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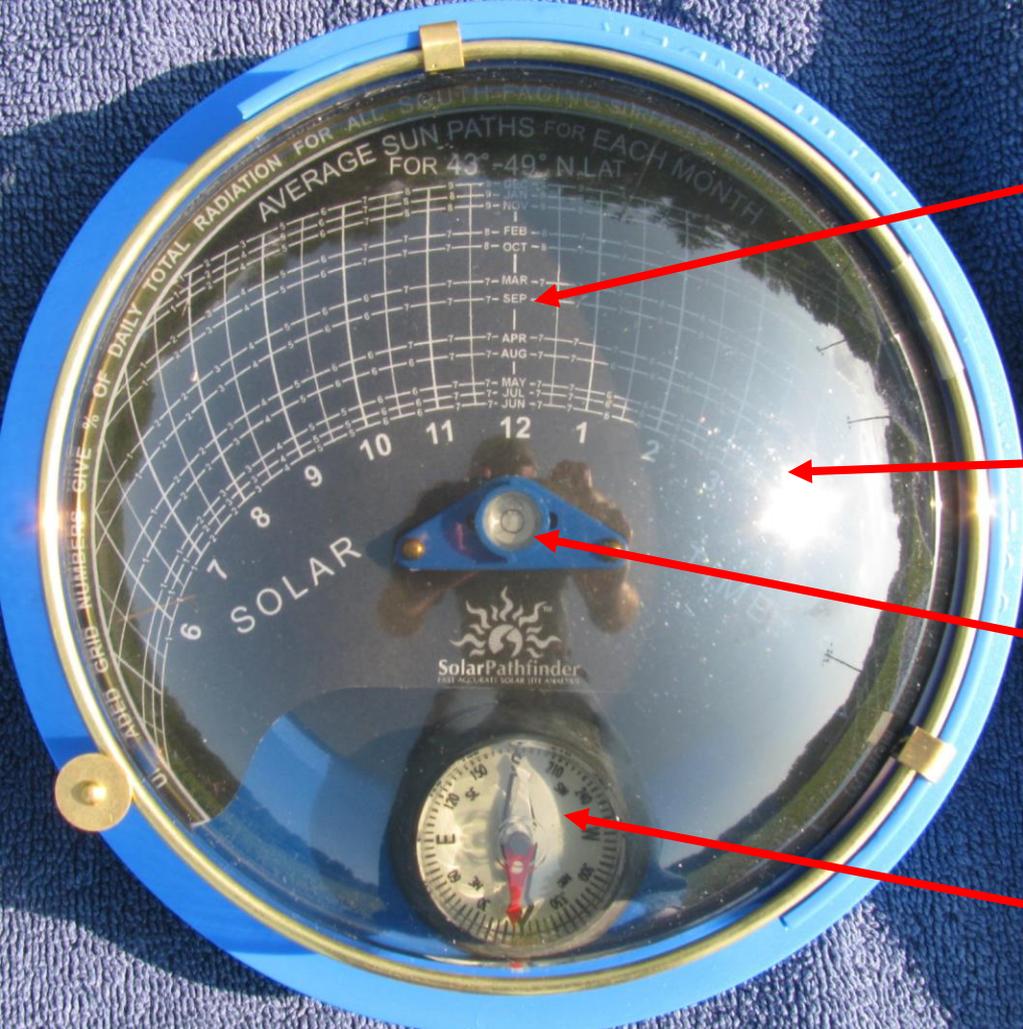
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## SOLAR SITE ANALYSIS: THE SOLAR PATHFINDER





