

What is a Green Home?

Energy efficiency, health, and comfort all are hallmarks of a green house. Such properties often are called **high performance, eco-friendly, or energy efficient homes**.

Common elements

Though some homes are certified as green by housing or environmental industry groups, properties don't necessarily have to carry a label to be considered green.

Such houses often include systems and features that lower utility bills, improve health and comfort, and minimize the impact on the environment.

Green upgrades

For existing homes, there are numerous ways to achieve greater efficiency.

They include small, inexpensive upgrades like installing low-flow water faucets, energy-efficient light bulbs, and programmable thermostats.

In addition, less visible elements, including efficient insulation and air sealing, create a more comfortable environment.

More substantial upgrades — high-efficiency furnaces, solar panels, and triple-pane windows, for example — often provide greater comfort to occupants and long-term savings and environmental benefits.

New homes

Newly constructed homes are being built to high standards that embrace green principles. They may incorporate recycled or non-toxic products and materials that require less energy to produce.

In addition, many builders now take a scientific, whole-building approach to ensure that a property's design, layout, and systems work together to create a functional, comfortable home that addresses environmental concerns. Many such homes also carry third-party home certifications.

Seeking green

When you're shopping for homes, look for:

- Energy efficient features, such as appliances, water fixtures, lighting, heating, cooling, and water heating systems.
- Efficient building envelopes with high-performance windows and well insulated walls, floors, and attics.
- Non-toxic building materials and finishes, including recycled or renewable woods and low- and zero-VOC (volatile organic compound) paints and sealants.
- A landscape featuring native plants and grasses that thrive without chemicals or excessive watering.
- Location efficiency, meaning a community that's walkable and has accessible public transportation so you can manage daily needs without a car.

Learn more

Contact a REALTOR® with NAR's Green Designation at www.green.realtor.

Read about green home labels at ENERGY STAR®, energystar.gov.

National Association of Homebuilders, nahb.org.
US Green Building Council, usgbc.org.



REALTORS® who have earned NAR's Green Designation can refer you to local experts who can assess your home's performance. Learn more at www.green.realtor.

