

Virtually nonpolluting and abundantly available, solar power stands in stark contrast to the combustion of fossil fuel and has become increasingly attractive to individuals, businesses, and ...

Solar technologies convert sunlight into electrical energy either through photovoltaic (PV) panels or through mirrors that concentrate solar radiation. This energy can be used to generate electricity or be ...

Solar cells connected together in photovoltaic modules (or solar panels) are the main mode of producing power with sunlight. In each cell, a material that generates an electric charge when hit by sunlight, ...

Solar power, also known as solar electricity, is the conversion of energy from sunlight into electricity, either directly using photovoltaics (PV) or indirectly using concentrated solar power.

OverviewPotentialTechnologiesDevelopment and deploymentEconomicsGrid integrationEnvironmental effectsPoliticsSolar power, also known as solar electricity, is the conversion of energy from sunlight into electricity, either directly using photovoltaics (PV) or indirectly using concentrated solar power. Solar panels use the photovoltaic effect to convert light into an electric current. Concentrated solar power systems use lenses or mirrors and solar tracking systems to focus a large area of sunlight to a hot spot, often to drive a steam turbine.

Photovoltaic Cells Convert Sunlight Into ElectricityThe Flow of Electricity in A Solar CellPV Cells, Panels, and ArraysPV System EfficiencyPV System ApplicationsHistory of PV SystemsA photovoltaic (PV) cell, commonly called a solar cell, is a nonmechanical device that converts sunlight directly into electricity. Some PV cells can convert artificial light into electricity. Sunlight is composed of photons, or particles of solar energy. These photons contain varying amounts of energy that correspond to the different wavelengths o...See more on eia.govPublished: Oct 1, 2024.iacfm