## Sunpath Diagram

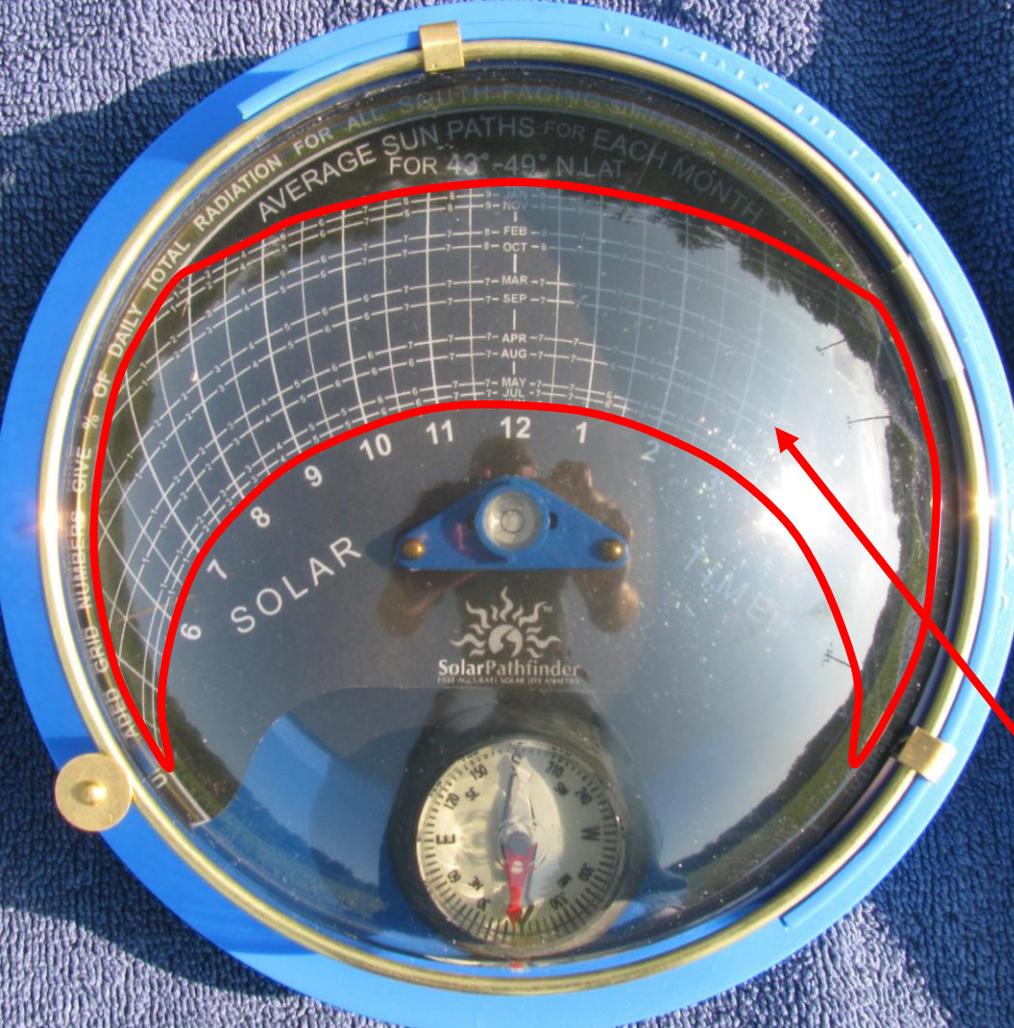
(Placed flat on the base just below the dome)

## Reflective Dome

## Level Bubble

## Compass





# 1. Solar Window

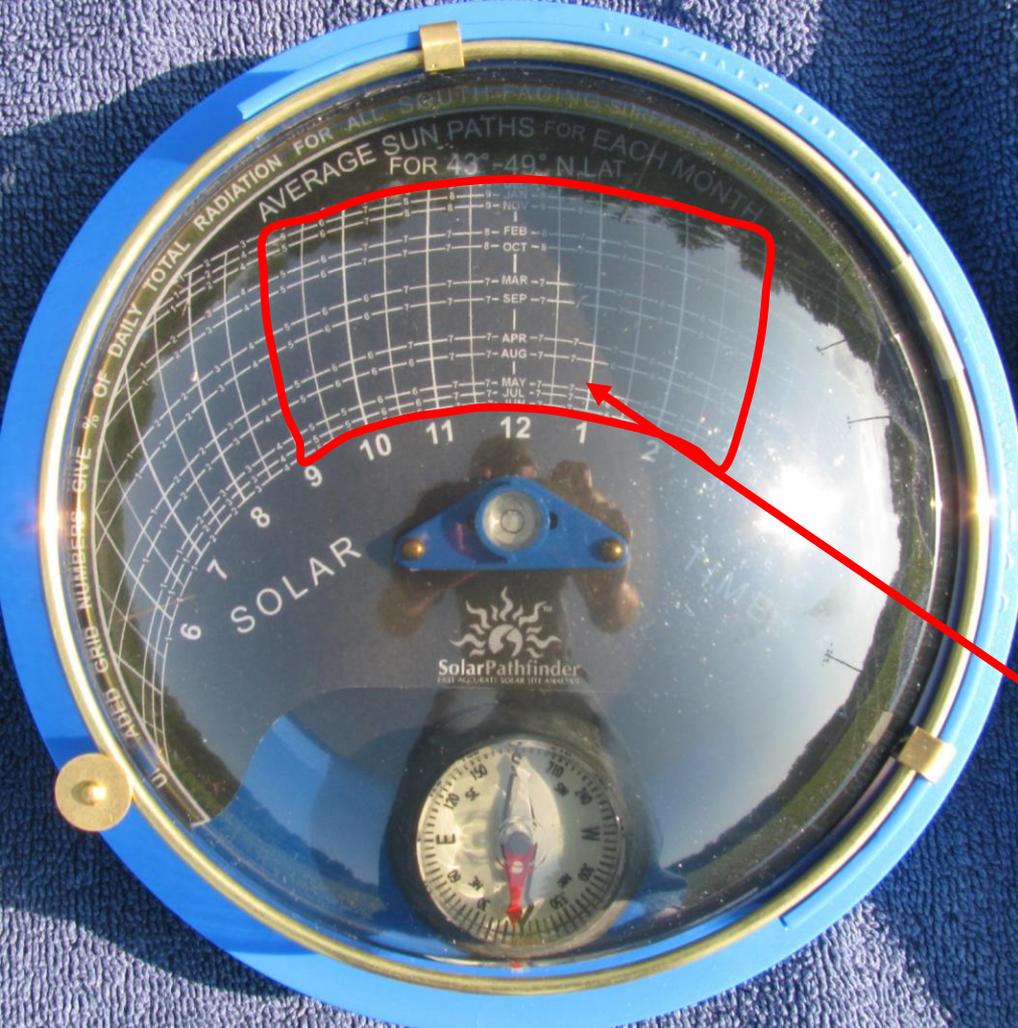
(astronomical definition):

