40 Questions to Ask a Solar Contractor

1. What year was the company established? Where are the offices?
2. Are you licensed and insured?
3. Who designs the system and forecasts estimated annual output?
4. Are the installers your employees? Do you use subcontractors for any part of the installation?
5. Do you have your own electricians on-staff in-house?
6. What financing options do you offer (Lease, PPA, Loan, Cash), and how do they differ?
7. How much can I save using solar?
8. Who does the paperwork for utility interconnection and permits? Are associated fees included in the price of the system or extra?
9. Will someone from your team be present when inspectors come to inspect?
10. Have you worked with my building department before?
11. Can my homeowner's association stop me from putting solar on my house?
12. What happens if I sell my home?
13. Do you offer a system performance guarantee?
14. Does your system include panel-level monitoring? Does it cost anything extra? How do I access it?
15. Will the system meet local building and fire codes?
16. Do you confirm that my roof is structurally OK to hold panels?
17. Do you recommend using a central inverter, micro-inverters or optimizers? Why?
18. Should my panels be interconnected to the grid? Can I get power during a blackout?
19. Will you give me a firm quote or an estimate prior to signing a contract?
20. How are contract changes addressed? Do I have the right to cancel?
21. How long will be between the time I sign the contract until installation?
22. How long will the installation take?
23. Will there be a master electrician on site?
24. Do I need to be home during the entire installation?
25. How much money is due upfront? When are other payments due?
26. Which rebates and incentives come to me? Federal? State? Other?
27. Who is responsible for fixing any damage to my home if caused during installation? Or due to a penetration in the roof that results in a water leak?
28. Do you pro-actively monitor my system's performance after installation and notify me if there are issues?
29. Can I add more panels/modules later?
30. Should I wait for newer technology?
31. Can I apply for shared solar or community aggregated solar?
32. What warranties are there on the different parts of the system? Who do I call if there is a problem?
33. Will my home value change? Will my real estate taxes go up?
34. Will the panel performance degrade over time?
35. Can you provide customer references?
36. What is the process for future roof replacement? Cost for removing and replacing panels?
37. What if a new building is built and shades my system?
38. Can you install a canopy system, a ground mounted system, or a tracking system if my roof isn't appropriate?
39. Will you perform a whole house audit and let me know how to reduce all my energy demands?
40. If I have an electric vehicle, how much solar energy is needed to charge it? Can I charge it when the sun isn't shining?

Source credit: American Solar Energy Society - www.ases.org/40-questions-to-ask-an-installer/