

ASES NATIONAL SOLAR TOUR

HOW TO: HOST A VIRTUAL LOCAL TOUR

TABLE OF CONTENTS:

How to Register Your Local Tour.....	2
How to Recruit People to Join Your Local Tour.....	3
How to Film a Virtual Tour.....	4
How to Upload a Video to YouTube.....	4
How to Upload a Video to Vimeo.....	5
How to Live Stream Your Tour.....	6
How to Shoot a Photo Tour.....	6
How to Sign-Up Tour Sites.....	7
How to Promote Your Local Tour.....	8
Virtual Local Tour Press Release.....	9
Social Media Captions.....	10

REGISTER YOUR LOCAL TOUR:

A Local Tour is a collection of solar and/or sustainable Sites. Note, as a host you do not need to showcase your own Site. The official weekend of the National Solar Tour is October 6-8, but you can host a Local Tour anytime during the year.

1. Go to nationalsolartour.org/signup to sign up your Tour
2. For the first question, choose the option "**Local Tour**"
3. Then choose "**Add Entry**" to sign up your Local Tour
4. A new form will appear, please **answer the questions in the exact order they appear**.
5. Fill out your contact information for the **main Tour organizer** and any other Tour organizers. Please note, you can click the small "+" next to the last box on the right to add more than one additional contact.
6. Create a **name and description** for your Local Tour. Add details on what **features** attendees can expect to see on your Tour.
7. Select whether your Local Tour will be an **in-person, virtual, or hybrid** Tour.

For a **virtual Tour**, please fill out the following:

- Select if you would like a **custom webpage** created for your virtual Local Tour or if you already have your own.
 - If you would like one created for you, select if you would like to **display your email** for attendees to ask you questions and **upload a photo (landscape preferred)** to feature on your webpage.
 - If you already have your own website, please **provide the link** so we can direct attendees there.
- Choose if you would like to live stream parts of your Tour.

For a **hybrid Tour**, please fill out the following:

- Select if you would like an **RSVP webpage** created for you or if you already have your own site.
 - If you would like one created for you, select if you would like to **display your email** for attendees to ask you questions and **upload a photo (landscape preferred)** to feature on your webpage.
 - If you already have your own Tour site, please **provide the link** so we can send attendees there.
- Add the **date(s) and time(s)** of your Local Tour. Please note, you can click the small "+" next to the last box on the right to add more than one date/time.
- Select if you plan on **live-streaming** parts of your Tour.

8. Let us know about your previous National Solar Tour involvement.

9. Fill out the final details and additional information. **Be sure to sign up for our email list too!**

10. **Agree to the Terms & Conditions**

11. When finished, select "**Submit**"

RECRUIT PEOPLE IN YOUR COMMUNITY TO JOIN A LOCAL TOUR

- Ask your friends, family, neighbors, colleagues, and others who have gone solar or have sustainable upgrades to host their home, business, religious institution, etc. on your Local Tour!
- Engage your neighbors by posting on community bulletin boards and social media platforms.

SHARE VIRTUAL TOUR TIPS WITH YOUR HOSTS:

WAYS TO FILM A VIRTUAL TOUR:

- Film a selfie video - keep it simple and easy!
- Consider asking a spouse, housemate, or child to help be a videographer for you, that way you can focus on sharing your story in front of the camera.

SETTING UP THE SHOT:

- **CHOOSE A GOOD BACKGROUND:** If you or your videographer can get you and your solar panels in the shot that is ideal. If you can't make that shot work, include your electric vehicle, the inverter, an electric bill in your hand, or another green feature in your house. Otherwise, a nice shot of you in front of your house is great!
- **LIGHT IT UP:** Try shooting outside on a sunny day for the best lighting. If you are shooting inside, it's always best to turn on all the lights! Move close to a window or light source and make sure the light is facing you and not behind you.
- **SAY CHEESE:** Make sure to smile. Feel free to include any friendly family and pet faces at home with you.
- **CONSIDER NOISE:** If you choose to film your video outside, make sure to keep noise level in mind—such as traffic and construction. Try to reduce noise other than your voice as much as possible. You may need to do a few takes if you have any interruptions.
If you have a set of headphones that have a microphone attached use it! The sound will be much better, particularly if you're outside. If you don't have a microphone, don't worry, the built-in microphone on your phone works just fine.
- **UP CLOSE AND PERSONAL:** Keep the distance between you and your videographer pretty close to make sure you can be well heard during your video.
- **GO SIDEWAYS:** Video is normally seen horizontally (landscape) instead of vertically (portrait). So unlike selfie photos you take, go ahead and turn your phone so your video is being shot in landscape mode.
- **REMINDER:** Be sure to elevate the camera to eye level (put the laptop on a pile of books or something else if needed) and look into the camera rather than at your computer or phone screen. If filming outside hold your phone up to eye level as though you were having a conversation with a person.