The area of sky open to sunlight for a site is called the **Solar Window**. Assuming there are no obstructions:

- The upper limit of the Solar Window is the sun's path on the first day of summer--the summer solstice.
- The lower limit of the Solar Window is the sun's path on the first day of winter--the winter solstice.
- The east and west edges of the Solar Window can be defined by the horizons.

This would define a Complete Solar Window.





Sunlight is usually weak early in the morning and late in the afternoon. In addition, early and late sunlight strike a fixed solar PV panel at an angle that doesn't produce electricity very well.

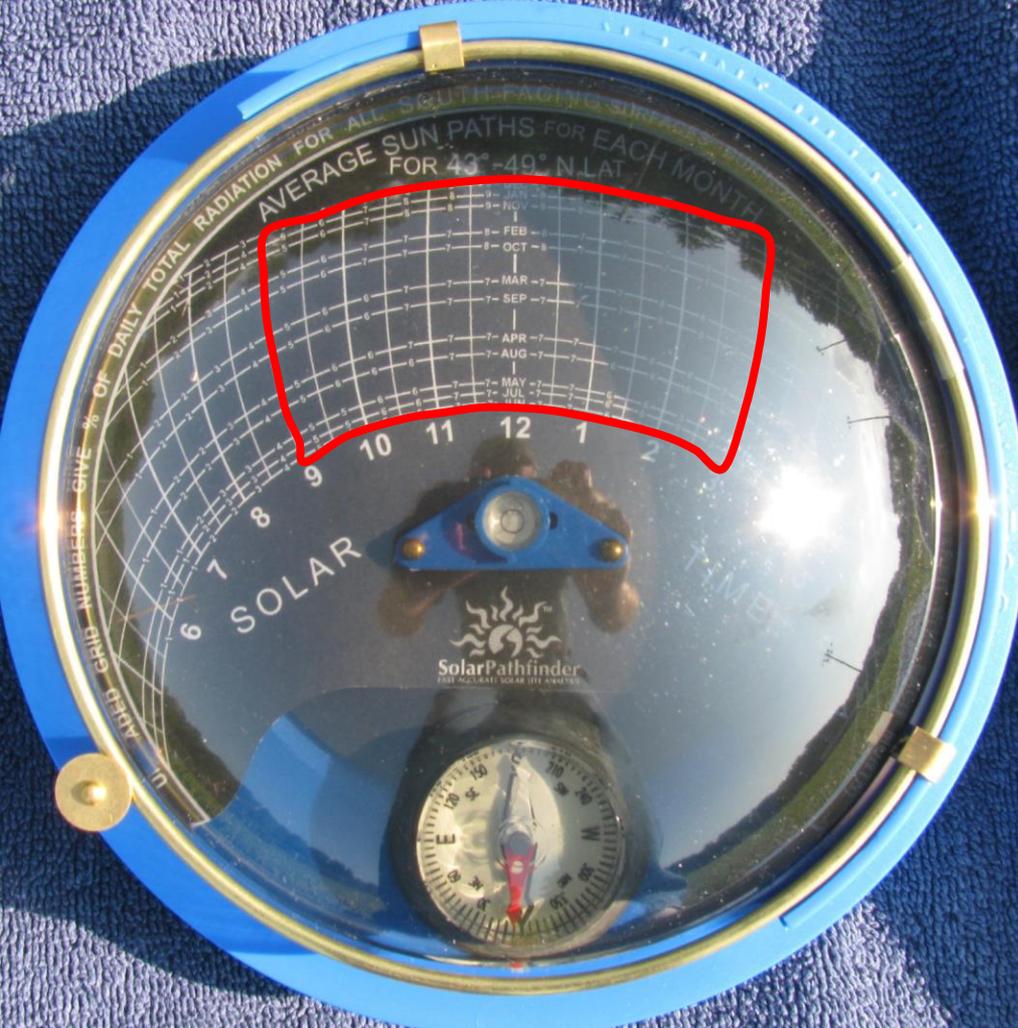
So, for photovoltaic solar panels, the hours from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m are the most critical for converting sunlight into electrical energy. For this reason, in the solar PV industry, the term **Solar Window** usually refers to these critical six hours

## 2. Solar Window

(as commonly used in the PV industry):

The three hours on either side of solar noon when the sun is at its highest altitude and greatest intensity for the day.



