

Manual PCE-SPM 1 Solar Meter



www.pce-instruments.com

1. INSTRUCTION

- The digital solar power meter is a precision instrument used to measure solar radiation in the field.
- It is fully cosine corrected for the angular incidence of solar.
- The solar power meter is compact, tough and easy to handle.
- The solar sensitive component used in the meter is a very stable, long-life silicon photovoltaic detector.

2. FEATURES AND APPLICATIONS

Features :

- 4 digit LCD reading.
- Wide spectral range.
- Excellent long term stability.
- Cosine corrected.
- Automatic transmission measurements.
- Select either power or transmission.
- Solar energy measurement.
- Current time setting function.
- User calibration factor setting function.
- End-mount light sensor.
- Select either W/m^2 or $Btu / (ft^2 \times h)$ units.
- Data hold/MAX/MIN/AVG modes.
- Auto Data Memory function. (43000 sets)
- Manual Data Memory and Read function. (99 sets)
- Auto power off function.

Applications :

The meter can measure the solar power radiated from any direction, angle or position, and can be mounted firmly on a tripod. The meter has Time Setting function, it can integrate the measured solar power of every second, calculate the average energy per hour automatically after the desired time is set up in order to get the average solar energy.

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- Storage Temperature and Humidity :
-10°C to 60°C (14°F to 140°F) & 0% to 70% RH.
- Power Source : 4 pcs size AAA battery.
- Battery Life (typical) : 100 hours (carbon zinc).
- Meter Dimensions/Weight : 110Lx64Wx34H (mm)/158g
- Accessories : Instruction manual, battery, Tripod mounted screw, CD software, RS232 cable.

- ② Press **TIME** key to switch the display of minute : second and day – hour.

4. HOLD/ MODE key :

- ① **HOLD Function** : Press this key momentarily to freeze or unfreeze the displayed readings.
- ② **Recording Mode** : Press this key for 3 seconds to launch into Recording Mode.
Press this key to circulate the maximum (MAX), minimum (MIN), average (AVG) and current (MAX MIN AVG) reading. Hold this key for 3 seconds to quit.
- ③ **Disable Auto Power Off** : Press and hold this key, then turn on the meter again, the Auto Power off mark “+” will disappear from the LCD.

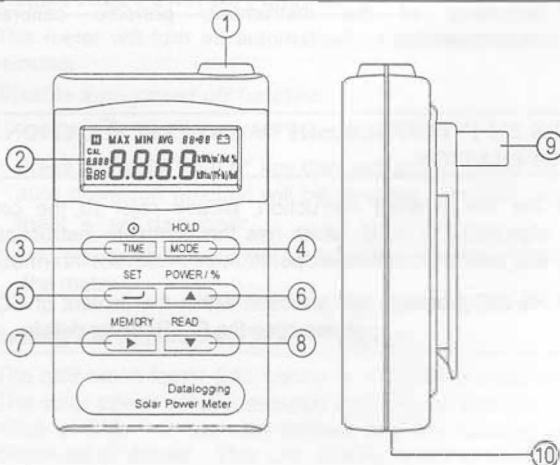
5. SET \downarrow key :

- ① **Unit Select** : Press this key to switch the unit between W/m^2 and $Btu / (ft^2 \times h)$.
- ② **Real-Time Setting Mode** : Press this key for 3 seconds to setting mode. There shows day digits on LCD. Press \blacktriangle , \blacktriangledown and \blacktriangleright keys to set the day & time. Press \downarrow key to store the time settings and start the integral solar energy measurement.
- ③ **Calibration Factor Setting Mode** : Press and hold this key, then turn on the meter again. There shows “CAL” mark and one flickering digit. Press \blacktriangle , \blacktriangledown and \blacktriangleright keys to set up desired calibration factor values. Press \downarrow key to store and exit.

6. POWER / % \blacktriangle key :

- ① **Power and Transmission % Function Select** : Press this key to select power or transmission (%) function.
- ② **Power and Energy Units Select** : In the integral solar energy mode, press this key to select power or energy units.

4. PARTS



1. Solar sensor.
2. LCD Display : Display 4 digit displays with a maximum reading of 9999, the measured values, unit function symbols, and decimal points etc.
3. ① **TIME** key :
① Press ① key to turn on the meter, hold it on for 3 seconds to turn off the meter.

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The meter has datalogging and RS-232 functions, so users can make a further analysis by accessing either of both features for convenience.

1. Solar Power Panel Industry:

Take the meter to measure the solar power at the installed place to find out the most advantageous angle and direction for the solar power radiation before the solar panel is installed.

2. Solar Power Research:

In Taiwan, the sunshine is quite sufficient and has been used for many kinds of applications widely recently. In the meanwhile, some related industries and academic organizations are also dedicated to the solar power development. The meter can be used for Solar Power research, as a tool of education and can also be used to prove the efficiency of the solar battery.

