

LEED for New Construction

What is LEED for New Construction?

LEED for New Construction and Major Renovations is a rating system for buildings that was designed to guide and distinguish high performance buildings that have less of an impact on the environment, are healthier for those who work and/or live in the building, and are more profitable than their conventional counterparts.

The LEED for New Construction Rating System can be applied to commercial, institutional and high-rise residential projects, with a focus on office buildings. Practitioners have also applied the system to K-12 schools, multi-unit residential buildings, manufacturing plants, laboratories and many other building types.

How does LEED for New Construction work?

LEED for New Construction is a performance-oriented rating system where building projects earn points for satisfying criterion designed to address specific environmental impacts inherent in the design, construction, operations and management of a building.

The LEED certification system is organized into five environmental categories: Sustainable Sites (SS), Water Efficiency (WE), Energy and Atmosphere (EA), Materials and Resources (MR) and Indoor Environmental Quality (IEQ). An additional category, Innovation in Design (ID), addresses sustainable building expertise as well as design measures not covered under the five environmental categories. The number of points the project earns determines the level of LEED Certification the project receives. LEED certification is available in four progressive levels according to the following scale:

What is the point breakdown for LEED for New Construction?

LEED for New Construction ratings are awarded according to the following scale:

There are 100 base points; 6 possible Innovation in Design and 4 Regional Priority points

Certified 40–49 points

Silver 50–59 points

Gold 60–79 points

Platinum 80 points and above

What are the benefits of LEED for New Construction?

LEED for New Construction offers many benefits including environmental, economic, and occupant-oriented performance and health advantages. LEED certified projects cost less to operate and maintain, are energy- and water-efficient, have higher lease-up rates than conventional buildings in their markets, and contribute to occupant health and productivity.

Why would a building choose to get LEED Certified?

LEED certification is an achievement that signifies that the building is designed and is operating exactly as it was intended. LEED certification is third party verification from the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) that helps owners can measure and manage their properties. LEED Certification is very similar the nutrition label on packaged foods – it is information about the building that will help guide decision making.

Who should use LEED for New Construction?

LEED for New Construction was designed primarily for new construction office buildings, but it has been applied to many other building types. Commercial occupancies include (but are not limited to) offices, retails and service establishments, institutional buildings (libraries, schools, museums, places of worship, etc.), hotels and residential buildings of four or more stories.

How was LEED for New Construction developed?

LEED for New Construction was developed through an open, consensus-based process in USGBC committees. Each volunteer committee is composed of a diverse group of practitioners and experts representing a cross-section of the building and construction industry. Any USGBC member can serve on a committee, and all committee procedures and proceedings are available at www.usgbc.org.

Where can I get an updated copy of the LEED for New Construction Rating System?

The rating system that addresses new building construction is located in the Green Building Design & Construction reference guide and is available for purchase from the [USGBC Web site](http://www.usgbc.org).

What is the process for LEED certification?

Certification is now administered by the Green Building Certification Institute (GBCI) through a network of professional, third-party certification bodies. To register a project for LEED certification, visit www.gbci.org.

What educational programs are available to learn more about LEED?

USGBC offers a variety of LEED instructor-led workshops, online courses and Webinars (live and on-demand). To learn more about USGBC's LEED curriculum, visit www.usgbc.org/education.