Solar panels for shed roofs

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Whether it's to power lights or tools in your shed, or just to supplement your home's electricity, there are plenty of ways to place solar panels on sheds. We've got all the information on how to make this happen in this article.

Once you're ready to invest in solar panels, you can use our quick quote tool. All you have to do is provide a few details, and our expert installers will be in touch with free quotes for you to compare.

Solar panels are pretty hefty pieces of kit, which means the shed will need to be made from sturdy materials that can hold the weight. If your shed is made from flimsy material or is looking a bit worse for wear, it won't be a suitable home for solar panels.

When it comes to solar power generation, it all depends on how much energy you consume. Generally, even if you only have very small electricity requirements, you'll still need at least two or three panels, which will measure roughly 1.6 square metres.

As for the angle and direction of the roof? You should make sure it's at about 35 degrees, with the panels facing southwards, to make sure they have optimal efficiency (the amount of energy that can be converted from sunlight into electricity).

If your shed's roof is at a different angle, you can still install solar panels, but they might not be as effective. Got yourself a shed with a flat roof? All you have to do is get a tilted-mounting system, which you can then place the panels onto.

Sheds made of wood won't typically be able to withstand more than 6–7 kg, metal shed roofs can around 12 kg, and plastic roofs can't withstand much weight at all, according to Garden Projects Advice. Most standard solar panels weigh about 18 kilograms (kg), making them too heavy for some sheds.

If you're worried your roof won't be strong enough for standard solar panels, you could always consider flexible solar panels. These bendy panels don't usually weigh more than 1–2 kg, and they come in smaller sizes than standard solar panels, which are around 2 square metres.

On the plus side, the bigger a shed is, the more weight it will be able to hold, regardless of the material. Garden Projects Advice says that if a shed is at least 3 square metres, it could withstand around 45 kg–122 kg – enough to support two to three standard solar panels.

If you want to install solar panels on your shed to produce supplemental electricity for your house, this same amount of solar panels will meet a little under 30% of the energy needs of the average three-bedroom house.

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Since most standard shed roofs are only 4–5 square metres, they’ll probably only be able to fit two 350 W solar panels. This should still be enough to power small electrical equipment, such as lights, fans, or an electric radiator.

One standard 350 W solar panel cost around £703 to buy and install. The average 4–5 square metres shed roof could fit a maximum of two solar panels, bringing the total cost to £1,405.

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