



Cheapest is not always best

Installing a solar panel system is a long term project – you will probably be expecting your system to work efficiently for in excess of 20 years – so buying cheaply at the outset is not always the best way to guarantee peace of mind for the future. Here are five common issues to bear in mind when purchasing your system:

1 Solar panels can sometimes go wrong

Don't panic, Solar PV panels are generally very reliable! However, they can go wrong and if your modules stop working or underperform, you need to know how these problems will be resolved. Will your installer remove and refit a new panel? Do you need to pay extra for the labour and scaffolding? Be aware that many cheaper panels are poorly made and are sold on the basis that the manufacturer is not responsible for replacing panels if they go faulty.

We say:

Solar Technology PV Energy ensures all its panels are tested to the highest levels for long term reliability. Solar Technology PV Energy is part of the Solar Technology Group with over 20 years experience in PV design and manufacture. Faulty panels will be replaced according to the conditions of our long 10 year product and 25 year performance warranty – see our Terms and Conditions for details.

2 Who would honour your manufacturer's panel warranty?

The world of PV manufacturers is changing quickly and module prices have fallen considerably. Many PV module manufacturers are expected to disappear over the next few years, either by going out of business or being absorbed by larger companies. If your panel manufacturer is no longer in business, then you may have a problem should your panels fail - insurance companies are not so helpful when trying to claim back money on so called 'insurance backed' warranties when manufacturers have ceased trading. Avoid future problems by checking the terms of your warranty before buying.

We say:

Solar Technology PV Energy is currently expanding in the UK, and, as part of the Solar Technology Group, has its own cash reserves for ensuring warranties are honoured – we mistrust that 'insurance backed' warranties will be easy to claim on in years to come.

3 Will your installer be around to repair your system in years to come?

Changes to the FIT rates by the Government have meant that many smaller PV installation companies are no longer in business due to the sudden drop in demand. Unfortunately, many installers know they will never honour the long installation warranties they offer and are often just looking for a quick sale.

We say:

Be careful when choosing your installer. Go for someone with a good track record and avoid unbelievably cheap offers - a quality installer needs to make enough to put funds aside to ensure the business is there in the future to service their installations.

4 Buying the cheapest is not always the best long term investment

There are a number of temptingly cheap panels on the market at the moment. However, such panels may prove to be a risky investment as they may be:

- bankrupt stock, or panels dumped to generate quick cash before bankruptcy,
- panels made from 'B' and 'C' quality grade cells, or
- panels sold on a no-return basis via containers from China.

We say:

Take care! Bear in mind that if your panels go wrong then your FIT income could be affected, so always find out where the panels come from and always check that the modules are made from 'A' Grade cells. Solar PV Energy only uses premium modules made to the highest standards.

5 Not all PV panels are the same

Cheaper PV panels are not necessarily subject to rigorous quality checks and can often contain cracked cells invisible to the naked eye. Panels could also be made of 'B' and 'C' grade quality cells without your knowing it, which could easily lead to the panels underperforming or failing early.

We say:

Solar Technology PV Energy only use panels made to the highest standards and quality tested by our own engineers. In the unlikely event that there are any problems with your installation, you have the peace of mind that our Customer Services Team is only a phone call away - we are a company you can trust.

For further advice and information on any aspect of installing and running a solar panel system, please ring our Sales Team on 01684 774006 or email us at sales@solarpve.co.uk

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