WHAT TO SAY IN YOUR VIRTUAL SOLAR TOUR:

- The typical format for a virtual tour is to record an introduction and talk about your sustainability story and then take the audience on a tour to show off your solar system or sustainable upgrades! Feel free to customize it to what works for you!
- Be sure to start off your video with your name, where you are located, and when/why you went solar
 - "My name is (name), and I am located in (location). Welcome to the virtual tour of my solar (home, school, nonprofit, business). I/we went solar because (fill in with your solar story)".

- What else to share in your video:
 - How many kilowatts your system is or how many kilowatt hours your system produces each month
 - Why you decided to go solar
 - What was the process like going solar
 - Why you would encourage other people to go solar
 - What you wish you knew before that you now know about solar

WHAT TO HIGHLIGHT ON YOUR VIRTUAL SOLAR TOUR:

- Some ideas of what to include on your solar tour, feel free to customize as you see fit:
 - Solar Array
 - Inverter
 - Electricity Bill
 - Any other sustainability features at your home - for example, EV's, battery storage, composting, geothermal, grey water system, gardens, green building materials, etc.
 - Your family, pets, yard, scenery etc. - make it personal to you and your home solar system!

TIPS FOR YOUR VIRTUAL SOLAR TOUR:

- **KEEP IT SHORT AND SWEET:** Your video should ideally be no longer than 5 minutes but can be as short as 30 seconds. Keeping your video within this length will make it more likely that viewers will watch it all. The average watch time of the 2020 National Solar Tour video was 2 minutes and 30 seconds.
- **PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT:** Practice what you are going to say in your video a few times before starting to record. You can also record a few takes and choose which one you like best!

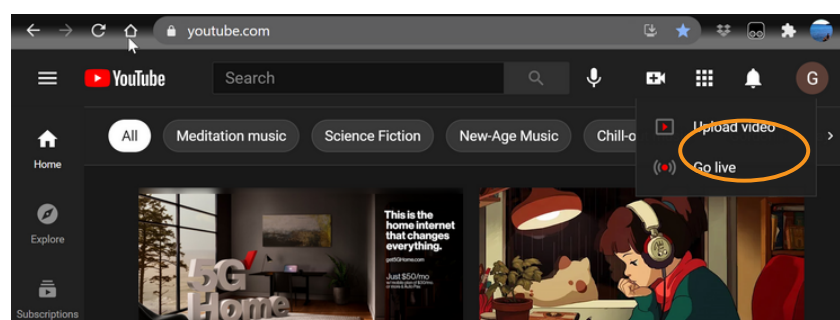
WANT TO GET MORE CREATIVE?

- Here are some other ideas to take your video to the next level!
 - Do you have an electric vehicle? Show off your solar powered ride. Give folks a quick tour of your charging station and walk through how your electric vehicle works!
 - Let your kids tell the story of how you went solar
 - Include your pets in the movie
 - Drone videos are a great addition if you have access to that technology
 - Download our National Solar Tour Sign for your family to use in a video or make your own sign!

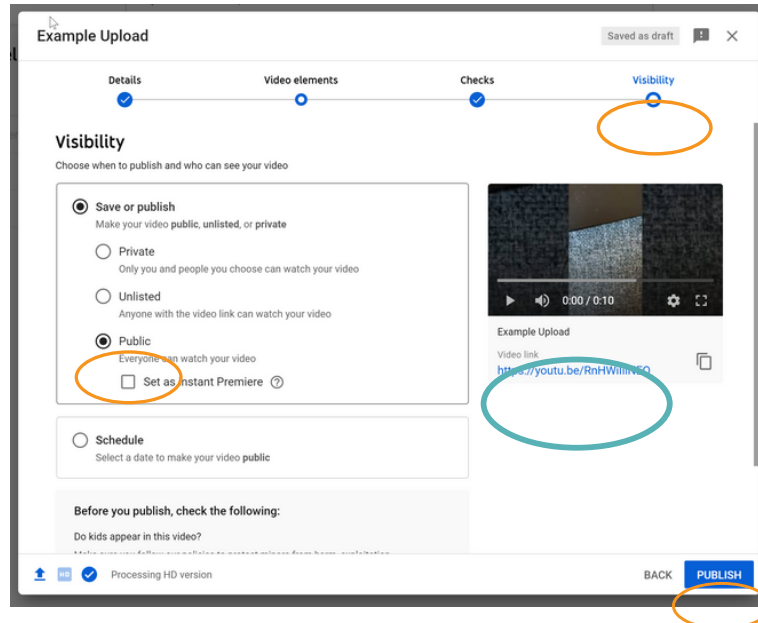
UPLOADING A VIDEO TO YOUTUBE:

*For this option you must have a Google account. This can be a Google email.