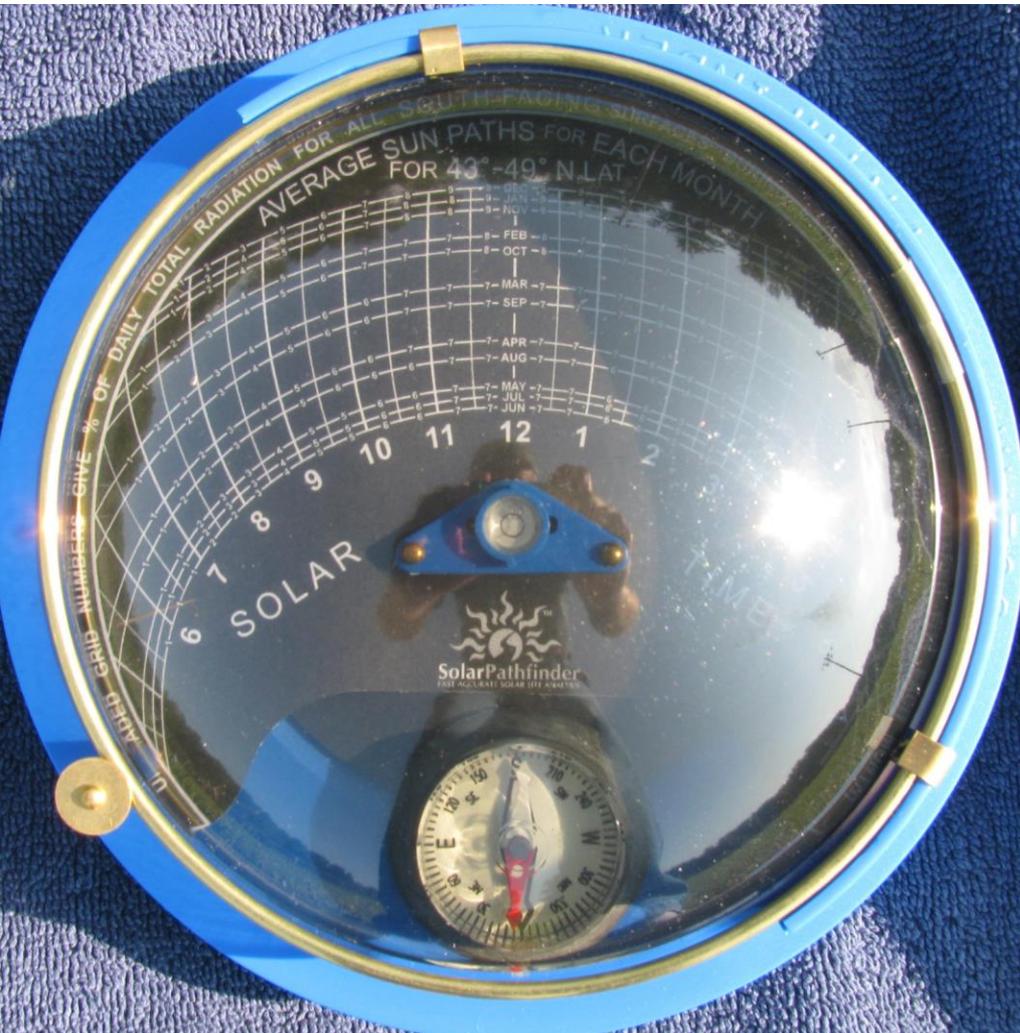


## 2. Solar Window (for PV industry):

The three hours on either side of solar noon when the sun is at its highest altitude and greatest intensity for the day.

As a general rule, if very much of the Solar Window is shaded, the site may not receive enough sunlight to justify the expense of installing a solar PV array.





