

Fashion Action

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Go Solar with a Solar Handbag

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If convenience, attractive design, and **eco-consciousness** could fuse and provide consumer product benefits guilt-free, some say the environmental problems of today, such as pollution, would be a thing of the past. Enter solar-powered handbags, a relatively new endeavor approached by green-minded fashion designers that allows you to charge your cell phone, or other small electronic device (think USB connector), after the bag's outer surface collects and stores the sun's rays as an **alternative to using a traditional electric outlet**.

Combining renewable energy with functional fashion? That's an ethical fashion trend Hearts can get behind!



Quick Facts: Why Go Solar?

- **100% annual global energy needs every hour:** The sun provides enough solar energy every single hour to provide a year's-worth of current global energy demands.^[i]
- **1% US power from solar photovoltaics:** Despite the sun's power, photovoltaics currently provide only 1% of US energy.^[ii]^[iii]
- **35% US electricity could come from solar:**^[iv] That is, with current technology – new innovations will get us closer to 100% in the future. Yet fossil fuel subsidies will reach \$775 billion in 2012 and renewable energy subsidies are closer to \$66 billion, which does not encourage growth in the green economy.^[v]
- **45,000 deaths annually from air pollution:** Generating electricity is the number one source of air pollution in the US.^[vi] More than 88 million Americans reside in areas with excessive levels of air pollution, and 45,000 die annually from air pollution related incidences as a result.^[vii] Renewable energy is a public health issue!

Take Action! Buy a Stylish Solar Handbag

1. **Voltaic Eco Tote:** The Voltaic lightweight travel tote can carry an iPad, a small camera and a water bottle. The solar panel charges a cell phone after four hours exposure to the sun and provides 4 Watts, total peak output at 6 or 12 Volts. The shell is eco-friendly, made from recycled PET soda bottles.
2. **Eclipse Solar-Powered Backpack:** The Eclipse backpack has all of the features a standard backpack has with a solar panel on the front surface for charging USB-powered equipment. Features include a compact design, royal blue color and breathable nylon material. The USB charges up to 2.5 Watts of power with a single 12V charging outlet.
3. **Brookstone Messenger Bag:** A utility, briefcase alternative, bag for the professional or student, the Brookstone Messenger offers enough space for smaller electronic equipment it can charge with its solar-charged USB chord and a laptop. The photovoltaic panels are subtly integrated onto the bag's outer front.
4. **Solarjo Power Purse:** This handbag provides an LED light inside, a USB connection and a basic geometric design. It's super cute, too!
5. **Refashion your own handbag into a solar handbag:** Anyone can upgrade their handbag with solar capabilities with a few tools and a little know-how. Check out this guide for turning a **Designer Handbag Into a Solar Powered Fashion Statement** for all the steps required.

Dig Deeper: Solar Energy and Fashion

- See just how little land area we would need as a planet to power all of humanity on 100% solar energy with this **Land Art Generator Initiative map**.

Energy: Solar Energy. (n.d.). Retrieved from National Geographic:
<http://environment.nationalgeographic.com/environment/global-warming/solar-power-profile/>

References

References

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