



LEED Version 3

What is LEED Version 3?

LEED v3 (www.usgbc.org/leedv3) is the next version of the LEED green building certification system. Launched on April 27, 2009, LEED v3 builds on the fundamental structure and familiarity of the existing rating system, but provides a new structure for making sure the rating system incorporates new technology and addresses the most urgent priorities like energy use and CO₂ emissions. LEED v3 consists of three components:

- LEED 2009: technical advancements to the LEED rating systems' credits and points.
- LEED Online: an upgrade to LEED Online that is faster and easier to use.
- New building certification model: an expanded certification infrastructure based on ISO standards, administered by the Green Building Certification Institute (GBCI) for improved capacity, speed and performance.

Which LEED rating systems changed under LEED v3?

The new version of the LEED Rating System – LEED 2009 – incorporates the existing commercial and institutional building rating systems: New Construction, Core and Shell, Commercial Interiors, Existing Buildings: Operations & Maintenance and Schools.

Did the LEED reference guides change?

The reference guides have been consolidated into three books that address buildings by type and phase: Green Building Design & Construction, for the rating systems that address new buildings; Green Interior Design & Construction, for the rating systems that address interior spaces; and Green Building Operations & Maintenance, for the rating systems that address the operations and maintenance of existing buildings.

When will the new reference guides be available?

The new reference guides are now available for purchase from the [USGBC online store, at www.usgbc.org/store](http://www.usgbc.org/store). E-book reference guides are available for \$140 and hard-copy guides are \$150 for USGBC members.

Attendees of LEED workshops that are focused on a specific rating system will continue to receive a discount on one printed corresponding LEED reference guide and also receive a free 30-day access period to download and save a non-printable personalized PDF copy of the reference guide.

What notable new technical advancements are reflected in the new LEED 2009 rating systems?

Notable technical advancements include:

- LEED prerequisite/credit alignment and harmonization
- Transparent environmental/human impact credit weighting
- Regionalization

LEED Prerequisite/Credit Alignment and Harmonization – The LEED credits and prerequisites have been consolidated, aligned and updated to reflect their “most effective common denominator,” providing a consistent pool of prerequisites and credits across the commercial and institutional LEED rating systems. A scrub of the existing credit interpretation rulings (CIRs) was conducted, and necessary precedent-setting and clarifying language has been incorporated into the prerequisites/credits.

Transparent Environmental/Human Impact Credit Weighting – With revised credit weightings, LEED now awards more points for strategies that will have greater positive impacts on what matters most – energy efficiency and CO₂ reductions. Each credit was evaluated against a list of 13

environmental impact categories, including climate change, indoor environmental quality, resource depletion and water intake, among many others. The impact categories were prioritized through the consensus of subject matter experts across the building and environmental sciences, and credits were assigned a value based on how they contributed to mitigating each impact. The result revealed each credit's contribution to the big picture, giving the most value to credits that have the highest potential for making the biggest change – which means the credits with the greatest impact on priority issues earn more points towards a LEED rating.

Regionalization – Through USGBC's regional councils, chapters and affiliates, regionally specific environmental priorities were identified. Depending on a project's specific location, six existing LEED credits from LEED's various credit categories that address regional environmental issues have been assigned "bonus points." That means that a project can be awarded up to four extra points – one point each for up to four of the priority credits.

What if I am currently working on a LEED project?

LEED projects registered under previous versions of the rating system can be "upgraded" to LEED v3 after April 27, or they can continue using the version of LEED under which they originally registered. Only projects registered under LEED 2009 will have access to the new version of LEED Online.

When does registration under the version 2 LEED rating systems end?

Projects will be unable to register a new project for older LEED rating systems after June 26, 2009. Beginning June 27, new projects will be required to use LEED v3.

If my project is registered under a version 2 LEED rating system, will I be required to switch to LEED v3?

No. Projects registering under the version 2 LEED rating systems will have the option to upgrade to LEED v3 at any time, or they can continue to use the version of LEED under which they originally registered.

If I choose to transition my current project to LEED v3, will I have to pay a new registration fee?

Not if you upgrade your project to LEED 2009 through by the end of Dec. 31, 2009.

