tariffs can have a significant impact on overall savings. Choosing the right tariff can often be just as important as choosing the right equipment.

Lisa's Tip - "Be cautious of anyone guaranteeing exact savings or payback periods. Every home is different, and future electricity prices and tariffs can change over time. A realistic estimate is far more valuable than an unrealistic promise."



COMMON MISTAKES TO AVOID

01

Buying The Largest Battery Available

More storage does not automatically mean greater savings. An oversized battery can increase the cost of the system significantly without delivering a proportional financial return.

02

Ignoring Usage Patterns

Understanding when you use electricity is often more important than how much you use. Homes with high evening consumption may benefit from battery storage differently than households that use most of their electricity during the day.

03

Not Planning For Future Needs

Future additions such as electric vehicles or heat pumps can significantly increase electricity demand. Considering these plans now may help avoid the need for costly upgrades later.

04

Comparing Price Instead Of Value

The cheapest battery is not always the most cost effective over its lifetime. Equipment quality, warranty cover, performance and aftercare should all form part of the decision.

05

Ignoring Tariff Opportunities

A battery's performance can be heavily influenced by the tariff it operates on. Smart tariffs and off peak charging can sometimes deliver savings that are just as important as solar generation itself.

06

Assuming Every Home Needs A Battery

Not every property will benefit equally from battery storage. In some cases, a well designed solar only system may provide a better return on investment.

Lisa's Tip - "The best solar and battery systems are designed around the homeowner, not the equipment. Focus on what works for your lifestyle, budget and future plans rather than simply choosing the biggest system available."



QUESTIONS TO ASK ANY INSTALLER

01

What Equipment Is Included?

Ask for the exact make and model of the solar panels, inverter and battery being proposed. Equipment quality, warranties and performance can vary significantly between manufacturers.

02

02 What Warranties Are Provided?

Understanding what is covered, and for how long, is essential. Be sure to ask about product warranties, workmanship guarantees and any insurance backed protection that may be included.

03

Are There Any Hidden Costs?

Request confirmation that the quotation includes all expected costs, including scaffolding, bird protection, monitoring equipment, certification and any potential DNO related charges.

04

How Realistic Are The Savings Figures?

Ask how the installer has calculated the projected savings and whether the assumptions reflect your actual electricity usage. Be cautious of overly optimistic claims or guaranteed returns.

05

Is The System Right For My Future Plans?

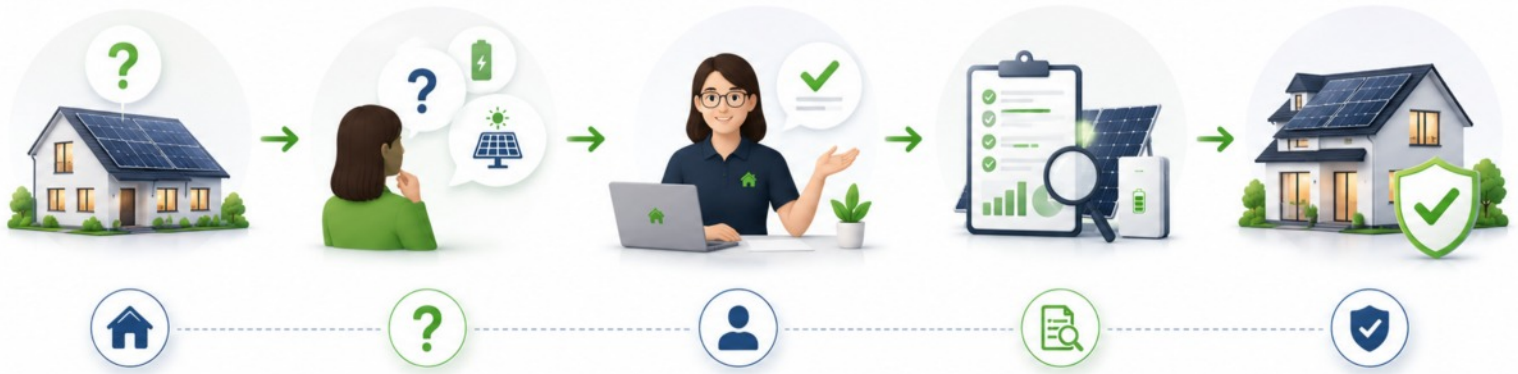
If you are considering an electric vehicle, heat pump or increased electricity usage in the future, ensure the system has been designed with these requirements in mind.

06

What Happens After Installation?

Ask who will provide ongoing support, assist with warranty claims and help if you encounter any issues in the future. Good aftercare can be just as important as the installation itself.

Lisa's Tip - "Do not be afraid to ask questions. A good installer will welcome them. The more clearly an installer explains their recommendations, the more confidence you can have in the advice you are receiving."



NEED AN INDEPENDENT OPINION?

“Overwhelmed by conflicting advice? Send me your quotations and I will happily explain the differences in plain English.”

“No jargon. No pressure. No obligation.”

Many homeowners contact the Energy Advice Team because they want an independent opinion before making a final decision. I can help you understand the difference between quotations, whether equipment recommendations appear appropriate, and the potential strengths and weaknesses of competing proposals.

- ✓ Independent Advice
- ✓ No Obligation
- ✓ Plain English Reports
- ✓ Nationwide Service



Independent. Honest. On Your Side.



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Lisa's Tip - "You do not need to become a solar expert overnight. Sometimes a second opinion can provide the confidence needed to make the right decision."