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.iacf_head{display:flex;align-items:center;gap:var(--smtc-gap-between-content-small);text-decoration-color:var(--smtc-foreground-content-neutral-primary);box-sizing:border-box;margin-bottom:var(--smtc-gap-between-content-x-small)}.iacfm .iacf_head span{flex:1 1 0;white-space:nowrap;text-overflow:ellipsis;overflow:hidden;color:var(--smtc-foreground-content-neutral-primary);font:var(--bing-smtc-text-global-body3-strong)}.iacfm .iacf_head div{display:flex;height:22px;width:22px;justify-content:center;align-items:center;transition:background-color 300ms ease-out;margin-right:-3px;border-radius:var(--mai-smtc-corner-list-card-default);overflow:hidden}.iacfm .iacf_head .iacf_chv{color:var(--smtc-foreground-content-neutral-primary)}[dir="rtl"] .iacfm .iacf_head svg{transform:scaleX(-1)}.rel_ent_w{margin:4px 0 9px}.rel_ent_w .rel_ent_w:focus-visible{outline-offset:-6px}.rel_ent_w .rel_ent_crs{margin:6px 0 16px}.b_top .rel_ent_w{margin-top:-4px}.b_top .rel_ent_w .rel_ent_crs{margin-top:0}.b_mm_swipable
```

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8px}.rel_ent_w.rel_ent_scr:not(.rel_ent_crs){height:50px;overflow:hidden}.rel_ent_c{white-space:nowrap;ov
erflow:hidden;padding-left:1px;height:50px}.aqptmt:not(.rel_ent_crs) .rel_ent_c{display:flex}.rel_ent_wp
.rel_ent_c{white-space:initial}.rel_ent_scr
.rel_ent_c{overflow-y:hidden;-webkit-overflow-scrolling:touch;overflow-x:auto}.rel_ent_scr:not(.rel_ent_crs)
.rel_ent_c{padding-bottom:12px}.b_mm_swipable
.rel_ent_c{padding-left:10px;margin-top:-2px;margin-bottom:4px}.b_rich
.rel_ent_c{padding-left:15px}.rel_ent_w.rel_ent_crs .slide,.rel_ent_w.rel_ent_crs
.slide:hover{width:auto;height:42px;border-radius:20px!important;box-shadow:none!important;overflow:visib
le}a.rel_ent{display:inline-block;padding:0 16px 0 12px;margin:4px 8px 4px
0;border-radius:20px;border:1px solid
#ddd;text-decoration:none;overflow:hidden;height:40px;max-width:80vw}:not(#lgVidAnsContainer)>.aqptmt
.rel_ent_c a.rel_ent{overflow:initial;display:flex}.slide a.rel_ent{margin:0;box-shadow:none}.b_sidebar
.slide .rel_ent .cico,.rel_ent .cico,.rel_ent>img{display:inline-block;vertical-align:middle;margin:2px 8px 2px
-10px;border-radius:50%;background:#f7f7f7;flex-shrink:0}.rel_ent_tw{vertical-align:middle;font-size:12px;
color:#444;line-height:16px;height:100%;float:right;display:table}.rel_ent_t{display:table-cell;vertical-align:
middle;align-content:center}.aqptmt:not(.spl2) .rel_ent_tw,.aqptmt:not(.spl2) .rel_ent_tw
.rel_ent_t{overflow:hidden;text-overflow:ellipsis;white-space:nowrap}.aqptmt:not(.spl2)
.rel_ent_tw{display:flex;overflow:hidden;text-overflow:ellipsis;align-items:center;white-space:nowrap}.rel_e
nt_w:not(.spl2) .rel_ent_t strong{display:inline-block;font-weight:normal}#b_results phead
.b_attribution{padding-bottom:8px}.iaplanner .b_moreLink{margin-top:11px}.iaplanner.iarnd
.b_moreLink{margin-top:3px}.b_ans .b_rich pserp.b_mBMargin{padding:0;border-top:0}.b_ans #vidans2
.b_rich .rel_ent_w{margin:6px 0 16px}.aqptmt a.rel_ent{border-color:#106ebe}.aqptmt:not(.spl2)
.rel_ent_tw,.aqptmt:not(.spl2) .rel_ent_tw .rel_ent_t{font-size:16px}#b_content .iacfic.mmkiaacf .iacfmit
.imgInfo{color:var(--smtc-ctrl-link-foreground-brand-rest)}#b_content .iacfic.mmkiaacf .iacfmit
a{text-decoration-color:var(--smtc-ctrl-link-foreground-brand-hover)}#b_content .iacfic.mmkiaacf .iacfmit
.imgInfo{font:var(--bing-smtc-text-global-body3)}#b_content .iacfic.mmkiaacf
.iacf_crsl[data-wptds-carousel]>div[data-wptds-carousel-scroll-container]{padding-bottom:52px}#b_content
.iacfic.mmkiaacf .iacfmit{box-sizing:initial;padding-bottom:52px}#b_content .iacfic.mmkiaacf .iacfmit
.imgInfo{text-overflow:ellipsis;display:-webkit-box;-webkit-line-clamp:2;-webkit-box-orient:vertical;align-sel
f:stretch;padding:0 var(--smtc-gap-between-content-xx-small);overflow:hidden}#b_content .iacfic.mmkiaacf
.iacfimgc{padding-bottom:var(--smtc-gap-between-content-x-small)}#b_content .acfImgAns
.salink,#b_content .acfImgAns
.iasalink{text-align:center;display:block;padding-bottom:var(--smtc-gap-between-content-medium)}#b_conte
