



Solar furnace for home heating

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As subject matter experts, we provide only objective information. We design every article to provide you with deeply-researched, factual, useful information so that you can make informed home electrification and financial decisions. We have:

Incorporated third-party data and information from primary sources, government agencies, educational institutions, peer-reviewed research, or well-researched nonprofit organizations.

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You already know that solar panels can generate electricity for your home, but that's not all that solar energy can do - there are other solar technologies that make use of the sun's thermal energy to help heat up homes and lower one's heating bills.

Photovoltaic solar panels generate electricity, but energy from the sun can be used in different ways. One common way to use solar power is with solar heating systems, which convert solar energy into usable heat instead of electricity.

If you're looking to reduce the cost of heating water for your home or business, solar water heating (also known as solar hot water) is a great solution. With a solar water heating system, you can use the power of the sun to reduce your reliance on traditional heating sources (such as oil, electricity, and natural gas) in favor of an abundant and environmentally friendly energy source - the sun!

Solar hot water systems capture thermal energy from the sun and use it to heat water for your home. Systems can either be passive or active - while passive systems use gravity and natural circulation, active systems use pumps and controls to circulate water.

Payback periods for a solar water heating system vary depending on how you currently heat your water. For example, the payback period for a solar hot water system that replaces natural gas will be longer than one that replaces electricity or gasoline because natural gas is a comparatively less expensive fuel. If you install a solar water heating system on your roof, you can expect significant annual returns dependent on your water use and the previous method of water heating. Plus, using a solar water heating system reduces your emissions and your home's impact on the environment.

Solar space heaters use the energy of the sun to heat your home. While similar to solar water heating, these systems typically require more collectors (and consequently, more roof space), as well as bigger storage units,



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to get the job done. The thermal energy is harnessed at the solar collectors and used to heat either a liquid or air, which is then circulated to disperse heat.

Like solar water heating systems, there are both passive and active solar space heaters. Passive systems work like greenhouses - the collectors gather energy, and the resulting heat is trapped and circulated naturally. Active solar space heaters use pumps and other mechanisms to circulate heat.

Solar space heaters can reduce heating costs by up to 70 percent. However, most building codes require a backup heating system, so your solar space heaters should be integrated with an existing heating system.

A solar pool heater uses solar thermal panels (also known as collectors) that collect heat from the sun and transfer it to pool water that is pumped through them. These solar collectors usually look similar to photovoltaic panels but have space inside them for pool water to flow through and be heated up.

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