



TIPS FOR CHOOSING A SOLAR CONTRACTOR

What to Know

Work with a qualified, licensed rooftop solar contractor and reduce your risk of fraud, an improperly installed or unsafe rooftop solar system, and ineligibility for state and federal government rebates or credits.

Tips

Consider the following tips before selecting a contractor for home solar power installation:

✓ **Check for the appropriate licenses, registrations and insurance.**

- **Contractor.** Ask the contractor to show you his or her “pocket license” from the Contractors State License Board (CSLB) and a photo identification to make sure it is the same person. Compare this to the license information with CSLB using the [CSLB online tool](#) or by calling (800) 321-2752.
- **Solar sales representative.** A sales representative who solicits a contract on behalf of a contractor must be a registered Home Improvement Salesperson (HIS) with CSLB. Make sure the individual is an employee of the licensed contractor before signing a contract: Ask to see a HIS registration card and identification, then check it on the [CSLB online tool](#).

✓ **Review public feedback on the contractor.**

- [Go Solar California](#) – View information on contractors by ZIP code
- [Better Business Bureau](#) – Search for any complaints filed against the contracting company
- [Yelp](#) – View community ratings and comments
- [EnergySage](#) – Find contractors, compare bids and read reviews

✓ **Protect your investment.**

- **As a down payment, never pay more than \$1,000 or 10 percent, whichever is less, for any contract.** There is an exception for about two dozen contractors with special consumer protection bonds that are noted on CSLB's website.
- **Do not pay in cash or ahead of work completion.**
- **Do not be pressured into signing a contract by intimidation tactics,** such as losing out on government incentives for not acting quickly.
- **Understand tax incentives.** Discuss potential tax benefits of an investment in solar with a tax consultant to determine your eligibility for the federal solar investment tax credit (ITC).

Contact CSLB. CSLB operates under the umbrella of the California Department of Consumer Affairs. CSLB licenses and regulates more than 300,000 California contractors and is regarded as one of the leading consumer protection agencies in the United States.

For more information, visit <http://www.cslb.ca.gov> or call (800) 321-CSLB (2752).