



FREE PREMIUM DOWNLOAD

The Ultimate Roofing Buyer's Checklist

A homeowner's guide to comparing estimates, understanding roof repairs and replacement, and avoiding costly mistakes.

Inside this guide

50 questions to ask contractors | Roof inspection checklist | Repair vs. replacement guide | Estimate comparison worksheet | Installation preparation checklist | Final walkthrough checklist

Presented by
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Welcome

Use this roofing guide before you sign a contract, compare estimates, choose materials, or decide whether your roof should be repaired, re-roofed, or replaced.

A roof is one of the most important protective systems on your home. It protects the structure, helps prevent water intrusion, affects curb appeal, and can impact comfort when ventilation and drainage are not working properly.

Family Home Improvements provides composite shingle new roofs, re-roofs, and roof repairs. The company roofing process includes inspection, consultation, a written job estimate, and roof construction with safety and cleanup planning.

How to use this guide

Print this checklist or keep it open while meeting with roofing companies. Check items off, write notes, and use the worksheets to compare estimates side by side. This guide is for homeowner education only. Final recommendations, pricing, code requirements, and permit needs should come from a professional in-home consultation.

Checklist Sections

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2. Homeowner Roofing Goals Worksheet
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1. Roof Replacement Readiness Checklist

Check all that apply. If several items match your home, it may be time to schedule a professional roof inspection.

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ I have noticed water stains on ceilings or walls | ☐ The roof looks old, faded, streaked, or worn out |
| ☐ I have seen an active roof leak during or after rain | ☐ There is dry rot, damaged fascia, or wood decay near the roofline |
| ☐ Shingles are missing, cracked, curled, or lifted | ☐ The attic smells damp or shows signs of moisture |
| ☐ There are loose shingle granules in gutters or on the ground | ☐ My home feels unusually hot and attic ventilation may be poor |
| ☐ My roof looks uneven, sagging, wavy, or soft in areas | ☐ Gutters overflow, clog often, or drain toward the house |
| ☐ The roof has been patched several times already | ☐ I am planning solar, skylights, or exterior upgrades |
| ☐ There is visible damage from wind, branches, or debris | ☐ I want better curb appeal and long-term protection |
| ☐ The roof is approaching the end of its expected life | ☐ I am preparing to sell or improve the value of my home |

What this means

A visible ceiling leak usually means water has already made its way through parts of the roof system. Small roofing problems can become bigger structural problems if they are ignored. A professional inspection can identify whether a repair, re-roof, or full roof replacement makes the most sense.

2. Homeowner Roofing Goals Worksheet

Before meeting with a contractor, write down what matters most to you. Clear goals make it easier to compare recommendations and estimates.

My Main Reasons for Roofing Work

- | | |
|--|---|
| ☐ Stop an active leak | ☐ Improve attic ventilation |
| ☐ Repair storm, wind, or tree limb damage | ☐ Increase home value before selling |
| ☐ Replace an old or worn roof | ☐ Reduce frequent repair costs |
| ☐ Improve curb appeal | ☐ Match a remodel, paint, siding, or exterior project |
| ☐ Protect the structure from water damage | ☐ Replace deteriorated underlayment or roof deck areas |
| ☐ Prepare the home for solar panels | ☐ Get a roof that will provide long-lasting protection |

My Biggest Concern

- | | |
|--|---|
| ☐ Price | ☐ Hidden wood damage |
| ☐ Warranty | ☐ Permit requirements |
| ☐ Timeline | ☐ Clean-up |
| ☐ Choosing the right material | ☐ Finding a trustworthy contractor |

Project goals:

Rooms or areas showing leaks or stains:

Preferred timeline:

3. Roof Warning Signs Checklist

Use this page to organize what you see before your appointment. Take photos when it is safe to do so, but do not climb onto the roof.

Interior Warning Signs

- ☐ Brown, yellow, or dark ceiling stains
- ☐ Bubbling paint or drywall near ceilings
- ☐ Dripping water during rain
- ☐ Mold or mildew smell in attic or rooms
- ☐ Wet insulation in the attic
- ☐ Daylight visible through roof boards

Exterior Warning Signs

- ☐ Missing shingles
- ☐ Cracked shingles
- ☐ Curled or lifted shingle edges
- ☐ Exposed nails
- ☐ Damaged flashing around roof penetrations
- ☐ Damaged ridge, hip, or valley areas
- ☐ Sagging roofline
- ☐ Tree branches touching the roof

Gutter and Drainage Signs

- ☐ Shingle granules collecting in gutters
- ☐ Overflowing gutters during rain
- ☐ Loose or damaged gutters
- ☐ Downspouts draining too close to the foundation
- ☐ Water stains on fascia or eaves
- ☐ Debris piled in valleys or roof edges

Safety reminder

Never walk on a wet, steep, damaged, or fragile roof. Roof inspections should be performed by trained professionals with proper safety equipment.

4. Repair vs. Re-Roof vs. New Roof

Not every roofing problem requires the same solution. Use this page to understand the basic differences so you can ask better questions.

Option	When It May Make Sense	Questions to Ask
Roof Repair	Best for isolated issues such as a small leak, a missing shingle area, flashing problem, or damage from a fallen limb.	Ask whether the repair will address only visible damage or also the underlying cause.
Re-Roof	May involve reconstructing or replacing roofing materials on an existing roof area when a broader section is worn or failing.	Ask what will happen to underlayment, decking, flashing, and ventilation.
New Roof	Best when the roof is old, leaking in multiple areas, has widespread damage, or when a home or addition needs a full roof system.	Ask for a written scope that lists materials, labor, permits, disposal, and warranties.

