A similar concept is [natural building](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Natural_building), which is usually on a smaller scale and tends to focus on the use of [natural materials](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Natural_material) that are available locally.[[3]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Green_building#cite_note-2) Other related topics include [sustainable design](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sustainable_design) and [green architecture](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Green_architecture). Sustainability may be defined as meeting the needs of present generations without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.[[4]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Green_building#cite_note-3) Green building does not specifically address the issue of the retrofitting existing homes.

A 2009 report by the U.S. General Services Administration found 12 sustainably designed buildings cost less to operate and have excellent energy performance. In addition, occupants were more satisfied with the overall building than those in typical commercial buildings.

