



Roof integrated solar panels

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Homeowners across the country have their eye on Elon Musk's Tesla Solar Roof, a much-heralded innovation for the solar energy industry. However, Tesla is just one company offering a roof-integrated solar option for homeowners and businesses. Roofing company GAF's solar tile solution, DecoTech, hit the market in early 2017 and promises to be "the beautiful affordable alternative to typical rack-mounted solar systems." We'll explain everything you need to know about DecoTech solar, from performance to price to warranties.

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GAF's roof-integrated solar product, DecoTech, is a low-profile solar energy system with standard solar panels installed as part of your roof. The brackets and mounting are affixed on the roof in a typical solar panel system. By contrast, the DecoTech system is installed when you are already replacing your roof, making integrating the two products easier.

There are a few different types of products in the "solar roofing" category. The first is solar shingles. Also known as "building-integrated photovoltaics" (BIPV), these are roof-shingle-sized solar panels. SunTegra and CertainTeed both offer these roof-integrated panels.

The second option, which was developed more recently, is the "solar roof." Solar roof products feature solar cells integrated into the roofing material itself. Unlike solar shingles, solar roofs are designed to hide the solar photovoltaic cell from view completely. Tesla and Forward Labs are two companies with solar roof products.

Unlike solar shingles or solar roof tiles, DecoTech uses standard 60-cell solar panels, which are the same size



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and shape as the panels typically used in solar systems. Their innovation comes during system installation. GAF is a roofing company first, and they have designed their product so that its installation is part of the re-roofing process. This makes setting the system at a lower profile easy, making it less noticeable and hiding the racking and other wiring necessary to the installation.

GAF's solar roofing product offers a sleek, low-profile solar option for many homes, but it may or may not be the perfect fit for your home. Here's how it compares to traditional solar panels, other solar shingles like SunTegra and CertainTeed, and new solar roofing options like Tesla and Forward Labs' solar roofing options.

DecoTech solar panels use the same solar technology as other solar panels: silicon solar photovoltaic (PV) cells. According to the company's product specifications, they offer 17% efficiency, which aligns with standard solar panels.

It's worth noting that both Forward Labs and Tesla's solar roof products likely have similar efficiency losses because of how they are installed. However, neither company has released detailed efficiency information.

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