

Before you plug it in

A pre-installation checklist for plug-in solar, built from the requirements the Plug-in Solar Device Interim Product Specification places on manufacturers — the things a compliant product's instructions must tell you. Work through it **before** you buy, not after it arrives.

WHY THIS EXISTS

When the government consulted, most respondents who supported consumer guidance asked for exactly this — a pre-installation checklist covering the per-circuit limit, RCD/RCBO protection, G98 notification, extension leads, circuit identification and freeholder consent. The government committed to guidance; it did not commit to a checklist. So here is one.

1. The building — can you install here at all?

These are prohibitions, not preferences. If any box cannot be ticked, stop.

- ☐ **Not** aluminium composite material (ACM) or metal composite material (MCM) cladding
IPS: “installations shall not be permitted on” these systems
- ☐ **Not** high pressure laminate (HPL) cladding
- ☐ **Not** timber cladding, and **not** a timber balcony
- ☐ **Not** a building subject to external wall remediation works, building safety remediation works or equivalent external wall fire safety restrictions
- ☐ If there is *any* uncertainty about the building's construction, you have consulted the owner, freeholder, managing agent or other responsible person
- ☐ Not fixed to a wall or other part of the building forming a **property boundary between dwellings**
- ☐ Escape and rescue paths will remain clear
- ☐ Positioned so as not to increase the risk of fire spreading along external walls or balconies to neighbours
- ☐ Where the building has a lightning protection system, the required separation distance is observed
BS EN IEC 52305-3:2024
- ☐ Any necessary planning permission or listed building consent obtained
IPS puts this responsibility on the user

2. Permission — whose yes do you actually need?

- ☐ You own the property outright, *or* you have written consent from your landlord
Tenants: see our request template at solar.org.uk/plug-in-solar/renting/
- ☐ If leasehold: freeholder or managing agent consent obtained, and the lease checked for covenants against alterations
- ☐ Insurance checked — your own policy, and where applicable the policy covering the building
IPS: users are responsible for checking “before installation”
- ☐ Where it will be fixed, installation costs apportioned with whoever owns the structure

3. The electrics

- ☐ **You have identified which sockets are on which circuit.** The specification's own method: switch off one breaker and see which sockets lose power — those that go off together are one circuit
Not confident doing this? The IPS says consult a professional electrician
- ☐ The installation has modern residual current protection (RCBO) and is in good condition. Older fuse protection without RCBOs must be checked and, where necessary, upgraded by an electrician
- ☐ The socket you will use is **not** damaged, degraded or non-compliant
- ☐ Only **one** device of up to 800 VA on the circuit — and see the caution below on how many your home may have in total
- ☐ **No** extension cables, multi-way adaptors, RCD adaptors or travel adaptors. No daisy-chaining. The device goes into a wall socket on the manufacturer's own lead
IPS requires manufacturers to state this is not permitted

- ☐ If the panels total more than **960 W**, you have considered a professional assessment of your electrical installation first

HOW MANY YOU MAY HAVE IS NOT SETTLED

The specification anticipates one device per household circuit. The government made that conditional on an amendment to Engineering Recommendation G98, and stated that until the amendment is made, G98's existing limit of **one device per household** continues to apply. We have not been able to confirm the amendment has been published.

If you are planning a second device on a second circuit, check the current position first: solar.org.uk/plug-in-solar/800w-limit/

4. Mounting

- ☐ The attachment method is **reversible and non-permanent**, and does not compromise the structural integrity, fire performance or weatherproofing of the building
IPS: this is a requirement, not a recommendation — and it is why a ballasted or free-standing mount is usually the better answer
- ☐ Fixing or ballasting is appropriate to the expected **wind and snow load** at your location and mounting position
- ☐ Manufacturer's minimum clearance between panel and mounting surface observed, and spacing from adjacent materials, so heat does not accumulate
- ☐ Not installed in the ground, or in wet areas; cable bend radii respected
- ☐ Only connection cables specified or approved by the manufacturer are used
- ☐ **No Y-connectors**. Where an adaptor is needed it is pre-assembled by the manufacturer
- ☐ If a multi-component kit: no more than **four** PV modules, no more than **two in series** in any string, and open-circuit voltage at the inverter input not exceeding **120 V DC**

5. After it is connected

- ☐ **Notify your distribution network operator** under G98. In G98 Issue 2 the notification is due no later than 28 days after commissioning, using the Appendix 3 Form B installation document
The IPS requires the product label to state that notification is mandatory
- ☐ The label supplied with the product is **affixed to your consumer unit** in a clearly visible location — and a new one fitted if the consumer unit is ever replaced or relocated
- ☐ Documents kept together: compliance declaration, G98 notification, any landlord, freeholder or insurer correspondence, and the product manual
- ☐ You know the rule for disconnection: **DC connectors must never be disconnected under load**, and the AC supply is turned off before disconnecting DC connections
- ☐ You know that removing the device also requires **notifying the network operator**. Deregistration is part of the obligation, not a courtesy

6. What this framework does not cover

- ☐ You understand the device is **not** to be connected to, operated with, or used in conjunction with a **battery energy storage system**. Battery-integrated products are outside the specification entirely
- ☐ You are not expecting export payments. A self-installed kit does not meet the Smart Export Guarantee's certification or export-metering conditions
solar.org.uk/plug-in-solar/seg/

Where this checklist comes from

Every item traces to a document you can read yourself:

- **Plug-in Solar Device Interim Product Specification, version 2** (July 2026) — sections 4 to 8, principally the consumer information requirements the specification places on manufacturers. Most items here are things a compliant product's instructions must already tell you; the checklist gathers them in one place and in the order you need them.
- **Plug-in solar: government response** (July 2026) — the per-circuit decision and its conditionality on G98, and the recorded demand for a pre-installation checklist. legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2026/848
- **Engineering Recommendation G98, Issue 2** (10 March 2025) — the 28-day notification and Form B.

We keep archived copies of the government publications, each with a SHA-256 hash you can check our copy against, at solar.org.uk/sources/legislation/.

WHAT WE COULD NOT CONFIRM

Whether G98 has been amended to permit one device per circuit. Until it is, the government's stated position is one per household. This is the single item on this checklist most likely to change.

The provenance of the G98 text. The copy of Issue 2 we read was a third-party mirror rather than an Energy Networks Association file, because ENA publishes current versions through its engineering database rather than as an open file.

Limitations

This is information, not advice, and it is not a substitute for the instructions supplied with your product — those are specific to the device you bought, and where they are stricter than this checklist, follow them. If you are unsure about the condition or suitability of your electrical installation, the specification's own answer is to consult a qualified electrician, and so is ours.

We do not sell or install solar, and we take no commission on anything you buy. If you find an error in this checklist, please tell us at solar.org.uk/contact/ — corrections are published and dated.

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