3. Agriculture:

Vegetables, flowers and plants are influenced by sunshine, especially for the plants cultivated in a greenhouse. The meter can measure the solar power efficiently and is the best tool for farmers to get the plants' growing under control.

4. Solar transmission measurement:

The meter can measure the solar transmission which is applicable for glass, heat insulation papers, parasols, sunshades and so on.

For example:

- ① To compare the solar power radiation measured before and after the sunshade is installed. The measured readings are helpful for recognizing whether the used material of a sunshade is good for insulating the solar power transmission.
- ② To check the ratio of sunshine insulation with heat insulation paper.

5. Construction:

To check the sun radiation at any angle and any moment, which is helpful for the installation of sheltering systems to control the indoor temperature efficiently and save energy.

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- ③ **Zero Adjustment** : Press and hold this key, then turn on the meter again, there shows "CAL" mark on the LCD. Cover up the solar detector then press \downarrow key, LCD will show "MIN" mark to zero the reading and exit.
- ④ **▲ key** : In READ mode, press this key to increase the memory location.
In setting mode, press this key to increase the parameter.

7. MEMORY \blacktriangleright key :

- ① **Memory Function** : Press this key momentarily to store a measuring value.
- ② **Clear the stored Data** : Press and hold this key, then turn on the meter again. There shows "CLr" mark on LCD. Press ∇ key to select "YES" or "NO" to erase the memory data.
- ③ **Auto Data Memory** : Press this key for 3 seconds to enter auto data memory mode, LCD will show "M" mark flicker. Press this key again to exit.
- ④ **► key** : In setting mode, press this key to move cursor to the desired position.

8. READ ∇ key :

- ① **Read Function** : Press this key to READ mode, then press \blacktriangle or ∇ key to select the desired stored number of data to read. Press \downarrow key to exit.
- ② **▼ key** : In READ mode, press this key to decrease the memory location.
In setting mode, press this key to decrease the parameter.
- ③ **Auto Data Memory Interval time setting** : Press this key for 3 seconds to interval time setting mode, then press \blacktriangle or ∇ key to select the desired time from 1 second to 1 minute. Press \downarrow key to store the setting time and exit.
- ④ **PC interface** : Press this key for 6 seconds to PC communication mode.

9. Tripod mounted screw.

10. RS-232 port.

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Electricity can be produced by combining the building materials with the solar power panel. The meter can measure the solar power radiation to reach the high efficiency.

6. Hydrological

- ① When ground water on the surface is evaporated by sunshine and becomes clouds, clouds are condensed and become rainfall caused by the gravitation.
- ② Sunshine radiates to the ocean and the temperature difference of the ocean occurs.
- ③ Sunshine radiates to the earth, as every place of the earth's surface affected by heat is different, this causes the atmospheric convection activity and becomes wind and the waves of the ocean surface.

3. SPECIFICATIONS

- **Display** : LCD display, 4 digit LCD reading.
- **Measuring Range** : 2000 W/m², 634 Btu / (ft² x h)
- **Resolution** : 0.1 W/m², 0.1 Btu / (ft² x h)
- **Overrange Display** : LCD will show "OL" symbol.
- **Spectral Response** : 400~1000nm
- **Accuracy** : Typically within ± 10 W/m² [± 3 Btu / (ft² x h)] or $\pm 5\%$, whichever is the greatest in sunlight ;
Additional temperature induced error ± 0.38 W/m² /
 $^{\circ}\text{C}$ [± 0.12 Btu / (ft² x h) / $^{\circ}\text{C}$] from 25 $^{\circ}\text{C}$
- **Angular Accuracy** : Cosine corrected <5% for angles < 60 $^{\circ}$
- **Drift** : < $\pm 2\%$ per year
- **Sampling Rate** : 4 times/sec.
- **Photo Detector** : One silicon photovoltaic detector.
- **Manual Data Memory Capacity** : 99 sets.
- **Auto Data Memory Capacity** : 43000 sets
- **Operating Temperature & Humidity** :
0 $^{\circ}\text{C}$ to 50 $^{\circ}\text{C}$ (32 $^{\circ}\text{F}$ to 122 $^{\circ}\text{F}$) & 0% to 80% RH.

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5. OPERATIONS

- The meter uses a silicon photovoltaic detector mounted in a cosine-corrected head to provide solar radiation measurements for solar, agricultural, meteorological, and hydrological applications.
- The meter accurately measures sun plus sky radiation for the spectral range of 400 to 1100nm. Sensors calibrated to this spectral range should not be used for vegetation or under artificial lights.

5-1 Solar Power Measurement

In power mode, the meter measures the power of solar radiation.