nt .acfImgAns .salink:hover .iasabt,#b_content .acfImgAns .iasalink:hover
.iasabt{background:var(--smtc-background-ctrl-neutral-hover)}#b_content .acfImgAns .salink:active
.iasabt,#b_content .acfImgAns .iasalink:active
.iasabt{background:var(--smtc-background-ctrl-neutral-pressed)}#b_content .acfImgAns .iasabt,#b_content
.acfImgAns
.iaExp_chevron{height:initial;border-radius:var(--smtc-corner-circular);background:var(--bing-smtc-backgrou
nd-ctrl-neutral-rest);display:inline-block;position:relative;top:0;box-shadow:initial}#b_content .acfImgAns

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.iasatxt{font:var(--bing-smtc-text-global-caption-1-strong);color:var(--bing-smtc-foreground-content-brand-res
t);padding:var(--smtc-gap-between-content-x-small)
var(--smtc-gap-between-content-small);display:flex;gap:var(--smtc-gap-between-content-x-small);justify-cont
ent:center;align-items:center}#b_content .acfImgAns .salink::before,#b_content .acfImgAns
.iasalink::before{border-bottom:1px solid
var(--smtc-stroke-ctrl-on-neutral-rest);width:100%;display:block;content:"";top:18px;position:relative}#b_con
tent .acfImgAns .svg{vertical-align:top}#b_content .acfImgAns
.svgpath{fill:var(--bing-smtc-foreground-content-brand-rest)}#b_content .acfImgAns .iachevron,#b_content
.acfImgAns .svgicon{width:12px;height:12px;margin-left:0;position:relative;top:0}html[dir=rtl] #b_content
.acfImgAns .iachevron,html[dir=rtl] #b_content .acfImgAns .svgicon{transform:scaleX(-1)}#b_content
.acfImgAns .rel_ent_w a.rel_ent{border:1px solid var(--acf-stroke-neutral-decorative)}#b_content .acfImgAns
.iaheader .iacf_head{text-decoration-color:var(--smtc-foreground-ctrl-neutral-primary-hover)}#b_content
.acfImgAns .iaheader .iacf_head span,#b_content .acfImgAns .iaheader .iacf_head
svg{color:var(--smtc-foreground-content-neutral-primary);forced-color-adjust:auto}#b_content
.iacfic.mmkiaacf .iacf_plan .cico{border-radius:var(--mai-smtc-corner-card-default)}#b_content
.iacfic.mmkiaacf .iacf_plan .cico img{border-radius:var(--mai-smtc-corner-card-default)}#b_content
.iacfic.mmkiaacf{overflow:visible;padding:0}#b_content .iacfic.mmkiaacf
.iacf_crsl[data-wptds-carousel]{margin:0;padding-bottom:var(--smtc-gap-between-content-medium)}#b_cont
ent .iacfic.mmkiaacf .iacf_crsl[data-wptds-carousel]
[data-wptds-carousel-controls]{--wptds-carousel-control-opacity:1}#b_content .iacfic.mmkiaacf
.iacf_crsl[data-wptds-carousel]>div{padding:0}#b_content .iacfic.mmkiaacf .iacf_crsl[data-wptds-carousel]
[data-direction="end"]{margin-right:-22px}#b_content .iacfic.mmkiaacf .iacf_crsl[data-wptds-carousel]
[data-direction="end"] svg{transform:scaleX(-1)}#b_content .iacfic.mmkiaacf .iacf_crsl[data-wptds-carousel]
[data-direction="start"]{margin-left:-22px}#b_content .iacfic.mmkiaacf .iacf_crsl[data-wptds-carousel]
[data-direction="start"] svg{transform:scaleX(1)}#b_content .iacfic.mmkiaacf .iacf_crsl[data-wptds-carousel]
button{background:var(--smtc-background-card-on-primary-default-rest);box-shadow:var(--bing-smtc-shado
ws-card-hover-3);width:36px;border-radius:var(--smtc-corner-ctrl-lg-rest)}#b_content .iacfic.mmkiaacf
.iacf_crsl[data-wptds-carousel]
button:hover{background:var(--smtc-background-card-on-primary-default-hover)}#b_content
.iacfic.mmkiaacf .iacf_crsl[data-wptds-carousel]
button:active{background:var(--smtc-background-card-on-primary-default-pressed)}#b_content
.iacfic.mmkiaacf .iacf_crsl[data-wptds-carousel] button svg{transition:initial}#b_content .iacfic.mmkiaacf
.iacf_crsl[data-wptds-carousel] button svg
path{fill:var(--smtc-foreground-content-neutral-secondary);forced-color-adjust:auto}#b_content
.iacfic.mmkiaacf .iacfmit{position:absolute}#b_content .iacfic.mmkiaacf .iacfimgc{margin:auto}#b_content
.b_ans.b_imgansacf{padding:0!important}#b_content
.b_ans.b_top.b_imgansacf{background-color:initial!important}#b_content .acfImgAns .iaheader
.iacf_head{gap:0;padding:var(--smtc-gap-between-content-medium)
0;display:flex;align-items:center;box-sizing:border-box}#b_content .acfImgAns .iaheader
.iacf_head:hover{text-decoration:none}#b_content .acfImgAns .iaheader .iacf_head:hover
span{text-decoration:underline}#b_content .acfImgAns .iaheader .iacf_head:hover