- 1) Go to youtube.com and click **SIGN IN** in the upper right-hand corner.
- 2) Once logged in, click the video camera button and hit **UPLOAD VIDEO**.



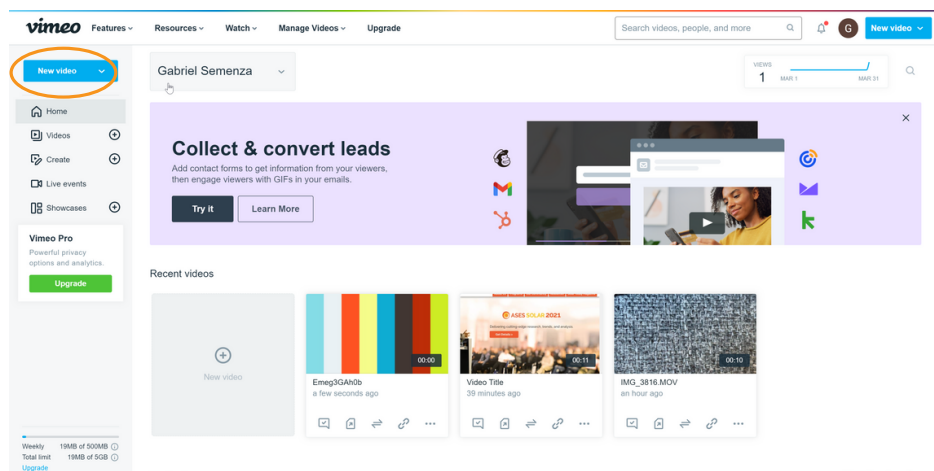
3) Click **UPLOAD VIDEO** and then **SELECT FILES** that you wish to publish.



- 4) While your video is uploading, choose a title and provide a short description of your video. You will be asked if your video is appropriate for children.
- 5) Click **VISIBILITY** and either choose **UNLISTED** or **PUBLIC**. *Note: your video will not be viewable by others unless one of these options is selected.*
- 6) Now **copy the provided link** and put this some place you will not lose it. Click **PUBLISH**.
- 7) The next pop-up window confirms that your video has been successfully published.
- 8) Finally, go to nationalsolartour.org/signup where you can sign up your Site and share the link to your video!

UPLOADING A VIDEO TO VIMEO:

- 1) Go to vimeo.com, click **NEW VIDEO** in the upper right-hand corner and then hit **UPLOAD**.
- 2) Fill out your information to either create an account or log in with a previous account. *Note: A Google/Gmail account can be used.*
- 3) Once you are logged in, click **OR CHOOSE A FILE** and select the correct video file.
- 4) For those already logged into Vimeo, click the **NEW VIDEO** button on the left side of your screen and then find **UPLOAD**



5) Now that your file is uploading, you can edit its title underneath the image of your video and add a description.



6) Click the **LINK** button to copy the web address to your published video. This button can be found at the top of the screen, to the left of the **EMBEDDED** button. **Note: for those with Vimeo subscription plans, be sure to set your privacy settings to public.**

7) Finally, go to nationalsolartour.org/signup where you can sign up your Site and share the link to your video!

GO LIVE!

- Go live on Facebook Live or Instagram Live to let your friends and neighbors tune in and engage with you in real time about your solar system.
- If you decide to go live, please let us know on your Local Tour or Site form. We will reach out to you to find out when you plan on going live and to help you with your event! We will add your live stream to our events calendar and post the link to your Tour when you go live!
- Learn how to use [Facebook Live](#) and [Instagram Live](#).
- Once you are done going live, save your video (by clicking the box in the bottom left corner) and then upload your video to your Tour Webpage for people who missed it to watch!

WAYS TO SHOOT YOUR PHOTO SOLAR TOUR:

- Print out a National Solar Tour sign to use in your photos
- Take some selfies - keep it simple and easy!
- Consider asking your spouse, child, or neighbor to help by being your photographer, that way you can be in some of the photos.
- Try to take a few different shots of each part of your system.

SETTING UP THE SHOTS:

- **CHOOSE A GOOD BACKGROUND:** If you can get photos of yourself with your system in the background that is ideal.
- **LIGHT IT UP:** Try shooting outside on a sunny day for the best lighting. If you are shooting inside, it's always best to turn on all the lights! Move close to a window or light source and make sure the light is facing you and not behind you.
- **SAY CHEESE:** Make sure to smile. Feel free to include any friendly family and pet faces at home with you.