1. Press " \odot " key to turn on the meter.
2. Press "SET" key to select the desired W/m² or Btu / (ft² x h) unit.
3. Position the meter with the solar sensor facing the sun directly.
4. Read the solar power value from the LCD display.
5. Press "HOLD" key, if the displayed value needs to be held.
Press that key again to exit.



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5-2 Using the MAX MIN Recording Mode for Solar Power Measurement

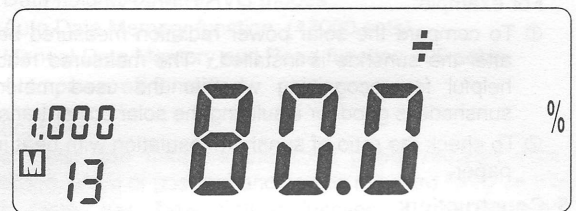
1. Press the "ⓘ" key to turn on the meter.
2. Press "SET" key to select the desired W/m^2 or $Btu / (ft^2 \times h)$ unit.
3. Position the meter with the solar sensor facing the sun directly.
4. Press "MODE" key for 3 seconds to MAX MIN Recording mode. The maximum, minimum, and average values are then reset to the present reading, LCD shows "MAX" mark and the auto power off feature is disabled.
5. Press "MODE" key to cycle the maximum (MAX), minimum (MIN), average (AVG), and present (MAX MIN AVG) readings, which indicate what value is being displayed. The average reading is the average of the last 4 times present values.
6. Press "MODE" key for 3 seconds to exit.



5-3 Solar Power Transmission Measurement

In transmission mode, the meter is able to calculate the solar transmission percentage associated with a given material such as glass, film or other transparent materials.

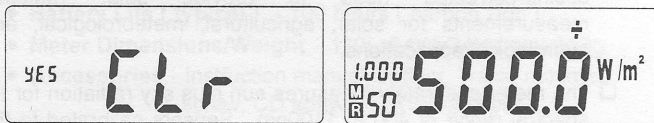
1. Press the "ⓘ" key to turn on the meter.
2. Press "SET" key to select the desired W/m^2 or $Btu / (ft^2 \times h)$ unit.
3. Position the meter with the solar sensor facing the sun directly.
4. Press "POWER / %" key to transmission mode, LCD then shows "%" mark.
5. Press "┘" key to store the solar power measured value as a reference, LCD then shows "100.0%".
6. Put the glass or film material between the solar source and the meter solar sensor.
7. Read the LCD display.
8. Press "HOLD" key, if the displayed value needs to be held.
Press "HOLD" key again to exit data hold mode.
9. Remove the sample material and confirm the meter returns to 100.0%. If the meter does not display 100.0% with the sample removed, then forget the reading and begin the test process again.
10. Press "POWER / %" key to exit.



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- ② Press "▲" or "▼" key to select the desired memory address number data for display.
- ③ Press "┘" key to exit.



5-6 Disable Auto Power off Function

The meter will turn off automatically if no key pressed for 10 minutes.

Disable auto power off function :

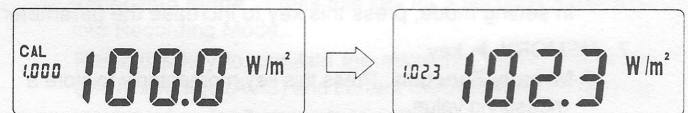
1. Press "ⓘ" key to turn off the meter.
2. Press and hold "HOLD" key then turn on the meter again, the auto power off function will be disabled. The auto power off mark "÷" will disappear.
3. Auto power off function will be actuated every time you turn on the meter.

5-7 Setting the Calibration Function (CAL)

The calibration factor CAL serves to calibrate the result display. The solar power value measured internally is multiplied by the value of CAL that has been entered and the resulting value is displayed or stored. The CAL setting range is from 0.000 to 9.999. The calibration factor adjustment method needs a standard solar meter as a reference.

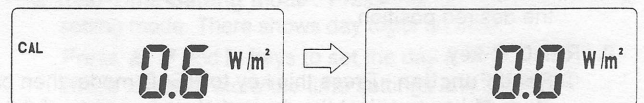
1. Press "ⓘ" key to turn off the meter.
2. Press & hold "SET" key, then turn on the meter again to set up calibration factor, LCD then shows "CAL" mark and the first digit starts flicking which can be changed.

3. Press "▶" key to select the desired flicking digit.
4. Press "▲" or "▼" key to the desired value.
Repeat step 3 and 4 for the remaining digits until the displaying value is the same as the standard reference.
5. Press "┘" key to store the new setting value and exit.



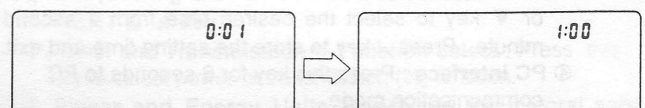
5-8 Zero Reading Adjustment

1. Press & hold "POWER / %" key then turn on the meter again to zero reading adjustment, LCD then shows "CAL" mark.
2. Cover up the solar sensor, and press "┘" key LCD then shows "MIN" mark 1 second to zero the reading.



