

## Sustainable Design

Sustainable design can mean different things to different people, but it encompasses all systems and practices that focus on solutions that encourage or foster a better relationship between human resource needs and our natural environment.

***Sustainable design** (also referred to as "green design", "eco-design", or "design for environment") is the art of designing physical objects and the built environment to comply with the principles of economic, social, and ecological sustainability. It ranges from the microcosm of designing small objects for everyday use, through to the macrocosm of designing buildings, cities, and the earth's physical surface.*

***Sustainable architecture** is the design of sustainable buildings. Sustainable architecture attempts to reduce the collective environmental impacts during the **production** of building components, during the **construction** process, as well as during the **lifecycle** of the building (heating, electricity use, etc)*

(Wikipedia.org)

Buildings that are sustainable have many emphasizes and include many design practices:

- Efficiency of heating and cooling systems
- Passive solar design and building orientation
- Appropriate building siting
- Reused, recycled, or 'sustainably managed' building materials
- On site power generation (solar technology, ground-source heat pumps, wind power)
- Rainwater harvesting for gardening and washing
- On site waste management such as green roofs that filter and control stormwater runoff, or man-made wetlands/solar aquatics to deal with sewage.

Ensuring your building is sustainably designed can often include professional certification, such as LEED (Leadership in Energy and Efficiency in Design), or use of building materials that have themselves a particular certification (FSC certified lumber, etc).

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Every project is unique, but can be evaluated and reviewed through four basic kinds of inquiry:

**Technique** How is it made?

**Systems** How does it perform?

**Aesthetics** What does it look like?

**Context** Does it relate to its natural and cultural environment?