

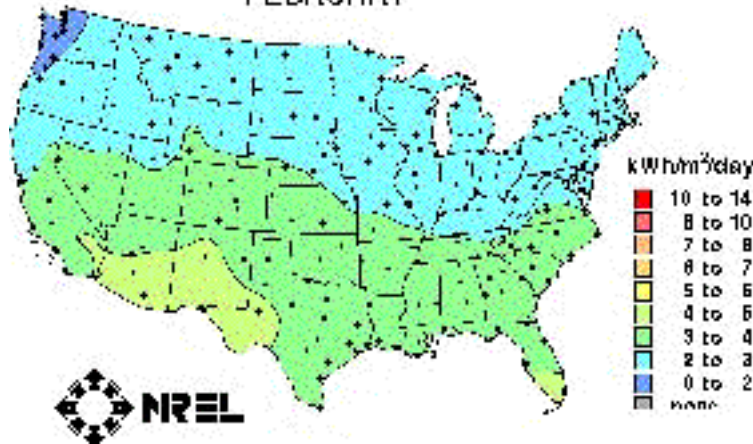
Solar Geography

The following three maps are for the United States only, but the principles involved may be applied to the entire world. The geography of solar power is related to the geography of the climate zones on the earth. For example, where there are cold climate zones like the tundra, there is little opportunity for solar power. The sun does not shine as directly on the tundra as it does on deserts or other sandy areas. In the American southwest is the greatest opportunity for solar power. In this area is the desert, where the sun strikes the earth the most directly. Different times of the year are given for the three following maps to illustrate the variance in the amount of power that is possible to generate.

Solar power is often criticized for not being able to provide power during cloudy days. Judging whether solar power is feasible in certain areas according the area's geography is invaluable. Placing a solar power station in a place on these maps that changes drastically in color means that batteries must be relied on during some of the year. Here are the average solar radiation maps for February, July, and October.

Average Daily Solar Radiation Per Month

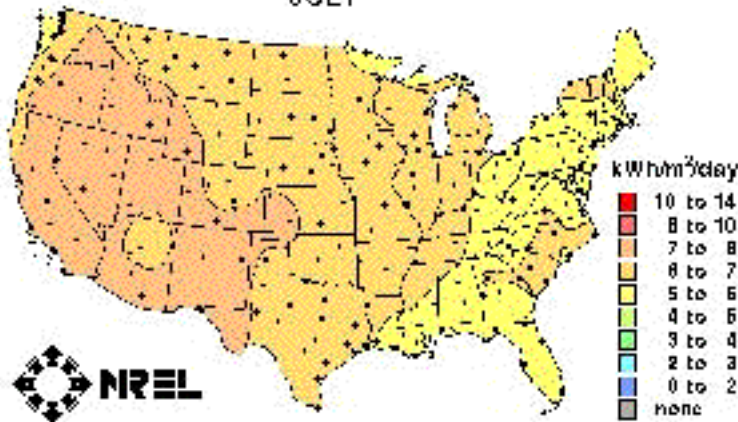
FEBRUARY



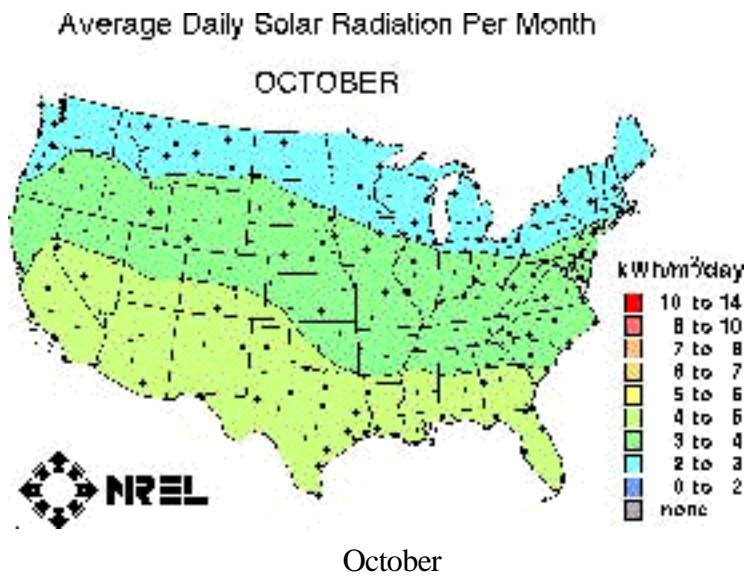
February

Average Daily Solar Radiation Per Month

JULY



July



These maps come from the National Renewable Energy Laboratory ([NREL](http://www.nrel.gov)).