

# The process of increasing the voltage of photovoltaic panels

What is the photovoltaic effect?

The photovoltaic effect is a process that generates voltage or electric current in a photovoltaic cell when it is exposed to sunlight. It is this effect that makes solar panels useful, as it is how the cells within the panel convert sunlight to electrical energy. The photovoltaic effect was first discovered in 1839 by Edmond Becquerel.

What is a photovoltaic (PV) cell?

A photovoltaic (PV) cell, commonly called a solar cell, is a nonmechanical device that converts sunlight directly into electricity. Some PV cells can convert artificial light into electricity. Sunlight is composed of photons, or particles of solar energy.

How does a photovoltaic cell work?

1. PV cells absorb incoming sunlight  
The photovoltaic effect starts with sunlight striking a photovoltaic cell. Solar cells are made of a semiconductor material, usually silicon, that is treated to allow it to interact with the photons that make up sunlight.

How does a photovoltaic cell convert sunlight into electricity?

Photovoltaic (PV) effect is known as a physical process in which that a PV cell converts the sunlight into electricity. When a PV cell is subject to the sunlight, the absorbed amount of light generates electric energy while remaining sunlight can be reflected or passed through.

Where does the photovoltaic effect occur?

The photovoltaic effect occurs in solar cells. These solar cells are composed of two different types of semiconductors - a p-type and an n-type - that are joined together to create a p-n junction. To read the background on what these semiconductors are and what the junction is, [click here](#).

Can a photovoltaic cell produce enough electricity?

A photovoltaic cell alone cannot produce enough usable electricity for more than a small electronic gadget. Solar cells are wired together and installed on top of a substrate like metal or glass to create solar panels, which are installed in groups to form a solar power system to produce the energy for a home.

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