

ASES NATIONAL SOLAR TOUR

SOLAR INSTALLER TOOLKIT

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The American Solar Energy Society

invites you to participate in the

National Solar Tour

October 4-6, 2024

Join ASES in hosting the nation's largest grassroots solar, renewable energy, and sustainable living event! The 28th Annual National Solar Tour is an in-person, virtual, and hybrid event in which homes and businesses show off their solar PV systems and sustainable upgrades to audiences across the country.

The National Solar Tour serves as an excellent opportunity to educate local community members about solar and sustainable living to advertise your business from the best referrals - your happy customers. By hosting a Local Customer Tour, your company will be at the forefront of your community's renewable energy scene and will generate new leads.

Benefits Include:

- Advertising your solar projects, products, and services FOR FREE
- Marketing opportunities
- Promotion of solar and sustainability in your area
- Demonstrating past successful solar and sustainable projects

To participate in the Tour, please head to [**nationalsolartour.org/signup**](https://nationalsolartour.org/signup) and select "**Local Tour**" where you can choose an in-person, virtual, or hybrid format. You can find more detailed instructions on signing up, flyers, and sample email templates to recruit your happy customers at [**nationalsolartour.org/resources**](https://nationalsolartour.org/resources). Email [**solartour@ases.org**](mailto:solartour@ases.org) with any questions and learn more at [**nationalsolartour.org**](https://nationalsolartour.org).

REGISTER YOUR LOCAL TOUR:

A Local Tour is a collection of Tour Sites. Note, as a host you do not need to showcase your own site. The official weekend of the National Solar Tour is October 4-6, but you can host a Local Tour anytime during the year and still be featured on the National Solar Tour Map!

1. Go to nationalsolartour.org/signup to sign up your Local Tour
2. For the first question, choose the option **"Local Tour"**
3. Then choose **"Add Your Local Tour"**
4. A new form will appear, please **answer the questions in the exact order they appear**.
5. Fill out the 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 additional contacts.
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 an **in-person Tour**, please fill out the following:

- Select if you would like a **custom event webpage** created for you or if you already have your own website.
 - If you selected that you would like one created for you, upload a photo (**landscape preferred**) to feature on the custom 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.

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

- Select if you would like a **custom event webpage** created for your virtual Local Tour or if you already have your own.
 - If you would like one created for you, **provide the email** you would like displayed 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 send attendees there.
- Choose if you would like to livestream parts of your Tour.

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

- Select if you would like a **custom event webpage** created for you or if you already have your own website.
 - If you would like one created for you, provide the email you would like displayed for attendees to ask you questions and **upload a photo (landscape preferred)** to feature on your webpage.
 - If you already have your own Tour website, 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 you are finished, select **"Add Your Local Tour"**
12. Finally, select **"Submit"** to successfully sign up!

Join the
<Company Name> Customer Tour
as part of the ASES National Solar Tour
October 4-6, 2024

Showcase your solar and sustainable upgrades in person or virtually!

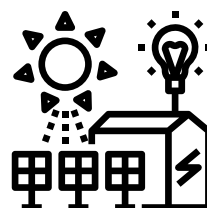
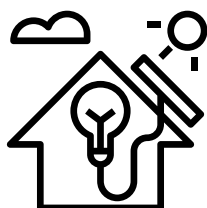
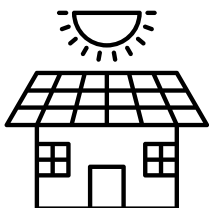
The National Solar Tour helps to spread solar contagion, where homes, businesses, schools, and other organizations across the country open their doors, yards, and roofs to neighbors who are looking to learn more about how they can utilize renewable energy. It is about neighbors talking to each other about solar, energy efficiency, other sustainable upgrades, financing, recommendations on installers, and local laws or issues.

Joining our Tour is easy! Showcase your home to others **in-person** by choosing which date(s) (October 4, 5, 6, or all three) and time(s) work for you to give tours of your home. **OR** join **virtually** by creating a video or photo tour that showcases your solar, sustainable upgrades, and why you went solar.

