

11

warm up with radiant heat



Nature uses it to warm us, and the Europeans have known about it for almost a century – radiant heating is one of the most energy-efficient and effective heating options available. By heating the floor, ceiling or panels in the walls of your house, you can achieve a more natural and consistent warmth. Other advantages over traditional convection-based systems and reverse cycle air-conditioning are that you're warming your whole house (not just one or two rooms), dust circulation is reduced (great for allergy sufferers), and those fights over who's hogging the heater become a thing of the past.

Photo: Corbis Australia

The image shows a modern, two-story house with a facade of corrugated metal siding. A large window is visible on the upper level. In the foreground, two large, cylindrical water tanks made of corrugated metal are stacked. The scene is set during the "golden hour" of sunset or sunrise, with a soft, warm light. The number "16" is displayed in the top right corner.

16

tanks for the free water

What could be more natural than harvesting the rain that falls freely from the sky? Considering an average family uses 240,000 litres of fresh water every year, half of which ends up down the toilet or in the garden, and you pay for it, installing a tank that can halve this waste seems an obvious option. Tanks can be small, huge, above or below ground. They can even be flat so you can use them as a fence or under decking – the new generation of tanks are far from ugly. You can also do it yourself: set out buckets, bins and old toddler pools to collect small reservoirs (under gutter pipes is a great location) and use them on your plants on the drier days. State and territory governments now offer rebates for installing new tanks, so it's definitely worth thinking about if you own your place.