

## **Solar Energy Tips To Help You Go Green**

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Going green is very popular and very wise. The best green choice in energy is solar energy. Using the clean, renewable energy of the sun to power your home reduces your carbon footprint and helps you save money. In this article, we will share some excellent tips to help you make good use of solar energy. Although the highly efficient solar technology of today is actually capable of working well even in areas that don't have tremendous amounts of sunlight, it's always best to set your solar energy system up in a southward facing area. This will give you the most sun exposure. You will probably generate more energy than you need this way, but happily, you can sell it to your local utility. In order to decide what kind of panels to buy and how many, you should find out the wattage you need. This can be done by studying your energy bills and determining how much energy you use a month on average. Then you will know the amount of energy your system must produce to meet the needs of your household. Look for a good solar contractor to install your system. When you do this rather than attempting a DIY solar system, you'll be certain to get the newest solar technology properly installed. This will ensure your safety and give you someone to turn to in the rare case you have problems. Professional installation is more likely to be eligible for grant assistance. Additionally, having your job professionally done may increase the value of your home and save you some money on insurance premiums. When choosing a professional solar installer, be sure to interview several. Start your search for a solar professional online or in the phone book. Look for the same sorts of qualifications you would look for in any

service personnel. You want an installer who has a good rating with the Better Business Bureau, good testimonials from satisfied customers, fair prices and good guarantees. Of course, you should also feel comfortable with the person since your dealings may be ongoing for some time. Solar energy systems need little or no maintenance; however, common sense dictates that you or your solar installer should tidy it up a bit several times a year. Keep dirt, dust, leaves and snow off the system so the sun can reach it, and check to be sure fittings and attachments are secure. Generally speaking, solar energy systems are rugged and long-lived. Once installed, you can count on enjoying clean, affordable solar energy for 20-30 years or more. During that time, you'll save lots of money on energy, and you'll never be bothered with increases in the cost of energy. You'll also be able to enjoy having full power even when storms and other interruptions to your local utility occur. Happily, as time passes, solar technology just gets more and more affordable, so when the time comes to replace your system you will probably be able to save even more money! Just follow these tips to reap the benefits of solar energy.

### Thrifty Green Energy Tips Save You Money

If you are a renter or simply don't have a penny to spare to switch to green energy alternatives, you can still go green with energy. Even if your electric company gets all its power from petroleum products and you have to use natural gas to heat your home, you can still save money and help the environment. Read on to find out how.

Save water and the energy it takes to heat it by using a water saving shower head and making sure to time your showers. If you are standing around relaxing in the shower, you're pouring money and energy down

the drain. Limit your shower time to just long enough to get clean. If you take baths, rather than lounging about, simply run a shallow tub, wash up and get out. You will save a great deal of money, water and energy by doing this and help the environment in the process.

Run a clothesline in your yard or on your patio/balcony or above your bathtub and air dry as much of your laundry as you can. For things that must be dried in the drier, don't overdo it. When you over dry your cloth, it weakens the fibers, so if you just dry your clothes to the point of being lightly damp and then hang them to air dry the rest of the way, you will save money and energy and you will be able to use your clothing, linens and so forth much longer.

Be sure to wash your clothes in cold water. You'll be surprised by how clean they turn out. Always wait to wash your clothes until you have a full load. It takes just as much energy to run a small load as a full load, so make the most of the energy you use to wash your clothes. Please note that this is also true of your dishwasher. Don't run it after every meal or even once a day if it isn't full. Wait until it's full and then run it.

Be sure to turn off lights, TV, radio, computers and so on when not in use. This will save you a lot of money. You can buy power strips to plug these items into and just flip the switch to shut everything off when you're not using them. This is fast, easy and smart. Additionally, use energy saving fluorescent light bulbs instead of obsolete incandescent ones. These types of bulbs not only save energy, they are also safer because they burn cooler.

Be sure to clean the lint and dirt out of your dryer filter, the coils on the back of your refrigerator, your central heat and air filters and/or the filters on any window air conditioners you may have. When these areas become clogged with dust, lint and debris it causes the appliance or system to work harder. This takes more energy which you must pay for. Keeping your electrical appliances and systems clean saves money and energy and benefits the environment.

Make use of passive solar energy during cold weather. Let the sunshine come in and warm your home. Conversely, be sure to use good thermal drapes to keep the heat out during the hot months. By paying close attention to the effects of the sun on your home, you can save money on energy year round.

In our consumer society, we are often encouraged to use with wild abandon, but the fact is, these thrifty tips that have actually been around for a very long time have helped generations of penny-wise people save money. The fact that they also save energy and benefit the environment is a happy side-effect. Follow the tips presented here to be a good steward of our natural resources and have a little extra money in your pocket