**Pathfinder:**

**Assess these Examples  
for Available Sun**

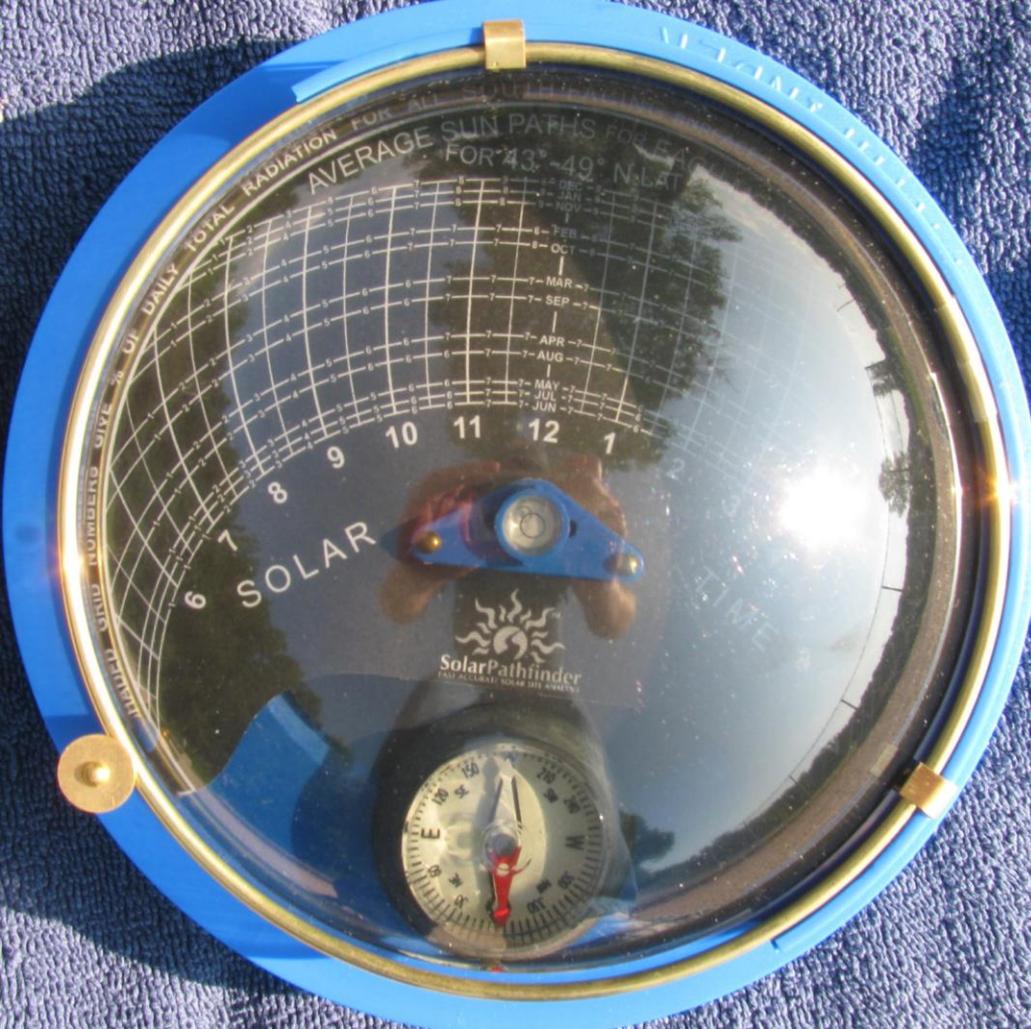




1.