```

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.iacf_chv{background:initial}#b_content .acfImgAns .iaheader .iacf_head
div{display:flex;align-items:center;transition:background 300ms
ease-out;margin-right:-3px;border-radius:var(--smtc-corner-ctrl-rest);overflow:hidden;color:var(--bing-smtc-f
oreground-content-neutral-secondary-alt)}#b_content .acfImgAns .iaheader .iacf_head
span{width:initial;flex:none;font:var(--bing-smtc-text-global-subtitle1-strong);padding-inline-start:0;max-widt
h:90%;text-overflow:ellipsis;white-space:nowrap;overflow:hidden}#b_content .acfImgAns .iaheader
.iacf_head .iacf_chv{width:22px;justify-content:center;height:22px}#b_content .acfImgAns
.rel_ent_w{margin-top:0}#b_content .acfImgAns .rel_ent_w .b_slideexp{margin:0}#b_content .acfImgAns
.rel_ent_w .btn.rounded{top:initial;margin-top:1px}#b_content .acfImgAns .rel_ent_w
.btn.next{right:-14px}#b_content .acfImgAns .rel_ent_w
.cr>div{width:36px;height:38px;border-radius:var(--smtc-corner-ctrl-lg-rest);background:var(--bing-smtc-bac
kground-container);box-shadow:var(--bing-smtc-shadows-card-hover-3);border:initial}#b_content
.acfImgAns .rel_ent_w .cr>div:after{margin-inline-start:2px;top:0}#b_content .acfImgAns .rel_ent_w
.b_viewport{padding-top:0;margin-left:0;padding-left:0}#b_content .acfImgAns .rel_ent_w .b_viewport
.slide{height:38px;margin-left:0;margin-inline-end:var(--smtc-gap-between-content-x-small)}#b_content
.acfImgAns .rel_ent_w
a.rel_ent{border-radius:var(--smtc-corner-circular);background:var(--smtc-background-card-on-primary-defau
lt-rest);padding-left:0;height:38px}#b_content .acfImgAns .rel_ent_w
a.rel_ent:hover{background:var(--smtc-background-card-on-primary-default-hover)}#b_content .acfImgAns
.rel_ent_w a.rel_ent:active{background:var(--smtc-background-card-on-primary-default-pressed)}#b_content
.acfImgAns .rel_ent_w .cico{margin:var(--smtc-gap-between-content-xx-small)
var(--smtc-gap-between-content-x-small) var(--smtc-gap-between-content-xx-small)
var(--smtc-gap-between-content-xx-small)}#b_content .acfImgAns .rel_ent_w
.rel_ent_tw{font:var(--bing-smtc-text-global-caption1-strong)}#b_content .acfImgAns .rel_ent_w
.rel_ent_c{padding-left:0}#b_content .acfImgAns .rel_ent_w .b_slidebar{padding-inline-start:0}#b_content
.acfImgAns .rel_ent_w .rel_ent_c
.rel_ent:first-child{margin-inline-start:var(--mai-smtc-padding-card-default);align-items:center}html[dir=rtl]
#b_content .acfImgAns .iaheader .iacf_head svg{transform:scaleX(-1)}html[dir=rtl] #b_content .acfImgAns
.iacf_crsl[data-wptds-carousel] [data-direction="end"]{transform:scaleX(-1)}html[dir=rtl] #b_content
.acfImgAns .iacf_crsl[data-wptds-carousel] [data-direction="start"]{transform:scaleX(-1)}.iacfm .iacfmit
a:focus .isp_imgcont img,.iacfm .iacfmit a:focus .iacfimgc img,.iacfm .iacfmit a:focus .iacf_smol{outline:3px
dotted #1aebff;outline-offset:-5px}.iacfm .iacfmit .cico{position:relative}.iacfm .iacfmit
.cico::after{content:"";position:absolute;left:0;top:0;width:100%;height:100%;background:rgba(0,0,0,.03)}.gs
_card .iacfmit img,.b_wpt_container .iacfmit img,.b_acf_card .iacfmit img{transition:transform .3s
ease-out}.gs_card .iacfmit:hover .iacfimgc img,.b_wpt_container .iacfmit:hover .iacfimgc img,.b_acf_card
.iacfmit:hover .iacfimgc
img{transform:scale(1.1)}.iacfic{position:relative;height:100%;width:100%;background:#fff;overflow:hidden
;border-radius:inherit}.iacf_plan{position:relative}.iacfmit
.mimg{width:100%;height:100%;position:relative}.iacfic .iacfmit{position:absolute}.iacfic .iacfmit
.cico{border-radius:0}.iacfca{padding:var(--mai-smtc-padding-card-default);box-sizing:border-box;overflow:
