

Solar success stories:

Maximizing excess solar energy



Meet Nicole and Anthony—two homeowners who changed how they use energy with solar panels, batteries, and a few smart habits.

Here's what they did, and how you can do it too.

Nicole's story:

Building a solar-powered home for the future

Nicole moved into her Bakersfield home in May 2025 and wanted to be ready for the hot Central Valley summers. With a family of four, heavy AC use, and plans to switch cars and appliances to efficient electric options, Nicole knew she needed more than a basic solar setup.

Nicole added solar for today's needs and upgrades. The result? Her bills dropped from about \$1,500 a month to less than \$100 a month. She also has energy to power her planned electric upgrades.

Nicole's tip:

“Plan for your real usage, not just the minimum.”



Save more by using all your solar energy: Nicole's solar energy helps power her home, an EV charger, and a heat pump water heater. To use all her solar power, Nicole also wants to add a second EV, induction stove, and efficient/heat pump electric dryer.

Track and improve: Nicole uses [PG&E's My Account](#) solar summary tool to see how much energy her home uses and how much solar energy is sent to the grid. She monitors total solar energy production by using her solar company's tool. The family now run appliances and charge the EV during the day, when their solar panels are making power.

Easy upkeep, big payoff: Nicole's system does not need much care. She has the panels cleaned when she sees a change in solar production.

Anthony's story:

Custom setup, batteries, and energy control

Anthony installed his solar system in June 2022. For this homeowner, going solar was about more than cutting energy costs—it was about reliability, independence, and peace of mind.

Choosing the right solar system setup meant weighing costs, home layout, and what mattered most—generating more energy to use for adding an EV, or having backup power during outages. So, Anthony's setup includes solar panels and two batteries. He wanted to save money and feel prepared.

In Anthony's words:

“Solar plus batteries provide peace of mind—power stays on even during outages and emergencies.”



Balance panels and batteries: Anthony suggests adding as many panels as makes sense for your home energy use. Also, batteries let you use extra solar energy after sunset and during power outages.

Awareness helps you save: Solar helped Anthony better understand his real-time energy use. Because he has batteries, he does not need to change when he runs appliances as much.

Plan for the future: Thinking about an EV? Anthony says solar and an electric vehicle work well together to maximize savings. Charging an EV when solar power is available. Learn more about planning for an all-electric home at pge.com/electrification.

Solar tips:



Use solar energy and save money

- 1 Check your system often:** Use [PG&E's Solar Summary Tool](#) to help monitor your energy use and solar power sent to the grid. Do not wait for a big bill to check how your system is doing. Learn how much power your system sends to the grid and look for more ways to use more of that solar energy at home.
- 2 Use more power during the day:** When you can, run appliances and charge EVs while your panels are making power.
- 3 Keep care simple:** Solar systems are easy to maintain. Clean the panels regularly, watch their performance, and address issues early.
- 4 Think about battery storage:** Batteries let you use extra solar energy after dark. They can also give you backup power during outages.
- 5 Thinking about an all-electric home?** Calculate product costs and savings with [PG&E's Clean Energy Calculator](#).
- 6 Get everyone involved:** Work with family or housemates to avoid wasting energy. Make small energy-efficient changes such as running full loads of laundry and dishes.
- 7 Keep learning:** Know how to use your solar tools—[PG&E's Solar Summary Tool](#)—and your solar company's tools to track total solar production. Plus, know your billing plan—[Solar Billing Plan](#) or [Net Energy Metering \(NEM\)](#)—to manage home energy usage.

Final thoughts:

Solar can help you build an all-electric home

Nicole's move toward an all-electric home and Anthony's focus on backup power show that **solar is about having more control**, supporting **cleaner energy**, and **helping you prepare** for the future.

Their advice is simple: choose the right system, track your energy, and use the power you make.

“Solar and batteries can help you make, store, and manage your own energy.”

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Solar summary tool

Monitor your energy usage monthly and see when you can use more of your solar energy

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