



Best whole house battery backup

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"The most unique aspect of the EP900 is that it is an all-contained ESS [energy storage system] device," Brian Shircliffe, a sales director of home energy storage systems at Bluetti, told CNET. "We've put it all in one unit."

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We did not conduct any hands-on testing for this review. Batteries are part of a complex home energy system that varies between households. Instead, this review is based on publicly available information online from Bluetti and an interview with Shircliffe.

Here's what you should know about Bluetti EP900 Home Battery Backup.

The EP900 system offers a modular design with multiple capacity options and a powerful 9-kW inverter. You'll also get a 10-year warranty. This battery system's round-trip efficiency and depth of discharge is lower than other batteries on the market, but it's not terrible. We'll talk more about specs and warranty below.

The EP900 is compatible with new and existing solar panel systems. Or you can install it without solar panels as a standalone backup power source. Here's a quick look at some of the specs for the Bluetti EP900.

The EP900 system's design is a bit more simplistic than other batteries we've looked at. Bluetti did this so that if you buy the battery you'll be able to install it on your own, Shircliffe said. If you're tech-savvy and confident with electrical instructions, you could take the DIY approach. The best part about this is that you'd save thousands of dollars on installation costs. However, if you'd rather leave these sorts of things to professionals, there's an option to hire an installer too.

"This comes as a kit. Everything's been pre-crimped and cut," Shircliffe said. "When you order one of these, it gets drop-shipped to your house very similar to any of our other consumer products. And then it takes about 20 to 30 minutes to unbox it, maybe another 10 to 20 minutes to assemble it, plug in all the connections, hit go. And then you've got [an] up and running solar battery."

The actual components are standard. You've got the B500 battery modules, EP900 inverter and a sub panel. The B500 battery modules store energy and get placed on the system's base and stacked on top of each other, installed in parallel. The EP900 inverter is what converts DC electricity into AC electricity that your home can use. This gets installed on top of the battery modules, sitting as the head of the system. The entire setup should look like a tower.

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There's also the sub panel, also referred to as the critical load panel. This small box acts as a sort of middleman between your home's main electrical panel and the battery system. The AC output is what gets wired to the critical load box, Shircliffe said. You'll also have two inputs wired in there. One for the battery and one for the grid. These circuits go onto this separate panel so that they can be controlled and maintained separately from other circuits.

If you choose to install the EP900 system outside, you also have the option of installing a little enclosure that goes around it. This shelter has an almost shed-like appearance, so if you don't want people to walk by and see a battery tower, this is a good cover-up.

The EP900 system is a stack of batteries with an inverter sitting on top.

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