

ENERGY

How to get started with rooftop solar and switch your company to renewable energy

Find out how to switch your workplace to 100% renewable energy by installing rooftop solar



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Just a decade ago, if you'd have presented a proposal to your employer recommending that solar panels be installed on the company's buildings, you might have been told you were dreaming. But that's not the case anymore. Solar panels are now commonplace, not just on houses, but on the rooftops of many commercial and industrial buildings. It's a sign of the times as the business world gets serious about corporate climate action.

More than [2.86 million](#) rooftop solar systems have now been installed in Australia. Much of this is thanks to the dramatic reduction in the cost of purchasing and installing solar panels in recent years. In Australia, the average payback period for a solar system without batteries is now just two to five years.

More and more companies are installing solar to reduce corporate emissions and help meet sustainability targets. Will your company be next? If your roof spaces are suitable, solar can be a smart and fast way to significantly reduce emissions.

And it's not just about the environment. Rooftop solar is a sensible long-term investment. If you can generate your own energy, you'll reduce your energy costs and reduce your company's reliance on grid energy. And that means you'll be better protected against rising electricity costs into the future.

When it comes to making climate action happen in the workplace, sometimes all it takes is just one person to get the ball rolling. So, if you want to help your company make the move to solar, here are the key steps to get started.

Understand your building energy use

Before your company approaches a solar installer for quotes, you need to have a good understanding of the energy consumption of each building. Your organisation's energy, facilities, operations or finance manager will most likely be the best contact for this type of information.

It's also important to understand your current electricity tariffs. You'll need to contact your electricity provider

It's also important to understand your own electricity tariff. You'll need to contact your electricity provider to find out what changes might apply to these tariffs once solar panels are installed.

Check building and planning requirements

Another thing you'll need to check is whether there are any planning and development guidelines that could apply to your buildings, like building codes or heritage provisions. You can check this with the relevant local Council.

Find accredited solar retailers and installers

The next step is to find accredited solar retailers and installers in your area. Look for suppliers that specialise in commercial solar and have a proven track-record.

In Australia, the [Clean Energy Council](#) is your one-stop-shop for lists of accredited solar retailers and installers. These are also approved by the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission.

Find an approved solar retailer – [this is a list of approved retailers across Australia](#).

Find a qualified installer – [this is a list of individuals who are qualified to undertake installation](#).

Request quotes

For solar panels, it's a wise idea to request multiple quotes so that you can compare and select the best option.

As part of the process, your solar expert should do a thorough site inspection, including assessing the suitability of the roof spaces for solar panels. This will include looking at the roofing material, age, condition, size, pitch and angle of the roof, along with shade and exposure to sunlight.

Here are some of the questions that should be answered as part of the design and quoting process:

- What is the proposed system design and size?
- What is the expected generation?
- What type of panels and inverters will be used?
- What components are included?
- How will the system be maintained and monitored?
- What is the process for installation, grid-connection and metering?
- What data will the company be able to access and how?
- What are the warranty details?

For more information, the [Guide to Installing Solar PV for Business and Industry](#) is a helpful resource. And don't forget to find out if there are any government incentives or rebates available to you.

But what if you don't own the building or roof space?

If your company doesn't own the roof space, there are other ways to switch to 100% renewable energy. You could try to negotiate an agreement with your landlord.

Some solar retailers even offer solar panel rental agreements and will remove the panels at the end of your tenancy.

Or you could source renewable energy through a Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) or by purchasing GreenPower.

Share your solar story

Once you get to the point of switching on your rooftop solar, it's time to celebrate the achievement and share the good news. Approach your PR, communications and marketing team to help spread the word. Making the change to a solar-powered future is the type of good news your customers and community will want to hear about.

And don't forget to celebrate your achievements with employees. Allow everyone to be part of the journey towards a fossil-free future.

To get started with solar or to investigate which renewable energy option is best for your company, access our [FREE step-by-step Renewable Energy Playbook](#) today. It will guide you through the practical steps to create real change.

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