

What is Plug-In Solar?



(Image source: *Southern Alliance for Clean Energy*, "[What to Know About Plug-In Solar](#)")

Plug-in solar, also known as balcony solar, refers to a plug-in solar system that one can place in their house or balcony. The plug-in solar system, unlike a standard residential solar system, does not have to be installed by a contractor, but rather can be plugged into a standard outlet. These systems tend to also be smaller in size: a plug-in solar system tends to be 0.8 to 1.6 kW, while a standard residential solar system can be about 7 to 15 kW (Bright Saver, "[What is Plug-In Solar?](#)").

Usually, when purchasing these plug-in solar kits, one would receive the solar panels themselves, a microinverter, and connector cables (Southern Alliance for Clean Energy, "[What to Know About Plug-In Solar](#)"). With a plug-in solar system, the energy generated goes back into your household wiring, thus reducing the amount of electricity a household would need to pull from the grid (Sierra Club, "[Plug-In Solar Power Could Be Coming to a Balcony Near You](#)"). Due to the size of the system, a plug-in solar system is not connected to the main grid as it does not need an interconnection agreement, nor can it participate in net metering. This is a more affordable option for those who would like to go solar and save a bit of money but maybe cannot afford the price of a full residential system, or do not have the proper roof capacity.