Sign up your Tour Site at nationalsolartour.org/signup. Select "**Tour Site**" and fill out the form in the order the questions appear. When prompted select "**<<LOCAL TOUR NAME>>**" from the drop-down list.

For more details on how to sign up your Tour Site and tips on how to host a successful in-person or virtual Tour Site, visit nationalsolartour.org/resources. Please email solartour@ases.org with any questions.

Thank You for Joining our Tour!



Subject: Showcase Your Solar on the <<Company Name>> Customer Tour!

Dear <<Customer's Name>>,

<<Company Name>> is teaming up with the American Solar Energy Society (ASES) by participating in the 2023 National Solar Tour, the nation's largest grassroots solar, renewable energy, and sustainable living event. Every year, ASES organizes the National Solar Tour, which aims to promote sustainable living in communities across the nation. This event will take place over three days (October 4-6), where homes and businesses show off their solar systems to in-person or online audiences. As a valued customer of ours, we invite you to showcase your home virtually or in person on our Local Customer Tour by signing up your home as a Tour Site under <<Local Solar Tour Name>>. The NST serves as an excellent opportunity to connect with others interested in solar technologies, answer questions, and demonstrate the numerous benefits of sustainable living.

Your participation can range from an uploaded video 'tour' or photo 'tour' of your Tour Site to a scheduled in-person showing of your site, yet any level of participation is greatly beneficial to your community. ASES has hosted the National Solar Tour for 28 years and has created extensive resources to help you host your in-person or virtual event. The deadline to sign up your Tour Site as part of our Local Customer Tour is **September 22!**

To learn more about the National Solar Tour, how to register your Tour Site as part of our Local Customer Tour, and resources head to nationalsolartour.org. If you have any questions, feel free to email Lauren Reddington, ASES' National Solar Tour Director, at solartour@ases.org.

Thank you,
 <<Name>>
 <<Title>>
 <<Company Name>>
 <<Email>>

HOW TO FILM A VIRTUAL TOUR:

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 ensure 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!

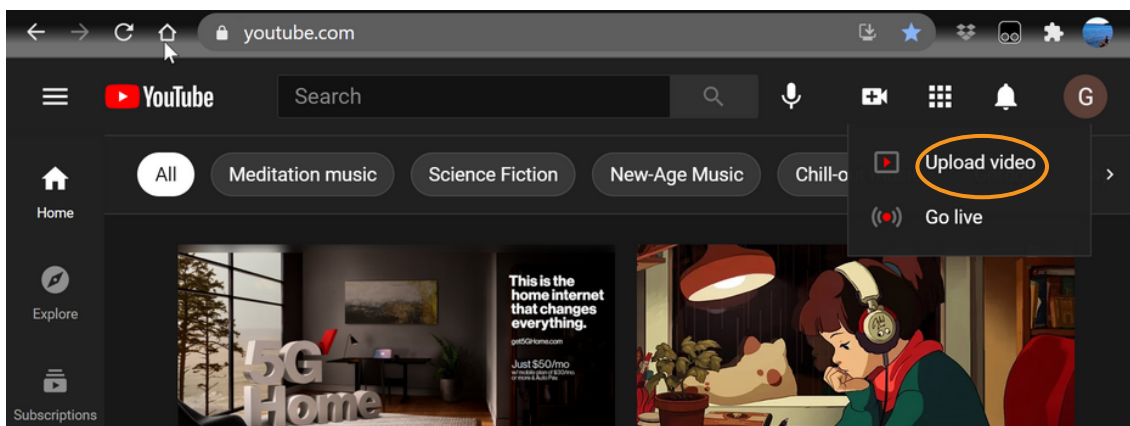
WANT TO GET MORE CREATIVE?

- 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!