Does LEED 2009 apply to LEED for Homes?

No. At this time, LEED 2009 is only for commercial and institutional building applications and their existing rating systems (LEED for New Construction, Existing Buildings: Operations & Maintenance, Commercial Interiors, Schools, and Core & Shell).

How does LEED 2009 affect LEED for Retail and LEED for Healthcare?

LEED for Retail, which is in pilot, and LEED for Healthcare, which is under development, will be aligned with LEED 2009 at a later date. More information will be available prior to the rating systems' launches.

How does LEED v3 apply to LEED for Neighborhood Development?

LEED for Neighborhood Development will not be affected by LEED v3. However, when LEED for Neighborhood Development launches, the new LEED Online platform will be used for credit submittals and a stand-alone reference guide will be released. The LEED for Neighborhood Development rating system will be separate from the LEED 2009 rating systems but will include transparent credit weightings and regionalization.

How does LEED 2009 affect the LEED AP (Accredited Professional) Program?

The Green Building Certification Institute has expanded its LEED professional accreditation program so that it continues to represent a professional's knowledge of the most current version of LEED. In order to maintain alignment with LEED 2009, candidates will only be able to take the LEED for Commercial Interiors 2.0 and LEED for New Construction 2.2 AP exams until June 30, 2009. Registration for these exams has ended.

For more information visit: www.gbci.org.

What if I'm already a LEED Accredited Professional (LEED AP)?

Current LEED APs have three options:

1. Enroll in the new system and become a LEED AP with specialty by passing one of the new specialty examinations; only part two of the new LEED AP exam will be required for current LEED APs who take the test by June 2011. When registering for the exam, APs will need to sign the disciplinary policy and agree to the credential maintenance program (CMP). Once enrolled, LEED APs will use one of the new specialty designations (O&M, BD&C, ID&C) after their name.
2. Enroll in the new system and become a LEED AP with specialty without taking one of the specialty exams. This involves agreeing to the credentialing maintenance program (CMP) and signing the disciplinary policy. The CMP requirements under this option are more strictly defined and follow a prescriptive path intended to ensure a LEED AP's ongoing education reflects the same level of knowledge that is tested in the new specialty exams. The prescriptive CMP requirements apply only to a LEED AP's initial two-year reporting period. Once enrolled, LEED APs will use one of the new specialty designations (O&M, BD&C, ID&C) after their name. Enrollment must occur before June 2011.
3. Do nothing; remain designated a LEED AP without a specialty title in the LEED Professional Directory.

What if I want to become a LEED AP?

Visit the Green Building Certification Institute (GBCI) www.gbci.org for information on the LEED professional credentialing program.

What about USGBC's educational offerings?

USGBC remains the primary source for LEED and green building education, both for building and design practitioners looking to learn more about implementing LEED into their projects and for aspiring LEED AP candidates. USGBC has already begun to roll out LEED 2009-aligned instructor-led workshops, online courses, and webinars (live and on-demand). To learn more about how USGBC's LEED curriculum is being adapted and expanded, visit www.usgbc.org/education.

USGBC's educational offerings and those available through the [Education Provider Program](#) will support the pursuit and maintenance requirements for the LEED AP and LEED Green Associate credentials. USGBC and Education Provider Program courses can be found on www.greenbuild365.org.

USGBC's LEED Core Curriculum, which addresses LEED 2009 and credentials, includes:

- *Green Building Basics & LEED* (100-level instructor-led workshops or online-anytime courses) – For beginners and those new to LEED.
- *LEED Core Concepts & Strategies* (200-level instructor-led workshops; available online in spring 2009) – For professionals who are seeking an understanding of LEED, but may not be involved in implementation, or who are seeking the LEED Green Associate credential from GBCI.
- *Green Building LEED Implementation Process* workshops (300-level instructor-led; available now for Green Building Operations & Maintenance; roll-out this year of Green Home Design & Construction, Green Building Design & Construction (Commercial New Construction) and Green Interior Design & Construction) – For project teams implementing LEED, as well as professionals pursuing any of the new LEED AP credentials.

For more information about LEED v3, visit www.usgbc.org/leedv3