

Do You Need To Replace Your Roof Before Installing Solar Panels

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So, you're thinking about going solar, but you might not be sure if you really have a good roof for solar panels currently. Should you replace it before having solar panels installed? If your roof is very old, possibly near the end of its life expectancy, then it's an easy decision. You know that if you install solar panels and then the roof starts leaking within a few years, the cost of uninstalling and reinstalling the solar panels, cables, and racks becomes an extra expense that could have been avoided. But what if your roof has more good years of life left in it? In that case, the decision is a little more involved.

Do I Need A New Roof For Solar Panels?

You may not need to have a professional roof inspector or our team of solar panel installation experts advise you that you need a new roof. There are often good indicators when a roof needs to be replaced:

- **Broken shingles:** If some shingles or tiles are cracked, and others have pieces broken off and lying loose on the roof, you may be able to see those from your yard. When shingles or tiles deteriorate due to long-term sun exposure and start breaking apart around the edges, it's probably time to replace the roof.
- **Missing shingles or tiles:** If you see spots with missing shingles across your roof, that means your roof is no longer fully protecting the interior of your home as it should be. It's also more likely to leak at some point in the near future, and there's a higher risk of being incompatible with solar installation in that condition.

- Many bits of shingle material washing off the roof: If you notice lots of little granules of shingle material in your gutters or washed out from the downspouts, that's an indicator that the shingles are disintegrating and are close to the end of their lifespan.
- Moisture on the underside of the roof deck: If there are damp areas in the attic on the underside of the roof or even showing through the ceiling of the living spaces below, that's an indicator of breaches in the integrity of the roof. If those are due to aging, then it's probably time for a new roof.

What If Your Roof has More Good Years Left?

If your roofer estimates that your roof has at least 5 years of life left in it, you may not want to replace it now because you'll be throwing away the money you paid for those years of use that you're forfeiting. On the other hand, if you choose to wait more years to go solar, you'll be forfeiting those years of electricity cost savings. So, what should you do?

For the most accurate estimate of how much you can expect to save by switching to solar energy for your home, ask your local Solarise Solar expert to calculate your solar payback period for you. The solar payback period is just the number of years it will take for your solar panel system to pay you back for your initial investment through energy cost savings.

You'll also have to consider the cost of a new roof vs. waiting additional years to replace it in this decision on whether to replace the roof before installing your solar panels.

In some areas, electricity prices and available solar rebates can reduce the solar payback period down to just 5 years for many homeowners. Alternatively, in some areas of the country, where electricity costs are lower, and there are fewer rebate opportunities, the solar payback period can reportedly be up to 15 years or longer.

Consider Ground Mounted Solar Panels

If it's a borderline situation where it's too difficult to see clearly which is the best option — replacing your roof or waiting — there's a way to avoid making that decision. You can wait to replace your roof and go ahead with installing your solar panels and prevent any worries at all about putting the solar panels on the roof. Installing solar panels on roof-tops is not the only option.

If you have sufficient room for it, the solution is ground-mounted solar installation. It typically costs more to install, but there are many advantages for property owners who choose this option instead of roof-mounted solar installation.

To Replace Or Not To Replace Your Roof

So, overall, if the condition of your roof is questionable, the most cost-effective *long-term solution* is likely to be investing in a quality roof replacement before you install your solar panels. But, if your roof has at least five or more years of good service life remaining and

you want to go solar, you'll need to determine what is most cost-effective to do.

The most accurate way to conclude whether it makes more sense to keep or replace the roof upfront is to have a solar energy expert calculate your costs and expected savings, if any, with the several solar panel installation options you have:

- Replace the roof now and install solar panels on the new roof now.
- Replace the roof later and install solar panels on the existing roof now.
- Leave the existing roof in place and install ground-mounted solar panels now.

With any of these choices, you'll have the security and electricity cost savings that come with switching to solar energy to power your home and shrink the size of your carbon footprint.

For Evaluation of Your Roof for Solar Panel Installation

Whether to replace your roof before installing your solar panels is a big decision. We can assess your roof for its acceptability for solar installation to help you deliberate. Consultation with Solarise experts is a big part of the comprehensive service we provide to our customers.

Call Solarise Solar at (719) 315-3034, or contact us here online to schedule an assessment of your roof for solar panel installation and a FREE solar analysis.
