

# How to Get a New Roof Austin Homeowners Can Rely On

## What a new roof actually involves

After fifteen years in the roofing trade, I have sat across kitchen tables from homeowners in south Austin, in Round Rock, and all over the hill country. The conversation almost always starts the same way: "I think I need a new roof, but I am not sure what it costs or what materials are best for this climate." That uncertainty is understandable. A roof is not something you replace often, and the options have changed a lot since the 1990s. The good news is that a new roof Austin project today can be more durable, more energy efficient, and more attractive than what was standard even ten years ago.

The first thing to understand is that a roof replacement is not just about slapping on new shingles. It involves tearing off the old layers, inspecting the roof deck for rot or damage, installing proper roofing underlayment, and then putting down the new covering. The details matter a lot, and skipping steps almost always leads to trouble later.

## Material choices and climate considerations

Austin weather is hard on roofs. The summer sun beats down with UV intensity that can degrade cheap asphalt shingles in a few years. Then come the spring hailstorms and occasional freezing snaps. So the material you choose needs to handle both heat and impact. In my experience, the major manufacturers all produce good products, but they are not interchangeable.

GAF and Owens Corning both make architectural shingles that mimic the look of wood shakes or slate. These are thicker, heavier, and more expensive than standard three-tab shingles, but they hold up better in the sun and add curb appeal. CertainTeed also offers a strong line of architectural shingles, and their color retention is excellent. If you are on a tighter budget, Tamko makes solid asphalt shingles that perform well for the price, though they may not last as long in direct southern exposure.

For flat or low-slope roofs, which are common on modern additions and some older mid-century homes, you have different options. TPO membrane is a single-ply roofing material that reflects heat well and is heat-welded at the seams. It is a good choice for Austin because it stays cool and does not crack like some older rubber membranes. EPDM rubber is another single-ply option, but it is dark and absorbs more heat, which can raise cooling costs. I generally steer people toward TPO for low-slope residential work unless there is a specific reason for EPDM, like a very small area where the lower material cost matters more.

## The layers below the shingles

What you cannot see is often what makes a roof last. Roofing underlayment is the layer between the roof deck and the shingles. It acts as a secondary barrier against wind-driven rain and ice dams. In Texas, we do not worry much about ice dams, but we do get heavy rain during storms. A good synthetic underlayment, like those made by Atlas Roofing, breathes moisture out while keeping water from getting in. On top of that, you should have an ice and water shield installed in the valleys and around any penetrations like chimneys or vent pipes. That is a self-sealing membrane that sticks to the deck and seals around nails. It is cheap insurance.

Ventilation is another often-overlooked part of a [new roof Austin](#) install. Without proper airflow, heat and moisture build up in the attic, which can warp decking and shorten the life of the shingles. Ridge vents installed at the peak, combined with soffit vents under the eaves, create a continuous flow of air from bottom to top. I have seen roofs that failed in five years simply because the attic had no ventilation. That is a preventable mistake.

## Flashing and details that matter

Roof flashing is the metal or rubber material used to seal joints where the roof meets a wall, a chimney, or a skylight. This is one of the most common failure points on any roof. Cheap flashing work leads to leaks almost every time. The flashing needs to be integrated with the underlayment and the shingles, not just slapped on top. A good roofer will step the flashing into the wall or chimney and seal it properly. If you are getting quotes, ask how they handle flashing. The answer will tell you a lot about their quality.

I also recommend paying attention to the roof deck itself. Sometimes when we tear off old material, we find plywood that is delaminated or OSB that has swollen from previous leaks. Replacing those sections before the new roof goes on is critical. It adds cost, but it is a lot cheaper than tearing off a new roof two years later to fix rot that was hidden underneath.

## Permits, utilities, and financing

In Austin, you need a City of Austin permit for most roof replacements. That is not optional. A reputable contractor pulls the permit and schedules the inspections. It protects you and ensures the work meets code. I have seen homeowners try to save a few hundred dollars by skipping the permit, and it usually ends up costing them when they sell the house or when an unpermitted roof fails.

Another practical consideration is energy efficiency. Austin Energy offers rebates for certain energy-saving improvements, and a cool-roof coating or reflective shingles can qualify. While a new roof itself may not get a rebate, choosing lighter colored architectural shingles or a TPO

membrane can lower your attic temperature by several degrees. That translates to lower electric bills in July and August.

Financing a new roof Austin project is something many homeowners need to think about. A full replacement can run several thousand dollars, and not everyone has that in cash. Some contractors offer payment plans or work with third-party financing. It is worth asking about if the upfront cost is a concern.

## **Tools and installation quality**

The tools used on the job also affect the final result. A roofing nailer, for example, drives nails consistently and at the right depth, which matters for wind resistance. Hand-nailing is fine for small repairs, but on a full roof, a nailer is standard. The roofer should also use roofing felt in the valleys and on the eaves. That is a layer of material that adds waterproofing before the shingles go down.

I have seen jobs where the crew skipped the felt to save time, and the roof leaked within a year. That kind of shortcut is not acceptable. A good contractor follows the manufacturer's installation instructions to the letter. If they do not, the warranty on the shingles may be voided, and you are left holding the bag.

## **Making the final decision**

Choosing a contractor for a new roof Austin requires some legwork. Get at least three written estimates. Ask for references and look at recent work in your neighborhood. Ask about the specific materials they plan to use - GAF versus Owens Corning versus CertainTeed, for example - and why they recommend one over the other for your house. A good roofer will explain the trade-offs without pressure.

I also suggest asking about the warranty. Manufacturers offer limited warranties on their shingles, but the workmanship warranty comes from the contractor. Make sure you understand what is covered and for how long. A five-year workmanship warranty is common, but some contractors offer longer.

Finally, trust your gut. If a roofer is vague about materials, avoids talking about permits, or gives a price that seems too good to be true, it probably is. A solid roof is a long-term investment. Taking the time to do it right the first time saves money and headaches down the road.

A new roof is a big project, but it is one of the most important investments you can make in your home. With the right materials, proper installation, and a contractor who knows the local climate, you can get a roof that stands up to Texas weather and looks good doing it.