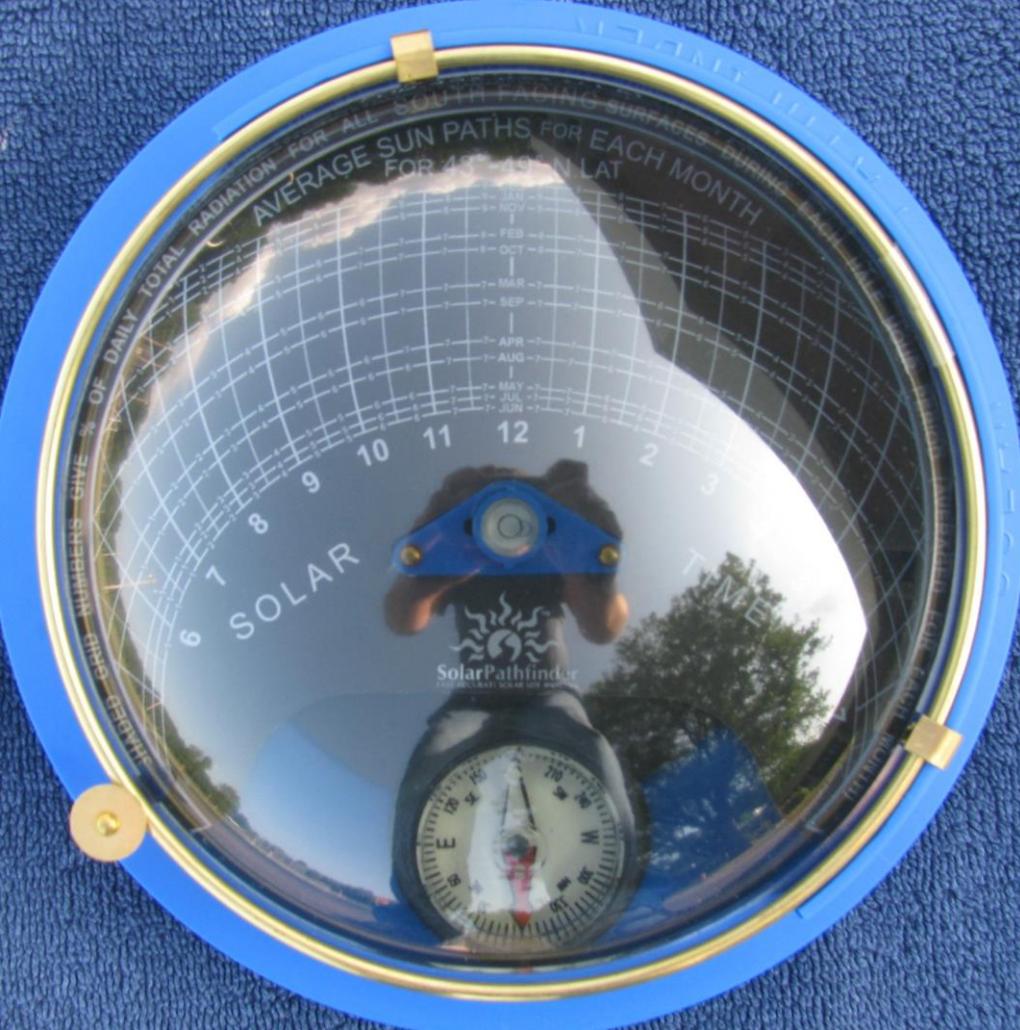
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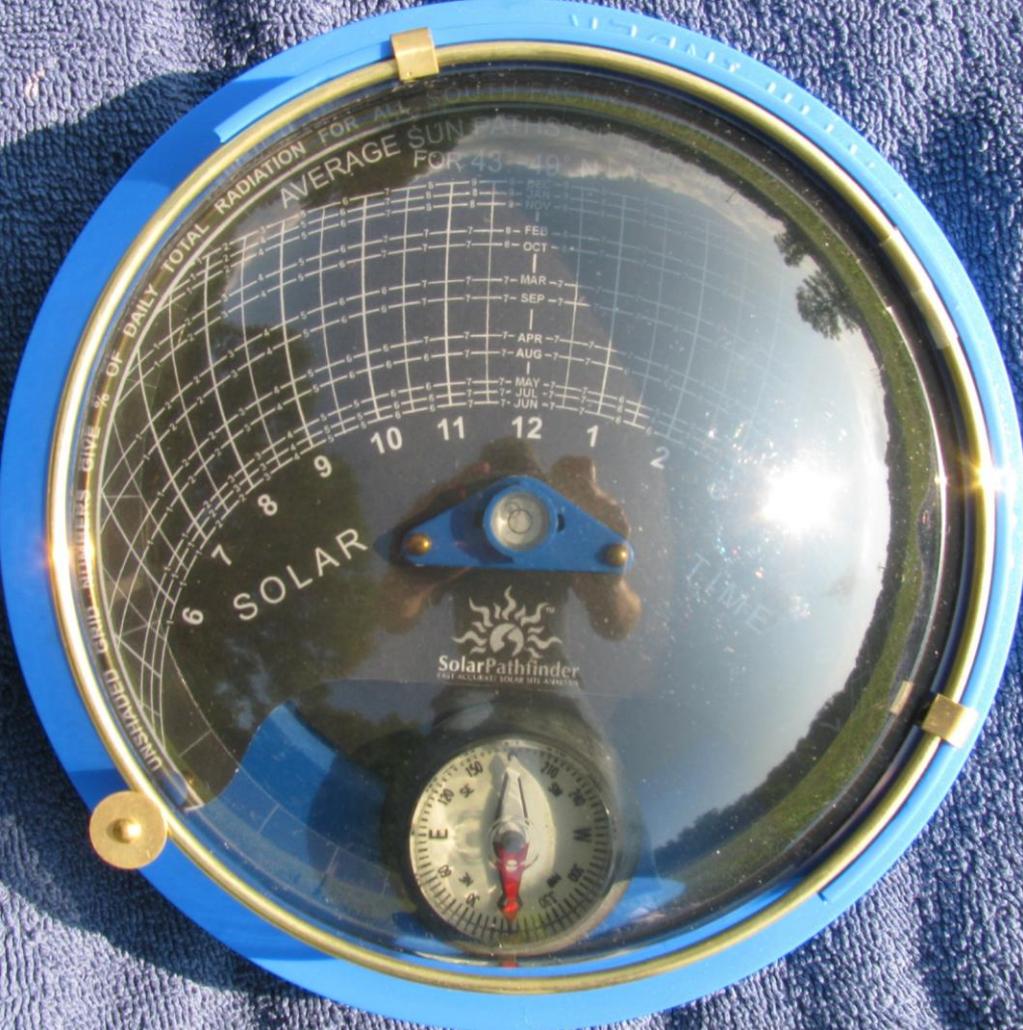