WHAT TO HIGHLIGHT ON YOUR PHOTO SOLAR TOUR:

- Some ideas of what to include on your solar tour, feel free to customize to your family, business, school, etc:
 - Solar array
 - Inverter
 - Electricity bill
 - Electricity production data
 - Any other sustainability features at your home - for example, electric vehicle, battery storage, compost, geothermal, etc.
 - Your family, children, people working, pets, etc. - make it personal to you and your solar system!

REGISTER YOUR TOUR SITE:

Either you or your Tour Site Hosts can do these steps, repeat these steps for every Tour Site on your Tour.

1. Go to nationalsolartour.org/signup
2. Select "**Tour Site as part of a Local Tour**" for the first question
3. Then choose "**Add Entry**"
4. A new form will appear, please **answer the questions in the order they appear**.
5. Fill out your **contact information** for the main Tour Site organizer and any additional organizers. Please note, you can click the small "+" next to the last box on the right to add more than one additional contact.
6. Choose the **Local Tour you are associated with** from the drop down list. *If you do not see your Local Tour then your Tour Organizer has not signed up your Tour.*
7. Select the type of Tour Site you are hosting, then **input the name and description of your Tour Site**. Let attendees know your system size and what other features are at this Tour site. If applicable, let us know the organization or company name.
8. Choose whether your Tour Site will be **in-person, virtual or a hybrid** Tour.

For a **virtual Tour Site**, please fill out the following:

- Select if you would like a **webpage** for your virtual tour created for you or if you have your own.
 - If you would like one created for you, select if you would like to **display your email** for attendees to ask you questions and **upload a photo (landscape preferred)** to feature on your webpage.
 - If you already have your own, please provide us the link so we can send attendees there.
- To choose whether you would like to showcase your solar journey through **photos or a video**.
 - For **photos**, upload the photos when prompted.
 - For a **video**, submit a Youtube or Vimeo link to your video.
- Choose if you will **livestream** parts of your Tour Site

For a **hybrid Tour**, please fill out the following:

- The **date(s) and time(s)** of your Tour Site - Please note, you can click the small "+" next to the last box on the right to add more than one date/time.
- Choose if you would like a **custom webpage** created for you or if you already have your own.
 - If you would like one created for you, choose if you would like to **display your email** for attendees to ask you questions and **upload a photo (landscape preferred)** to feature on your webpage.
 - If you already have your own, please provide us the link so we can send attendees there.
- Tell us your **Solar Story**. Select how you would like to showcase your solar journey through **photos or a video**.
 - For **photos**, upload the photos when prompted.
 - For a **video**, submit a Youtube or Vimeo link directly to your video.
- Select if you plan on **live streaming** any part of your Tour Site.

8. Let us know about your previous National Solar Tour involvement.

9. Fill out the final details and additional information. **Be sure to sign up for our email list too!**

10. When your finished, select "**Add Entry**"

11. **Agree to Terms & Conditions**

12. When finished, select "**Submit**"

PROMOTE YOUR VIRTUAL TOUR:

- **SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS** - Use the social media graphics and captions on the resource page or below to let your social networks (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Linked In, Nextdoor) about your Local Tour. You can also make your own graphics using Canva.com, BeFunky.com, Adobe, etc. or email solartour@ases.org for us to help you make one.
- **FLYERS** - Post flyers showcasing your tour around town- at local coffee shops, shopping centers, bulletin boards, etc. Again, you can use the flyers provided on the resource page, below or make your own flyers on different online graphic makers like Canva, BeFunky, Adobe, etc. or email solartour@ases.org for us to help you make one.
- **CREATE AN E-URE TO HELP EDUCATE ATTENDEES** - E-brochures can be posted on your Tour Webpage
 - Add home specs
 - Add a list of resources: designers, builders, suppliers, retailers
 - Include money & energy saved

Virtual National Solar Tour Local Press Release:

Contact: [Your Name, Phone, Email]

For Immediate Release

[Your Org Name] and the American Solar Energy Society Host the National Solar Tour in Support of the World's Largest Grassroots Solar Event.

Homes, Schools & Businesses Nationwide are Participating in the 27th Annual ASES National Solar Tour in order to Help Residents Across the Country Cut Energy Costs, Enjoy Tax Credits & Assert Their Energy Independence!