5-9 Auto Data Memory

1. Clear the auto memorized data only by PC.
2. Interval time setting



- ① Press "ⓘ" key to turn on the meter.

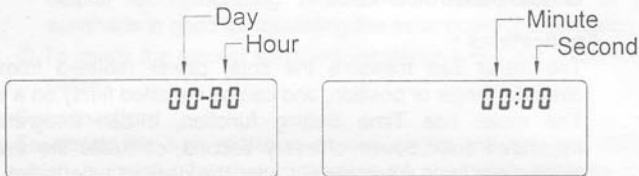
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5-4 Integral Solar Energy Measurement

Measure the amount of sunlight available at your site. When sunlight reaches to the Earth, it is distributed unevenly in different regions. Sunlight varies with the seasons, as the rotational axis of the Earth shifts to lengthen and shorten days with changing seasons. The quantity of sunlight reaching any region is also effected by the time of day, the climate (especially the cloud cover, which scatters the sun's rays), and the air pollution in that region. Likewise, these climatic factors affect the amount of solar energy that is available to PV systems.

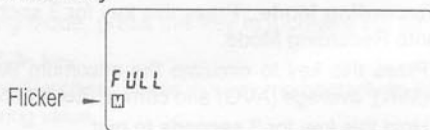
1. Press the "⓪" key to turn on the meter.
2. Press "SET" key to select the desired W/m^2 or $Btu / (ft^2 \times h)$ unit.
3. Position the meter with the solar sensor facing the sun directly.
4. Press "SET" key for 3 seconds to enter the real-time (now time) setting, LCD then shows the "□□-□□" mark and the flicking numbers.
5. Press "▲" or "▼" key to set desired value.
6. Press "▶" key and move to the other two flicking digits.
7. Repeat step 5 and 6 to complete Day-Hour and Minute : Second (Real-Time) settings.
8. Press "Ⓜ" key to store the real-time and start integral solar energy measurement.



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- ② Press "READ" key for 3 seconds to set the interval.
- ③ Press "▲" or "▼" key to select the desired interval time from 1 second to 1 minute.
- ④ Press "Ⓜ" key to stored the setting time and exit this mode.

3. Auto data memory



- ① Press "MEMORY" key for 3 seconds to record data automatically, LCD then shows "M" flickering or "FULL" mark if memory is full. In this mode, all keys are inactive except "⓪" and "MEMORY" keys.
- ② Press "MEMORY" key again to exit.

4. Download the recording data to PC

Connect the RS232 cable to PC, then press "READ" for 6 seconds to connect the meter to PC.

6. BATTERIES

1. As the battery power is not sufficient, LCD will display "Ⓜ" : and a replacement of standard AAA-size 4 pcs 1.5V batteries is required.
 2. Unscrews the big screw on the back of the meter and removes the carrying clip.
 3. Disconnect the battery from the instrument and replace it with standard AAA-size 4 pcs 1.5V batteries and go for the cover.
- Note : Make sure the battery polarity is installed as indicated.

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9. Press "POWER / %" key to select solar power or integral solar energy units.
10. Press "TIME" key to switch between day-hour and minute : second real-time display.
In this mode, the "HOLD MODE" key is disable.
11. Press and hold "⓪" key for 3 seconds to exit and turn off the meter.



5-5 Manual Data Memory and Read Mode

1. Clear the manual memorized data
 - ① Press "⓪" key to turn off the meter.
 - ② Press and hold "MEMORY" key, then turn on the meter again, LCD shows "CLr YES" mark.
 - ③ Press "▼" key to select "YES" or "NO" then press "Ⓜ" to confirm.
2. Manual data memory
Press "MEMORY" key momentarily to store current LCD reading to the memory. Total memory size is 99 sets.
3. Manual memory data READ
 - ① Press "READ" key to read manual recorded data. The LCD then shows "R" mark.

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7. MAINTENANCE

1. The white plastic plate on the top of the meter should be cleaned with a damp cloth when necessary.
2. Do not put the instrument in a place where temperature or humidity is excessively high.
3. The calibration interval for the solar sensor will vary according to operational conditions, but generally the sensitivity decreases in direct proportion to the product of solar light intensity by the operational time. In order to maintain the basic accuracy of the instrument, periodic calibration is recommended.

8. RS-232 INTERFACE, SOFTWARE INSTALLATION AND OPERATION

- For the detailed instruction, please refer to the content of attached CD-ROM, which has the complete instruction of RS-232 interface, software operation and relevant information.
- RS-232 protocol : are enclosed within the content of CD-ROM, please open the CD-ROM for details.