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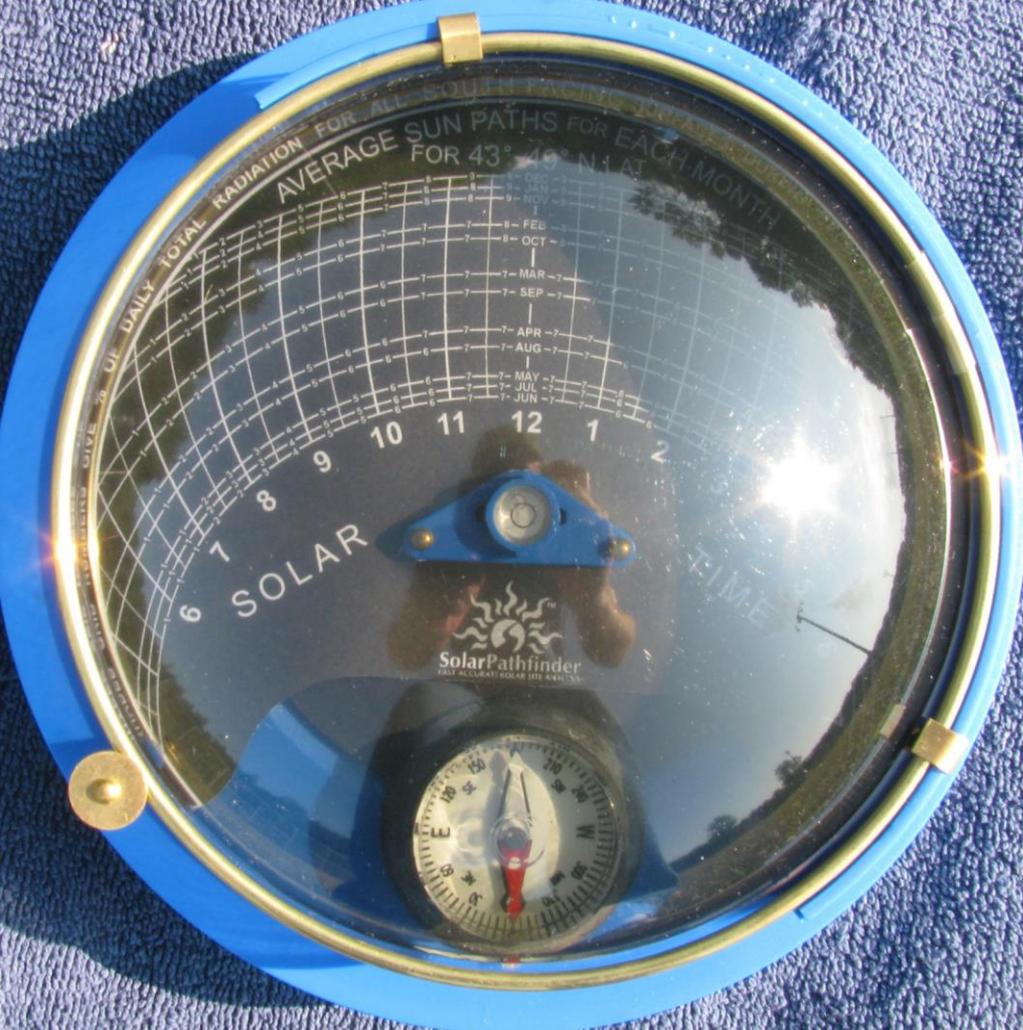
4.





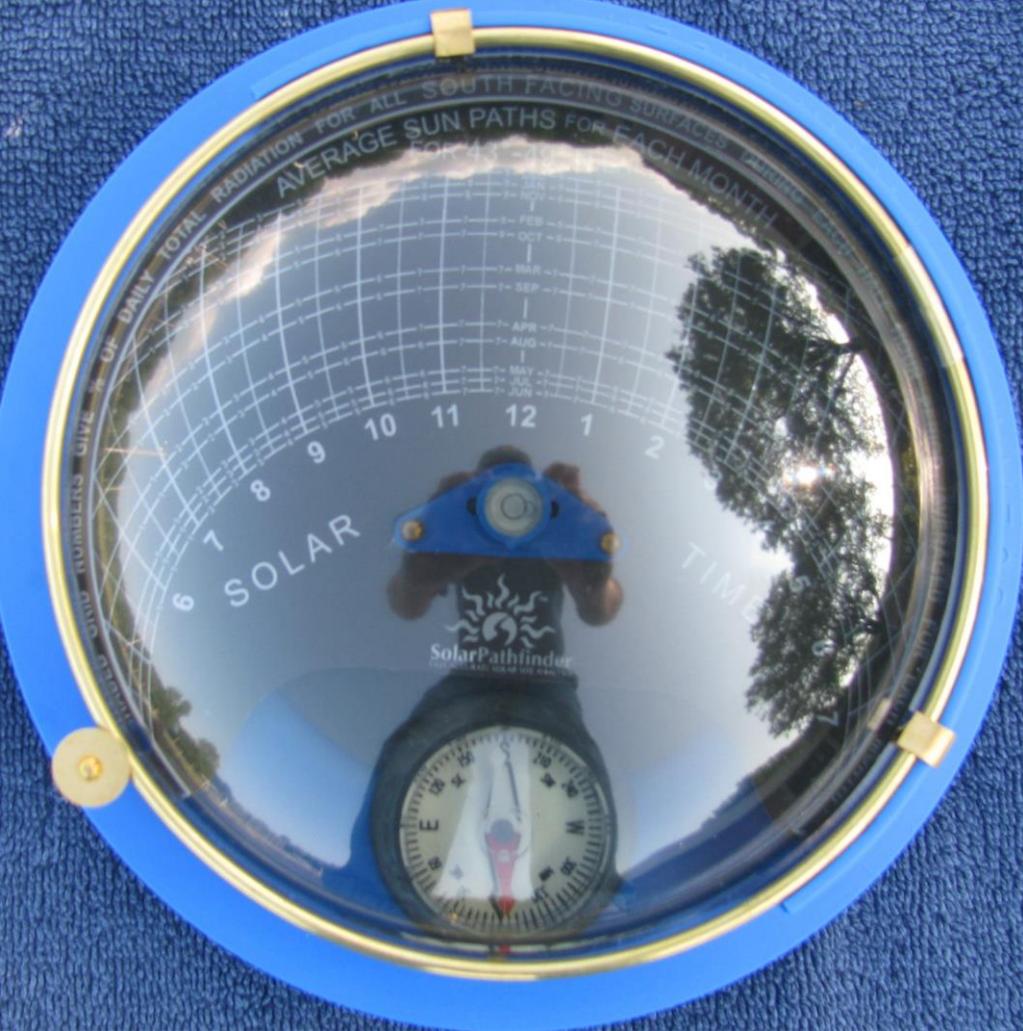
5.