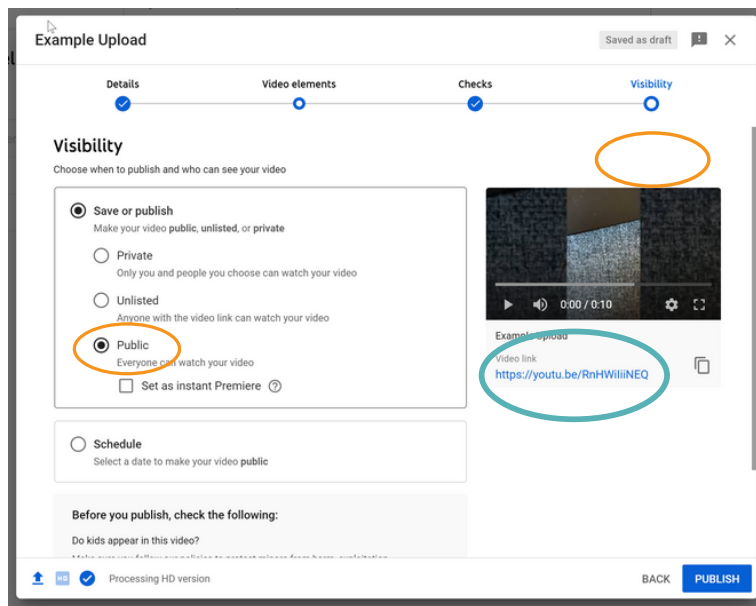
UPLOADING A VIDEO TO YOUTUBE

*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 Solar Site and share the link to your video!

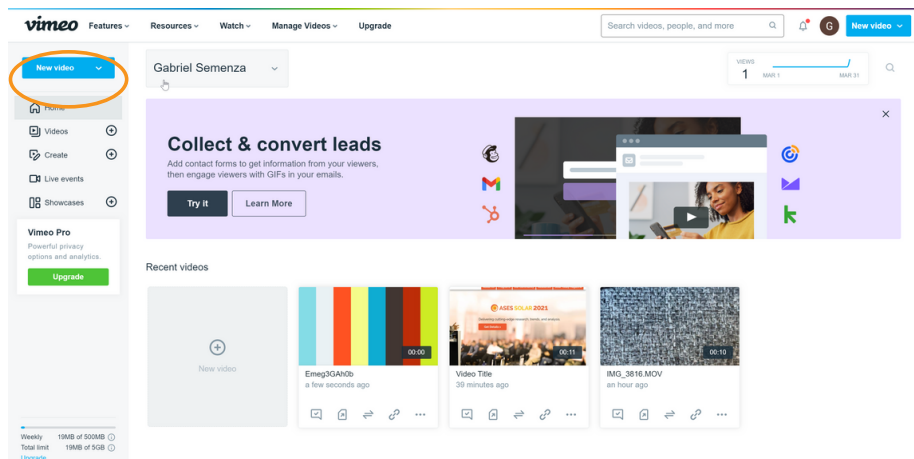
UPLOADING A VIDEO TO VIMEO

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**



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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 Solar 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 Solar Tour or Solar 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 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 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 ASSOCIATED WITH A LOCAL TOUR:

The official weekend of the National Solar Tour is October 4-6, but you can host a Tour Site anytime of the year. Tour Sites can be a home, business, school, government building, non-profit, religious institution, or an electric vehicle. Please make sure your Local Tour organizer has already signed up your Tour before you sign up your Tour Site.

1. Go to nationalsolartour.org/signup
2. Select **"Tour Site"** for the first question
3. Then choose **"Add Your Tour Site"**
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 the Local Tour yet.**
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 site. If applicable, let us know the organization or company name associated.
8. Choose whether your Tour Site will be **in-person, virtual, or hybrid** Tour.

For an **in-person Tour Site**, please fill out the following:

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

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 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 us the link so we can send attendees there.
- To choose whether you would like to showcase your solar journey through **photos and/or a video**.
 - For **photos**, upload 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 tour - 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 event 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 website, 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 and/or a video**.
 - For **photos**, upload 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 tour.

9. Let us know about your previous National Solar Tour involvement.
10. Fill out the final details and additional information. **Be sure to sign up for our email list too!**
11. Agree to the **Terms & Conditions**
12. When you are finished, select **"Add Your Tour Site"**
13. Finally, select **"Submit"** to successfully sign up!

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TOUR SITE

Date:

Time:

nationalsolartour.org