



SolarTech Power Solutions

Battery storage for several hours



Overview

Will a fifth hour of battery storage cost more than 4 hours?

value for a fifth hour of storage (using historical market data) is less than most estimates for the annualized cost of adding Li-ion battery capacity, at least at current costs.²⁵ As a result, moving beyond 4-hour Li-ion will likely require a change in both the value proposition and storage costs, discussed in the following sections.

Can battery technology unlock long-duration energy storage?

The batteries work fabulously for discharging a few hours of electricity, but they're too expensive to dispatch energy for much longer. Now several companies say they have developed cheaper technologies, including flow batteries and metal-air batteries, that promise to unlock long-duration energy storage.

How long does an energy storage system last?

While energy storage technologies are often defined in terms of duration (i.e., a four-hour battery), a system's duration varies at the rate at which it is discharged. A system rated at 1 MW/4 MWh, for example, may only last for four hours or fewer when discharged at its maximum power rating.

What is the future of battery storage?

Competing long-duration storage technologies, such as flow batteries and other metal-air batteries, have also attracted billions in investment and government support. Utilities started adding batteries to the US electrical grid dramatically in 2021. Source: US Energy Information Administration.

Could lithium-ion batteries cover less than a day of energy storage?

Many flow battery companies are targeting less than a day of energy storage, a duration that lithium-ion batteries could also cover.

Should energy storage be more than 4 hours of capacity?

However, there is growing interest in the deployment of energy storage with greater than 4 hours of capacity, which has been identified as potentially playing an important role in helping integrate larger amounts of renewable energy and achieving heavily decarbonized grids.^{1,2,3}

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