6.

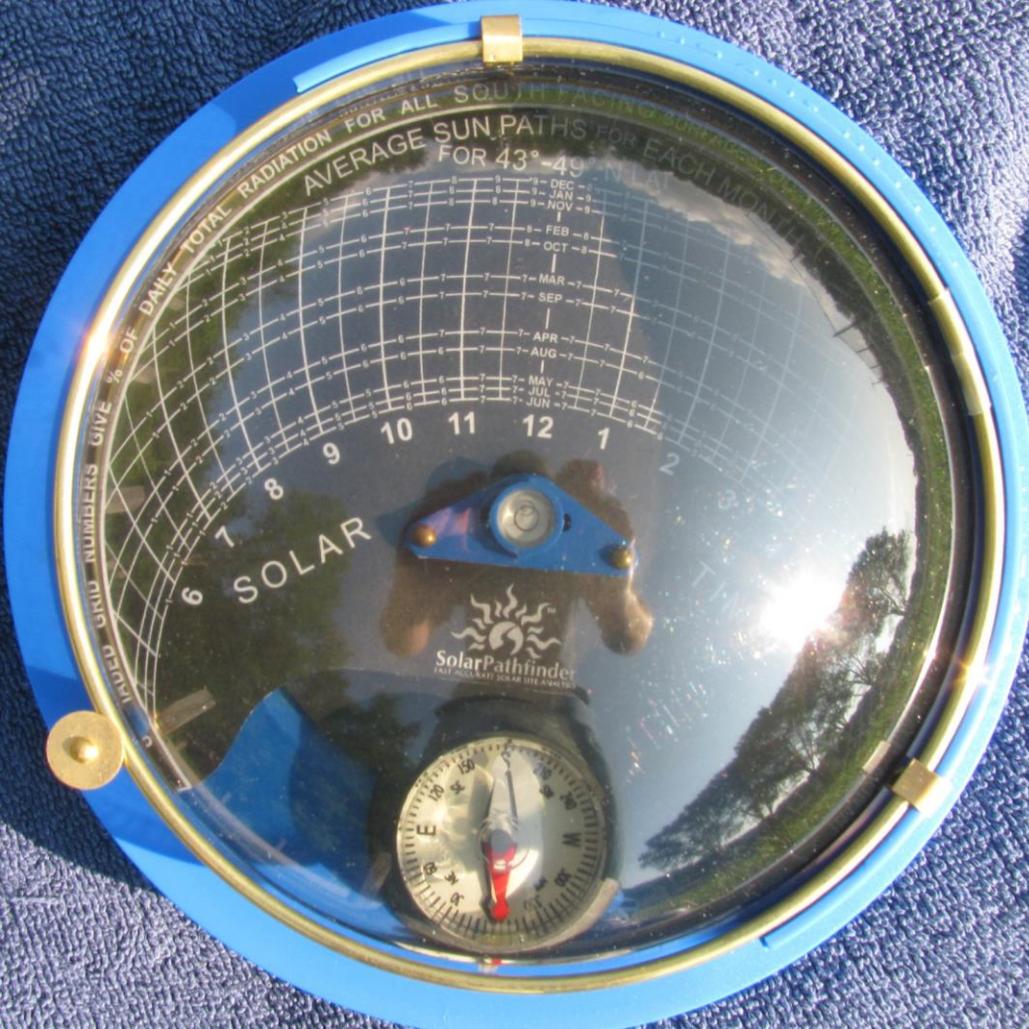




7.



8.



9.





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