

BlueSolar charge controllers MPPT – Overview

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Feature highlights

- Ultra-fast Maximum Power Point Tracking (MPPT)
- Advanced Maximum Power Point Detection in case of partial shading conditions
- Load output on the small models
- BatteryLife: intelligent battery management by load shedding
- Automatic battery voltage recognition
- Flexible charge algorithm
- Over-temperature protection and power de-rating when temperature is high.

Color Control GX

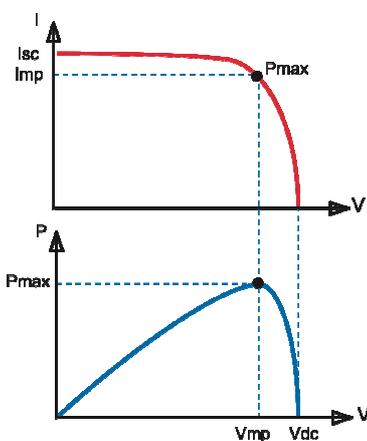
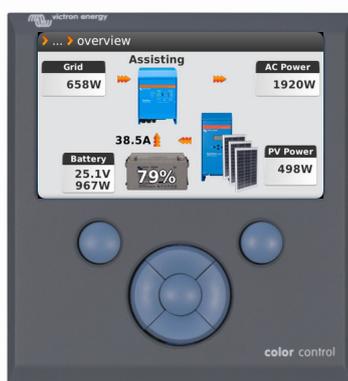
All Victron Energy MPPT Charge Controllers are compatible with the Color Control GX: The Color Control GX provides intuitive control and monitoring for all products connected to it. The list of Victron products that can be connected is endless: Inverters, Multi's, Quattro's, MPPT 150/70, BMV-600 series, BMV-700 series, Skylla-i, Lynx Ion and even more.

VRM Online Portal

Besides monitoring and controlling products on the Color Control GX, the information is also forwarded to our free remote monitoring website: the VRM Online Portal. To get an impression of the VRM Online Portal, visit <https://vrm.victronenergy.com>, and use the 'Take a look inside' button. The portal is free of charge.

Related product: EasySolar

Minimal wiring and an all-in-one solution: the EasySolar takes power solutions one stage further, by combining an Ultra-fast BlueSolar charge controller (MPPT), an inverter/charger and AC distribution in one enclosure.



Maximum Power Point Tracking

Upper curve:

Output current (I) of a solar panel as function of output voltage (V). The maximum power point (MPP) is the point P_{max} along the curve where the product I x V reaches its peak.

Lower curve:

Output power $P = I \times V$ as function of output voltage.

When using a PWM (not MPPT) controller the output voltage of the solar panel will be nearly equal to the voltage of the battery, and will be lower than V_{mp}.

Model	Load output	Fan	Battery voltage	Display	Color Control GX	Com. port
75/15	Yes	No	12/24	No	Compatible	VE.Direct
100/15	Yes	No	12/24	No	Compatible	VE.Direct
100/30	No	No	12/24	No	Compatible	VE.Direct
75/50	No	No	12/24	No	Compatible	VE.Direct
100/50	No	No	12/24	No	Compatible	VE.Direct
150/35	No	No	12/24/36/48	No	Compatible	VE.Direct
150/70	No	No	12/24/36/48	Yes	Compatible	VE.Can
150/85	No	Yes	12/24/36/48	Yes	Compatible	VE.Can



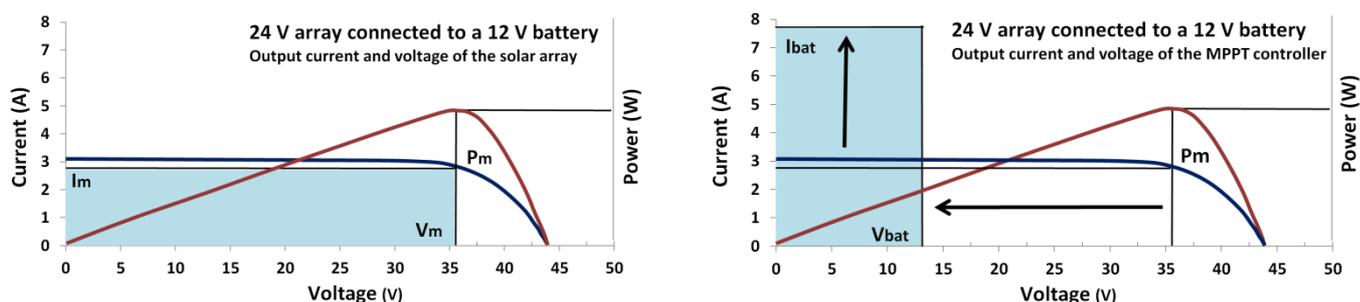
Which solar charge controller: PWM or MPPT?

What follows is a summary of our white paper with the same title.

1. What they do

The PWM controller is in essence a switch that connects a solar array to a battery. The result is that the voltage of the array will be pulled down to near that of the battery.

The MPPT controller is more sophisticated (and more expensive): it will adjust its input voltage to harvest the maximum power from the solar array and then transform this power to supply the varying voltage requirement, of the battery plus load. Thus, it essentially decouples the array and battery voltages so that there can be, for example, a 12 volt battery on one side of the MPPT charge controller and a large number of cells wired in series to produce 36 volts on the other.



Graphical representation of the DC to DC transformation as performed by an MPPT controller

2. The resultant twin strengths of an MPPT controller

a) Maximum Power Point Tracking

The MPPT controller will harvest more power from the solar array. The performance advantage is substantial (10% to 40%) when the solar cell temperature is low (below 45°C), or very high (above 75°C), or when irradiance is very low.

At high temperature or low irradiance the output voltage of the array will drop dramatically. More cells must then be connected in series to make sure that the output voltage of the array exceeds battery voltage by a comfortable margin.

b) Lower cabling cost and/or lower cabling losses

Ohm's law tells us that losses due to cable resistance are $P_c \text{ (Watt)} = R_c \times I^2$, where R_c is the resistance of the cable. What this formula shows is that for a given cable loss, cable cross sectional area can be reduced by a factor of four when doubling the array voltage.

In the case of a given nominal power, more cells in series will increase the output voltage and reduce the output current of the array ($P = V \times I$, thus, if P doesn't change, then I must decrease when V increases).

As array size increases, cable length will increase. The option to wire more panels in series and thereby decrease the cable cross sectional area with a resultant drop in cost, is a compelling reason to install an MPPT controller as soon as the array power exceeds a few hundred Watts (12 V battery), or several 100 Watts (24 V or 48 V battery).

3. Conclusion

PWM

The PWM charge controller is a good low cost solution for small systems, when solar cell temperature is moderate to high (between 45°C and 75°C).

MPPT

To fully exploit the potential of the MPPT controller, the array voltage should be substantially higher than the battery voltage. The MPPT controller is the solution of choice for higher power systems because of the lowest overall system cost due to smaller cable cross sectional areas. The MPPT controller will also harvest substantially more power when the solar cell temperature is low (below 45°C), or very high (above 75°C), or when irradiance is very low.