

# Understanding Your Shingle Roof Replacement Estimate



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You've decided you need a new roof. You have estimates from several contractors. How do you know which is right for you? It is important to understand exactly what the contractor is proposing when making a decision on your roof replacement. There are usually several products/services included on most re-roofing quotes.

## SHINGLES

The primary item on a roof replacement estimate is the actual roofing material. The estimate will list the manufacturer and type of shingles the contractor intends to use. It will also show the style of shingle. Architectural or dimensional shingles are the most popular. They create more interest and often mimic the look of other roofing materials such as slate or tile.



It may include color choice or options if design was part of the initial discussion. The estimate will also indicate the length of the manufacturer's warranty for that type.

## FLASHING

If your roof has chimneys, dormers, and walls, then you will see flashing on your estimate. Flashing prevents water from seeping behind and under shingles, causing water damage to the structure.



Flashing is usually thin sheets of aluminum or galvanized steel. Many professional roofers will fashion their own from sheet metal. Flashing is installed over joints in the roof & wall construction. Possible areas are valleys, chimneys, dormers, windows, pipes, skylights, porches, decks and edges.

New flashing is often installed with a new roof. If flashing deteriorates or comes loose it can cause severe damage to your home. It is important to make sure it is installed properly to avoid unnecessary damage.

## UNDERLAYMENT

One item that should be included on every roof replacement estimate is underlayment. Underlayment is a layer of protective material between the roof deck or plywood and the shingles. Often called felt paper, it is the first layer of waterproofing for your roof.

Manufacturers reinforce the underlayment with fiberglass to strengthen and resist tearing, make installation easier and improve its waterproofing effectiveness.



Manufacturers are constantly developing new underlayment technology. Newer synthetic underlayment further increases the effectiveness, ease & safety to install and increases longevity. Some manufacturers have developed organic and green underlayment products.

It is usually recommended to use underlayment from the same manufacturer as your shingles as they are designed to work together. It may be required for a valid warranty.

A contractor will choose the best type of underlayment for your roof replacement based on the type of roof and climate in which you live. If you have any questions regarding their choice, they are the best resource for your specific project.

## DRIP EDGE

Drip edge is another important and sometimes overlooked part of a roofing or re-roofing job. Even though manufacturers recommend it, and some require it for a valid warranty, some contractors do not include drip edge on their estimates.

Drip edge is metal strips applied along gutter lines, eaves and some rakes. It stops water from getting under the shingles and damaging the deck plywood and protects fascia. Properly applied drip edge will lengthen the life of the roof and further protect the home from water damage.

Drip edge is not expensive to include in a roof replacement project and the benefits greatly outweigh the cost.

## ICE & WATER SHIELD

The purpose of a roof is to protect the home from the elements; wind, rain, ice, etc. In most climates, ice and/or water are a concern you can't ignore.

Ice and water protection should be discussed for almost every residential roofing project and will likely appear on your estimate. Ice and water barriers allow proper water flow preventing damage caused by high wind and rain storms and ice build-up known as ice dams. It strongly adheres to the plywood roof deck providing a second line of defense to the underlayment. The barrier is applied to the most vulnerable parts of the roof. Depending on the type of roof this could be the valleys, eaves and rakes, or the entire deck surface. Contractors may also suggest applying it around chimneys and other areas where leaks are likely to occur.



## VALLEYS

A valley is the angle formed by the intersection of two sloping roof planes to provide water runoff. Because of the amount of water passing through that area of a roof, it is important to consider how the area will be protected when replacing an asphalt shingle roof.

There are different methods for shingling the area with dimensional asphalt roofing material. Closed cut valleys are most popular aesthetically. In a closed cut valley application, shingles from one side of the valley extend across the valley while shingles from the other side are trimmed back a few inches from the valley centerline. Any flashing is not exposed. When using the open cut valley roofing method the flashing is visible. Open cut valleys may be used to create visual interest or enhance features on some design styles.



Some contractors will use ice and water shield under the shingles, others will choose to install metal flashing. Further, some contractors will install both for extra protection. A professional roofing contractor will consider many factors and make a recommendation as to the best method and style for the specific project. A detailed estimate will include these recommendations.