[YOUR TOWN, STATE, Date] – [Your organization name here] joins the nonprofit American Solar Energy Society (ASES) and hundreds of solar-savvy installers and grassroots organizations throughout America to showcase thousands of solar-powered homes, schools and businesses — in-person and virtually and across North America -- for the National Solar Tour, the world's largest grassroots solar event.

The event, on October 6-8, will showcase the solar technologies solar enthusiasts are using to 1) drastically reduce monthly energy bills, 2) reduce harmful carbon emissions, and 3) enjoy rich tax credits and cash incentives as they improve their property values.

"The ASES National Solar Tour shows families and businesses real-life examples of how their neighbors and people nationwide are harnessing free energy from the sun to generate electricity, warm and cool their homes, heat water and slash monthly utility bills," [he/she] said.

On October 6-8, [Name of your event/organization] will hold virtual Site Tours of more than [number of participating sites] homes and businesses in the greater [use name of your region here] area on nationalsolartour.org.

The Virtual National Solar Tours afford participants the perspectives of homeowners and installers about the costs, processes and economic and environmental benefits of going solar. The National Solar Tour also gives a glimpse at how a variety of solar systems look in and around structures with different architectural styles all from the safety of your home.

"The National Solar Tour demonstrates an array of practical and economical solutions available right here, right now. It encourages neighborhood conversations addressing the growing need for clean energy," ASES Executive Director, Carly Rixham, stated.

Learn more about sponsoring, hosting or volunteering for a tour virtually or in your community at: nationalsolartour.org.

ABOUT [YOUR ORGANIZATION]:

[Add 2-3 sentences describing your organization here.]

ABOUT THE AMERICAN SOLAR ENERGY SOCIETY:

Since 1954 the American Solar Energy Society has led the renewable energy revolution. It is the nonprofit organization dedicated to increasing the use of solar energy, energy efficiency, and other sustainable technologies across North America. ASES leads national efforts to promote solar energy education, public outreach, and advocacy. www.ases.org.

SOCIAL MEDIA CAPTIONS:

- **FACEBOOK:** The 2023 in-person and virtual National Solar Tour brought to you by @americansolarenergysociety is right around the corner. This event is the largest grassroots solar, renewable energy and sustainable living event in the nation. The Tour occurs October 6-8 showing a collection of Tour Sites and Local Tours around the country. Find my <<Virtual/ in-person/hybrid>> << Local Tour or Tour Site Name>> details and RSVP at nationalsolartour.org! #NationalSolarTour #SolarTour2023 #<<Local Tour or Tour Site Name>>
- **TWITTER:** The 2023 in-person and virtual National Solar Tour brought to you by @ASES_Solar is coming up on October 6-8. Find my <<Virtual/ in-person/hybrid>> << Local Tour or Site Name>> details and RSVP at nationalsolartour.org! #NationalSolarTour #SolarTour2023 #Solar
- **INSTAGRAM:** The 2023 in-person and virtual National Solar Tour brought to you by @ASES_Solar is right around the corner on October 6-8. Find my <<Virtual/ in-person/hybrid>> << Local Tour or Tour Site Name>> details and RSVP at nationalsolartour.org! #NationalSolarTour #SolarTour2023 #Solar
- **LINKEDIN:** The 2023 in-person and virtual National Solar Tour brought to you by @americansolarenergysociety is right around the corner. This event is the largest grassroots solar, renewable energy and sustainable living event in the nation. The Tour occurs October 6-8, showing a collection of solar and sustainable Tour Sites and Local Tours around the country. Find my <<Virtual/ in-person/hybrid>> << Local Tour or Tour Site Name>> details and RSVP at nationalsolartour.org! #NationalSolarTour #SolarTour2023 # SolarMovement
- **ONLINE NEWSLETTER:** The 2023 in-person and virtual National Solar Tour brought to you by the American Solar Energy Society is right around the corner. This event is the largest grassroots solar, renewable energy and sustainable living event in the nation. The National Solar Tour will occur October 6-8, showing a collection of Tour Sites and Local Tours around the country. Find my <<Virtual/ in-person/hybrid>> << Local Tour or Tour Site Name>> details and RSVP at nationalsolartour.org! #NationalSolarTour #SolarTour2023 # SolarMovement

BE SURE TO TAG ASES WE CAN SHARE YOUR POSTS!

- **Facebook:** @americansolarenergysociety
- **Instagram:** @ases_solar
- **Twitter:** @ASES_Solar
- **LinkedIn:** @American Solar Energy Society

Thank you for creating a virtual Local Tour and contributing to the National Solar Tour!
For more resources and printable versions of the graphics above go to
nationalsolartour.org/resources.

If you have any questions or need support, feel free to reach out to
Lauren Reddington, Tour Director, at **solartour@ases.org**.