

What is NatHERS

The [Nationwide House Energy Rating Scheme](#) (NatHERS) provides energy ratings for new homes, helping create more energy-efficient and comfortable homes that cost less to run. It is also supporting Australia's transition to net zero emissions by 2050.

Thermal Star Ratings

NatHERS star ratings are out of 10 and consider a home's design, orientation, and construction materials for the local climate. On the 1ST May 2025 the minimum star rating requirement of the National Construction Code (NCC) was increased from 6 to 7 stars in WA, most other states and territories adopted 7 stars in 2024.

Higher star ratings mean the home is more comfortable to live in and cheaper to run.

NatHERS star ratings are included in energy assessments for new homes, and provide information about the thermal performance (heating and cooling needs) of homes.

The energy performance of appliances (e.g., heating and cooling systems) is not measured in the star rating but is included in the [NatHERS Whole of Home rating](#) (out of 100).



The Catalina Sustainable Home achieved 10 stars.

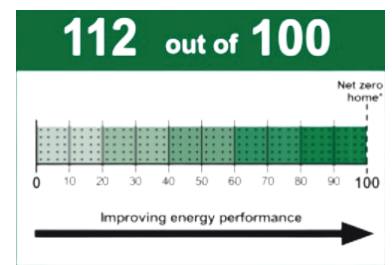
Whole of Home Rating

Adding to the NatHERS thermal star rating, Whole of Home ratings were introduced to provide a snapshot of the home's energy costs as well as greenhouse gas emissions. The Whole of Home rating is out of 100.

Whole of Home rating looks at these appliances;

- hot water, heating and cooling systems
- lighting, cooking and plug-in appliances
- pool and spa equipment
- solar energy generated onsite and battery storage.

While the scale ranges from 0 to 100 (where 100 is a net zero energy value home), ratings above 100 are possible. One way a home may rate over 100, is where it generates more energy than it uses.



The Catalina Sustainable Home achieved 112 out of 100.

The assessment

Energy assessors use your house plans and construction details and enter the data into [NatHERS Accredited Software](#) to produce a star rating based on scientific research by the CSIRO.

Find an accredited NatHERS assessor by:

- Searching the [Accredited Assessor Directory](#) on the Australian Building Sustainability Association website
- Reviewing the [Design Matters National database](#) — select Thermal Performance Assessor and enter your postcode
- Completing the [House Energy Rater referral form](#) on the House Energy Raters Association website.

Tips for getting the best results

Expert Modelling for an accurate Star Rating

- A certified NatHERS assessor uses approved software (FirstRate5, AccuRate, BERS Pro, HERO) to simulate how the home performs thermally across all seasons.
- They consider climate zone, building envelope, orientation, glazing, and insulation in great detail.
- Only they can officially provide a NatHERS star rating that will be accepted for compliance or marketing.

Early Design Feedback = Better Outcomes

- A good assessor helps architects and designers test different options before plans are finalised.
- They'll identify high-impact changes (e.g. tweaking window sizes, insulation levels, thermal mass) that could shift a home from 6 to 8 or even 10 stars with minimal extra cost.

Certification and Documentation

- A formal certificate from a NatHERS assessor is often required for:
 - Building permits
 - Energy efficiency compliance under NCC 2022
 - Green star or other sustainability credentials
 - Selling or marketing as a "10-Star Home"
 - Cheaper "green loans" for mortgages

Avoid Overdesigning or Wasting Money

- Aiming for 10 stars often tempts people to overspend on triple glazing or exotic materials.
- An assessor can model what's needed—and where you're hitting diminishing returns.

For example, Catalina Sustainable Home achieves 9.2 stars by switching all the double-glazed windows and doors to low-E laminated glass, which would save \$14,195. If we just used standard glazing, we could save \$20,145, and the rating would be 8.3 stars.

Custom Advice for Specific Climate Zones

- What works in Cairns will be very different to what works in Perth.
- Assessors understand these nuances and can recommend climate-specific strategies that general guides or designers might miss.

What to Look for in a Good NatHERS Assessor

- Experience with high-performance buildings (not just basic 7-star compliance)
- Willing to collaborate closely with your design team early on
- Transparent about what's feasible and what's a "box-ticking" exercise
- Can offer scenario modelling e.g., "What happens if I shrink this west-facing window?"

Point of diminishing returns

The "point of diminishing returns" for energy ratings, each additional rating point, and the accompanying investment and effort, provides progressively smaller benefits in energy savings and comfort compared to the previous point.

Aiming for 8 - 8.5 stars is where you will get the most "bang for your buck" Each point after this yields a much smaller percentage of energy reduction for the money spent.

Useful Links & Additional Reading

- NatHERS Nationwide Energy Rating Scheme - nathers.gov.au
- Building Designers Association of Australia ABDA Accredited Assessor - bdaa.com.au
- Design Matters National Member Directory for Thermal Performance Assessors - designmatters.org.au
- House Energy Raters Association (HERA) - hera.asn.au

Visit one of the most sustainable homes in Australia.

Catalina
sustainable home

www.catalinasustainablehome.com.au