## RIDGE VENT

All roofs need to be vented to allow moisture to escape and prevent damage to the roof and the entire home. There are several types of roof ventilation systems. The most popular are ridge vents. They are installed along the ridge or peak of the roof and allow hot air to escape and draw cool air in the soffit vents.



A detailed roof replacement estimate will include which type and style of vent is going to be installed. Ridge vents come in several styles to match the home, shingle design, and homeowner's preference as to how much they stand out or blend in with the rest of the new roof.

## CHIMNEY CRICKET

If the home has a chimney, a professional roofing contractor may recommend installing a cricket if there isn't one already. A cricket is a peaked construction at the back of a chimney to help prevent snow and ice build-up and to deflect water around the chimney.



## PIPES AND FANS



Pipes and fans on the roof should be addressed in the estimate. These are vents that allow air to escape the home from the attic, bathroom, or other household needs. A contractor will indicate how they will treat these during the project. Will they keep the same ones, replace with new pipes or recommend a different type of ventilation or fan.

## GUTTERS

When replacing a roof, it is a good time to consider replacing gutters as well. Either on your request or their recommendation, an option for gutter replacement may appear on the estimate. It may specify the length in feet, type of material, the type of construction (seamless, sectional), the size or width in inches and the size of the downspouts that will be used. Gutter estimates may include leaf protection, which is a covering that allows water to flow and keeps leaves and other debris from causing clogs in the gutter and downspouts.



## SOFFIT & FASCIA

Often replacing soffit and fascia will be recommended.

**Fascia** - connects the roof to the soffit, where gutters are attached

**Soffit** - Covers the underside of the roof overhang

Both of these play a large part in protecting the structure of the home.

## PLYWOOD & SHEATHING

Under all the underlayment, ice & water shield and shingle material is the decking.



This is the wood that makes the solid structure of the rooftop. During a roof replacement project, it may be discovered that some of this decking has been damaged and needs to be replaced. A roofing contractor may indicate this expense in different ways. If they see obvious damage they will note that in the estimate and the type of material that will be used. This could be plywood, Luan or other coverings. However, sometimes this damage is hidden until

the replacement project has begun. Some contractors will also include the additional costs that may be incurred if a problem is found.

## WARRANTIES

Most roof replacement estimates will mention warranties and guarantees with limitations and for a specific number of years.

Manufacturers' warranties usually offer coverage when there is a defect in the roofing material that causes leaks under normal conditions. A manufacturer's coverage will typically cover the cost of replacing the materials, not the labor to do so. They also do not cover replacing the entire roof, just repairing or replacing the defective areas.

Manufacturers' warranties often exclude damage due to pre-existing conditions of the roof. If the shingles were installed improperly or the roof structure and gutter design was faulty, coverage may be denied. Many warranties are prorated, meaning the longer the roof is on your home the less coverage you have.

Manufacturers may recognize quality professionals that they trust. These contractors may be able to offer additional or extended manufacturers' warranties.

Be sure to understand the coverage and limitations of a manufacturer's warranty before using it to make your roofing decisions.

While a good warranty to cover defects is important, choosing your roofing contractor is as much so.

Manufacturers' warranties do not cover problems arising from installation. This is where a workmanship guarantee comes in.

A workmanship guarantee is offered by the contractor and covers all defects related to installation work only. A qualified contractor will know what type of material to use on your roof and how to install it properly, reducing the possibility of roof leakage. Your contractor will also recognize potential problems such as structure, drainage and ventilation issues and address those ahead of time so they won't damage your new shingles in the future. A reputable contractor will offer a labor warranty to cover any issues that may arise for additional peace of mind.

When considering your new roof investment, be sure to look at the coverage warranties offer and especially the quality and knowledge of the company installing them.

## CHOOSING YOUR CONTRACTOR

After reading and understanding the estimates, it is time to make a decision as to who will do the work. Make sure to check out each contractor's qualifications and experience. Online reviews are an excellent source of information.

