

MAINTENANCE & CARE

Solar Panel Maintenance in Australia: Cleaning, Checks & Output

One of the best things about solar is how little it asks of you. There are no moving parts on the roof, and rain does a lot of the cleaning. But "low maintenance" isn't "no maintenance". A dirty array, a spider-clogged inverter or an unnoticed output drop can quietly cost you money for months. This guide covers the small, sensible routine that keeps a home solar system performing, and where a professional should step in.

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<https://shutthefrontup.com.au/solar-panel-maintenance>

QUICK ANSWER

Solar systems are close to maintenance-free, but a little attention keeps them generating at their best. **Clean the panels once or twice a year, glance at your monitoring app regularly, and have the system professionally serviced every two years or so** by a licensed electrician.

Panels tilted at 15 degrees or more get some natural rinsing from rain, so many homes only need an occasional clean. **Coastal, dusty, or tree-shaded homes should clean more often (around quarterly)** and your monitoring app is the best way to tell whether dirt is actually costing you output.

Bottom line: Clean once or twice a year (quarterly in tough spots), watch your app for output drops, and book a professional service every two years. Never clean panels in a risky way to chase small gains.

Who this is for: Australian solar owners who want to protect output and system life without over-servicing.

Typical solar maintenance costs

Indicative Australian costs in 2026. Most upkeep is free monitoring; the paid items are occasional cleaning and a professional service every couple of years.

ITEM	TYPICAL RANGE	NOTES
DIY visual check + app monitoring	\$0	your time and the free monitoring app
Professional panel clean	\$150-\$400	indicative; depends on system size and roof access
Professional system service / inspection	\$150-\$350	indicative; every ~2 years by a licensed electrician
Inverter replacement (eventual)	\$1,200-\$2,500	indicative; inverters typically last 10-15 years

What affects how much maintenance you need

Panel tilt

Panels tilted 15 degrees or more get rinsed by rain and self-clean reasonably well. Flat or low-tilt arrays hold dirt and need cleaning more often.

Your environment

Coastal salt, dusty roads, nearby trees and heavy bird traffic all soil panels faster. These homes benefit from quarterly cleaning; a clean suburban roof may need it only once or twice a year.

Shading changes

A tree that grows, a new build next door or a fresh aerial can shade panels at certain times and drag output down. Worth checking during your routine glance at the app.

The inverter

The inverter is the part most likely to need attention over the system's life. Keeping its vents clear of dust, spiders and vermin helps it run cool and last longer.

Monitoring habits

The single most valuable habit is simply checking your monitoring app now and then. It's how you catch a dirty array or a failing string before it costs you a season of generation.

Solar maintenance schedule

TASK	HOW OFTEN	DIY OR PROFESSIONAL
Check the monitoring app for output	Weekly / monthly	DIY
Visual check of panels for dirt, debris, shade	Every 6 months	DIY
Check inverter is on, cool and vents clear	Every 6 months	DIY
Clean the panels	Once or twice a year (quarterly if coastal/dusty)	DIY from the ground, or professional
Full system inspection (wiring, isolators, inverter)	Every 2 years	Professional (licensed electrician)
Check output before vs after a clean	When you clean	DIY (via the app)

How often to clean. And how to do it safely

Most Australian homes only need to clean their panels once or twice a year. Homes near the coast, under trees or on dusty roads may need it quarterly. Panels tilted 15 degrees or more get some free rinsing from rain, so don't over-do it.

Safety comes before a few percent of output. Getting on a roof is the real risk in solar maintenance, so wherever possible:

- Clean from the ground with a soft brush and a hose on a long pole. Avoid going on the roof.
- Use plain or lightly soapy water and a soft brush or squeegee. **Never use abrasive pads, harsh detergents or a high-pressure washer**, which can scratch the glass or damage seals.
- Clean early morning or late afternoon when panels are cool. Cold water on hot glass can crack it.
- If your roof is steep, high, or the array is large, pay a professional. It's cheaper than a fall.

Watch your monitoring app

Every modern inverter comes with free monitoring software that shows daily and historical generation. It's your early-warning system and it costs nothing to use.

- Get a feel for what a good sunny day produces for your system and season, so an unusual drop stands out.
- The best way to know whether a clean was worth it is to compare output in the app for the days before and after. A clear jump tells you the panels were being held back by dirt.
- A sudden drop to zero, or a red light on the inverter, is a troubleshooting job. See our [solar troubleshooting guide](#).

Keep an eye on the inverter

The inverter usually lives in the garage or on an external wall and is the part most likely to need attention over the years. Between professional services you can safely:

- Check the status light is green and the unit is running normally.
- Make sure the heatsinks and ventilation grilles are free of dust, spider webs and vermin, so it can stay cool.
- Keep the area around it clear. Don't stack boxes against a wall-mounted inverter.

Don't open the inverter or touch any wiring. Anything inside it is for a licensed electrician.

Professional servicing

Keep the system clean and have it professionally serviced roughly every two years by a licensed electrician (a CEC-accredited installer is ideal). A service typically includes inspecting the wiring, isolators, mounting and inverter, checking for corrosion or water ingress, and confirming everything still meets safety requirements. It's inexpensive next to the cost of a system running at half output, or a safety fault going unnoticed.

Your solar maintenance routine

☐ **Check the app regularly**

A quick look at daily generation catches most problems early.

☐ **Visual check every 6 months**

Look for dirt, debris, bird mess and any new shading over the panels.

☐ **Clean 1-2 times a year**

More often if you're coastal, dusty or under trees. Prefer cleaning from the ground.

☐ **Water and a soft brush only**

No abrasives, harsh detergents or high-pressure washers. Clean when panels are cool.

☐ **Keep the inverter cool and clear**

Clear dust, webs and vermin from its vents; don't block it.

☐ **Professional service every ~2 years**

A licensed electrician checks wiring, isolators and the inverter.

Frequently asked questions

How often should I clean my solar panels?

Most Australian homes need to clean their panels once or twice a year. Homes near the coast, under trees or on dusty roads may need quarterly cleaning. Panels tilted 15 degrees or more get some natural rinsing from rain, so many systems need very little. Use your monitoring app to judge whether dirt is actually reducing your output.

Do solar panels need maintenance?

Very little, but not none. The sensible routine is to check your monitoring app regularly, do a visual check every six months, clean the panels once or twice a year, keep the inverter's vents clear, and have the system professionally serviced by a licensed electrician about every two years.

Can I clean solar panels myself?

Yes, ideally from the ground with a soft brush and a hose on a pole, using plain or lightly soapy water when the panels are cool. Avoid abrasive pads, harsh detergents and high-pressure washers. If your roof is steep, high or the array is large, it's safer and often not much dearer to have it done professionally. The main risk in solar maintenance is falling from the roof.

How do I know if my solar panels need cleaning?

Your monitoring app is the best guide. Compare current output to a similar sunny day in the past, and after a clean compare the days before and after. A clear jump in generation tells you the panels were being held back by dirt. Visible dust, bird droppings or pollen build-up are also signs.

How often should solar be professionally serviced?

A professional inspection every two years or so is advisable for most home systems, carried out by a licensed electrician. The inverter is the component most likely to need attention over the system's life, and inverters themselves typically last 10-15 years before replacement.

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