hidden;border-radius:var(--mai-smtc-corner-card-default)}.iacfca .iacf_crsl

```

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.iacfmit{overflow:hidden;position:relative}.iacfca .iacf_crs1 .iacfmit
.cico{overflow:hidden;border-radius:var(--mai-smtc-corner-list-card-default)}.iacfca .iacf_crs1 .iacfmit .cico
img{border-radius:inherit;transition:transform 300ms ease-out}.iacfca .iacf_crs1 .iacfmit:hover .cico
img{transform:scale(1.1)}.iacfca .iacfmit a:focus,.iacfca .iacfmit a:focus img{outline:0}.iacfca .iacfmit
a:focus .cico::after{border-radius:inherit;box-shadow:inset 0 0 0 3px
var(--bing-smtc-background-card-on-primary-alt-rest);outline:2px solid
var(--smtc-foreground-content-neutral-secondary);outline-offset:-2px}.iacfca
[data-wptds-carousel][data-default][data-variant="Normal"]{margin:0
calc(-1*var(--mai-smtc-padding-card-default));height:auto}.iacfca
[data-wptds-carousel][data-default][data-variant="Normal"] [data-wptds-carousel-scroll-container]{padding:0
var(--mai-smtc-padding-card-default)}.iacfca [data-wptds-carousel][data-default][data-variant="Normal"]
[data-wptds-carousel-scroll-container] ol{width:fit-content;align-items:center}.iacfca
[data-wptds-carousel][data-default]
[data-wptds-carousel-control][data-direction="end"]{margin-right:24px}.iacfca
[data-wptds-carousel][data-default]
[data-wptds-carousel-control][data-direction="start"]{margin-left:24px}.iacfca
.iacf_pag{position:absolute;bottom:8px;left:50%;transform:translate(-50%,0)}.cards.large
.iacfca{height:200px}[dir="rtl"] .iacfca .iacf_pag{transform:translate(50%,0)}.iacfm.iacfca
.iacf_crs1[data-wptds-carousel]
[data-wptds-carousel-control]{background:var(--bing-smtc-background-ctrl-neutral-rest);border:0;height:56px
;width:16px;transition:width .3s;background
.3s;color:var(--smtc-foreground-ctrl-neutral-primary-hover)}.iacfm.iacfca .iacf_crs1[data-wptds-carousel]
[data-wptds-carousel-control] svg{transition:transform .3s}.iacfm.iacfca .iacf_crs1[data-wptds-carousel]
[data-wptds-carousel-control]:hover{width:24px;background:var(--smtc-background-ctrl-neutral-hover)}.iacf
m.iacfca .iacf_crs1[data-wptds-carousel] [data-wptds-carousel-control] path{fill:currentColor}.iacfm.iacfca
.iacf_crs1[data-wptds-carousel] ol [data-direction="start"]{border-radius:0 8px 8px
0;margin-left:16px}.iacfm.iacfca .iacf_crs1[data-wptds-carousel] ol [data-direction="start"]
svg{transform:scale(.7)}.iacfm.iacfca .iacf_crs1[data-wptds-carousel] ol [data-direction="start"]:hover
svg{transform:scale(1)}.iacfm.iacfca .iacf_crs1[data-wptds-carousel] ol
[data-direction="end"]{border-radius:8px 0 0 8px;margin-right:16px}.iacfm.iacfca
.iacf_crs1[data-wptds-carousel] ol [data-direction="end"] svg{transform:scale(-.7)}.iacfm.iacfca
.iacf_crs1[data-wptds-carousel] ol [data-direction="end"]:hover svg{transform:scale(-1)}.iacfm.iacfca.iacf_fb
.iacf_crs1[data-wptds-carousel] [data-wptds-carousel-control],.iacfm.iacfca.iacf_ss
.iacf_crs1[data-wptds-carousel]
[data-wptds-carousel-control]{background:var(--mai-smtc-background-ctrl-on-image-rest);color:var(--mai-sm
tc-foreground-ctrl-on-image-rest)}.iacfm.iacfca.iacf_fb .iacf_crs1[data-wptds-carousel]
[data-wptds-carousel-control] path,.iacfm.iacfca.iacf_ss .iacf_crs1[data-wptds-carousel]
[data-wptds-carousel-control] path{fill:currentColor}.iacfca .iacf_colg_crs1
[data-wptds-carousel-list]{width:fit-content}.iacfca .iacf_colg_crs1 .iacfmit{position:absolute}.iacfca
.iacf_colg_crs1
.cico{border-radius:0}.iacfca:not(.iacfh):has(>.iacf_colg_crs1){height:100%;width:100%;padding:0;overflow:

```

```

hidden;border-radius:inherit}.iacfca:not(.iacfh):has(>.iacf_colg_crsl)
.iacfmit{border-radius:0}.iacfca:not(.iacfh):has(>.iacf_colg_crsl) [data-wptds-carousel][data-default]
[data-wptds-carousel-controls]{inline-size:calc(100% + var(--wptds-carousel-control-size) -
var(--mai-smtc-padding-card-default)*2);transform:translateX(calc(0rem +
var(--mai-smtc-padding-card-default) - (var(--wptds-carousel-control-size)/2)))
translateY(-50%)}[data-wptds-carousel][data-default],[data-wptds-carousel][data-default]::before,[data-wptds-
carousel][data-default]::after,[data-wptds-carousel][data-default] *,[data-wptds-carousel][data-default]
*::before,[data-wptds-carousel][data-default]
*::after{box-sizing:border-box;margin:0;padding:0}[data-wptds-carousel][data-default][hidden],[data-wptds-c
arousel][data-default]
[hidden]{display:none}[data-wptds-carousel][data-default][data-visually-hidden],[data-wptds-carousel][data-d
efault] [data-visually-hidden]{block-size:.0625rem;border:0;clip:rect(0 0 0
0);inline-size:.0625rem;margin:-.0625rem;overflow:hidden;padding:0;position:absolute}[data-wptds-carousel]
[data-default]{--wptds-carousel-control-bg-color:#fff;--wptds-carousel-control-border-color:#ddd;--wptds-car
ousel-control-box-shadow:0rem .125rem .1875rem
rgba(0,0,0,.1);--wptds-carousel-control-fg-color:#767676;--wptds-carousel-control-size:2rem;display:block;po
sition:relative;block-size:100%}[data-wptds-carousel][data-default]
[data-wptds-carousel-scroll-container]{overflow-x:auto;overflow-y:clip;scroll-behavior:smooth;block-size:10
0%;-ms-overflow-style:none;scrollbar-width:none}[data-wptds-carousel][data-default]
[data-wptds-carousel-scroll-container]::-webkit-scrollbar{display:none}[data-wptds-carousel][data-default]
[data-wptds-carousel-scroll-container]:focus-visible{outline-color:Highlight;outline-color:-webkit-focus-ring-
color;outline-offset:.0625rem;outline-style:auto;outline-width:.0625rem}[data-wptds-carousel][data-default]
[data-wptds-carousel-list]{display:flex;gap:.5rem;list-style:none;block-size:100%}[data-wptds-carousel][data-
default] [data-wptds-carousel-list]> *{flex-grow:0;flex-shrink:0}[data-wptds-carousel][data-default]
[data-wptds-carousel-list]>:not([data-wptds-carousel-item]){display:none}[data-wptds-carousel][data-default]
[data-wptds-carousel-item]{block-size:100%}[data-wptds-carousel][data-default]
[data-wptds-carousel-item]> *{block-size:100%}[data-wptds-carousel][data-default]
[data-wptds-carousel-item]>img{display:block;inline-size:auto}[data-wptds-carousel][data-default]
[data-wptds-carousel-controls]{list-style:none;position:absolute;inline-size:calc(100% +
var(--wptds-carousel-control-size));inset-block-start:50%;transform:translateX(calc(0rem -
(var(--wptds-carousel-control-size)/2)))
translateY(-50%);display:flex;align-items:center;justify-content:space-between;pointer-events:none}[data-wpt
ds-carousel][data-default]
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.3125rem

```


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