## ROOFING TERMS

### Roofing terms glossary to help you communicate with your roofer.

It is important to understand what needs to be replaced or repaired. If you don't understand your roofer's estimate, ask for further explanation.

- **Felt** - a barrier that protects the roof deck from moisture
- **Eave** - The part of the roof that extends beyond the edge
- **Eave Vents** - screens that allow fresh air into the attic
- **Downspout** - connected to the gutter, downspouts carry water to ground level, away from the foundation
- **Dormer** - smaller roof set into the larger roof
- **Dry Rot** - deterioration of wood caused by prolonged moisture
- **Flashing** - waterproof construction at intersections of planes and openings in the roof
- **Fascia** - connects the roof to the soffit, where gutters are attached
- **Soffit** - Covers the underside of the roof overhang
- **Gutters** - carries rain off roof and into downspouts to move away from foundation
- **Diverter** - a metal piece that moves water away from an opening when gutters can't be used.
- **Hip** - the intersection of two sides of the roof that form a sloping ridge from top to bottom
- **Ridge** - the intersection of two roof planes that form a horizontal peak
- **Ridge Vent** - an exhaust vent that runs along the peak of the roof to allow air to escape the attic
- **Pitch** - the slope of the roof
- **Underlayment** - the layer of protective material between the deck and shingles
- **Deck** - the base of the roof, usually wood or plywood
- **Valley** - the area where two sloping roof sides join at an angle to allow water runoff
- **Square** - A measurement term referring to the surface area of the roof. 100 square feet, usually 10' X 10" area

## FACTORS IN THE COST OF A NEW ROOF

### COST OF ROOF REPLACEMENT

Replacing a roof is a big project. There are a lot of factors that a roofing contractor considers when preparing an estimate for a homeowner.

#### Existing Roof

##### Size

Roofers measure in "squares" which is equal to 100 square feet. The more squares, the more material, labor, and so on that will be needed to complete the project.

##### Style

The type of roof that is being replaced also affects the costs as well as how many layers of old roofing materials are there. Time and costs to remove and dispose of the old roof are a factor in the total roof replacement quote.

##### Pitch

Pitch is how steep the slope of the roof is. A steep roof will require more safety precautions, more preparation and staging, and more or different equipment. It will also determine the types of materials used to ensure the roof is watertight and long-lasting.



##### Condition

Is there damage to the roof, deck, or soffit and fascia? If these will need to be repaired before a new roof can be installed there may be additional notes on the estimate sheet.

#### New Roof

##### Style

The materials and style of the new roof plays a part in the final estimate. Asphalt shingles are a cost effective material and come in differing styles and prices.



##### Gutters & Downspouts

Are the gutters and downspouts in good condition? This is another possible cost to replacing a roof that the contractor and homeowner can discuss.

##### Details

Finishing touches that result in a good looking roof, details such as painting and neat flashing might also be taken into consideration by a roofing contractor when preparing the estimate.

##### Other Materials

In addition to the shingles, there are other materials needed to complete a roofing project. Underlayment, replacement decking, ventilation system, insulation, and types of fasteners needed all come in to play.

##### Labor

If there are chimneys, skylights, or other roof obstacles these will need to be inspected and determine if they will need new flashing, repair, seals and if they make it difficult to work around when installing the new roof.

How easy is it to get to the roof? How high is the roof? Are there obstacles to accessing the roof? The more difficult it is to access the roof, the more the cost may be to replace it. Some contractors have special equipment that make access easier and safer.



##### Insurance

A reputable, honest roofing company will carry all the proper insurance, and licenses. These can be very expensive and may influence a contractors labor costs as well as the experience of the company and its crews.



Depending where you live, there may be taxes on materials and labor costs.

##### Taxes

If special permits need to be purchased to complete the job, these will also factor into final cost.



##### Permits

#### Choosing a Contractor

When you are reviewing your roofing estimate keep in mind that price isn't the only factor. Do you feel comfortable meeting with the contractor and feel they were knowledgeable? Do they have a solid background and reputation? If so, then they may be the best choice, even if not the lowest total price.



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