Repair May Be Enough When

- ☐ Damage is isolated
- ☐ The surrounding roof is still in good condition
- ☐ The leak source can be clearly identified
- ☐ The roof is not near the end of its life
- ☐ The repair can be properly matched and sealed
- ☐ The contractor can explain why replacement is not necessary

Replacement May Be Better When

- ☐ There are multiple leaks
- ☐ The roof has widespread wear
- ☐ Decking or underlayment is failing
- ☐ Repairs are becoming frequent
- ☐ Shingles are brittle, curled, or heavily deteriorated
- ☐ You are planning major upgrades such as solar

5. Roof System Components Checklist

A roof is more than shingles. A strong estimate should explain the full roof system and what is included.

Component	Why It Matters
Roof Decking	The wood surface that supports the roof system. Damaged or decayed sections may need replacement.
Underlayment	A protective layer installed beneath shingles to help protect against water intrusion.
Starter Course	The first row that helps protect the roof edge and supports proper shingle installation.
Shingles	The visible weather-shedding surface of the roof. Family Home Improvements highlights composite shingles on its roofing page.
Flashing	Metal or other material used around walls, chimneys, skylights, vents, and roof transitions.
Ventilation	Intake and exhaust ventilation that helps manage attic heat and moisture.
Ridge and Hip Details	Roof peak and corner areas that need proper materials and sealing.
Gutters and Drainage	Systems that move water away from the roof edge and foundation.

Ask Your Contractor to Explain

- | | |
|--|---|
| ☐ Which components are included in the estimate | ☐ How attic ventilation will be evaluated |
| ☐ What happens if hidden wood damage is discovered | ☐ How gutters and drainage will be addressed |
| ☐ How valleys, roof edges, and penetrations will be protected | ☐ Which manufacturer materials are included |

6. Composite Shingle Checklist

Family Home Improvements highlights composite shingle roofing for new roofs, re-roofs, and repairs. Composite shingles are popular because they can provide an attractive look, durability, and a strong value for many homes.

Shingle Options to Discuss

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|--|---|
| ☐ Architectural or dimensional shingles | ☐ Algae-resistant options |
| ☐ Premium designer shingles | ☐ Matching color for partial repairs |
| ☐ Impact-resistant options, if available | ☐ Starter shingles and ridge cap materials |
| ☐ Cool roof or energy-conscious options, if appropriate | ☐ Manufacturer warranty options |

Color and Appearance Questions

Which shingle colors work best with my exterior paint, stucco, siding, or trim?

Can I see samples in natural light?

Will the color look different from the street than it does up close?

Are there HOA requirements for roof color or style?

Will the new roof improve curb appeal or resale appeal?

Buying tip

When comparing estimates, do not compare shingles by name alone. Compare the full system: underlayment, flashing, ventilation, accessories, installation method, cleanup, warranty, and what happens if damaged wood is found.

7. Roofing Material and Color Worksheet

Use this worksheet during your roofing consultation.

Decision Item	Notes
Current Roof Material	
Preferred Roof Material	
Preferred Color Family	
Exterior Paint or Stucco Color	
Trim Color	
HOA Requirements	
Solar Panels Planned	
Skylights or Roof Accessories	
Biggest Style Concern	
Biggest Performance Concern	

Sample Notes

Color I like:

Colors I want to avoid:

Homes in my neighborhood with roofs I like:

8. Roof Inspection Checklist

The Family Home Improvements roofing page describes starting with an inspection of the roof, including shingles, support framework, drainage, and gutters. Use this checklist to understand what should be reviewed.

- | | |
|--|---|
| ☐ Shingle condition | ☐ Decking or framework concerns |
| ☐ Missing, cracked, curled, or lifted shingles | ☐ Dry rot or decayed wood |
| ☐ Roof valleys | ☐ Fascia and eaves |
| ☐ Ridge and hip areas | ☐ Attic ventilation |
| ☐ Flashing around walls and penetrations | ☐ Gutters and downspouts |
| ☐ Skylights, vents, and accessories | ☐ Debris, branches, or impact damage |
| ☐ Signs of leaks or water intrusion | ☐ Previous repair areas |
| ☐ Underlayment condition, where visible or accessible | ☐ Safety or access concerns |

What to ask after the inspection

Ask the consultant to explain what is urgent, what can wait, what should be included in the estimate, and which items could affect the final price if hidden damage is discovered after removal begins.

9. Drainage, Gutters, and Ventilation Checklist

Roof performance is affected by how water leaves the roof and how air moves through the attic. These items should not be ignored.

Drainage and Gutters

- | | |
|---|---|
| ☐ Gutters are clean and properly pitched | ☐ Roof edges show no water staining or rot |
| ☐ Downspouts move water away from the foundation | ☐ Fascia boards are in good condition |
| ☐ Valleys are clear of debris | ☐ Gutter connections are secure |

Attic and Roof Ventilation

- | | |
|--|---|
| ☐ Attic intake ventilation is present | ☐ Attic does not feel excessively hot or damp |
| ☐ Exhaust ventilation is present | ☐ There is no visible condensation on roof framing |
| ☐ Vents are not blocked by insulation or debris | ☐ Ventilation recommendations are included in the estimate if needed |

Questions to Ask

Will my gutters or downspouts need repairs or replacement?

Does my roof have enough attic ventilation?

Will new ventilation be added during the roofing project?

Are drainage or gutter issues contributing to my roofing problems?

Will the estimate include any fascia, eave, or wood repairs?

10. Estimate Comparison Worksheet

Do not compare roofing estimates by price alone. Use this worksheet to compare what each company is actually offering.

Item	Company 1	Company 2	Company 3
Company name			
Representative			
Phone			
License and insurance discussed			
Roof type			
Repair, re-roof, or replacement			
Shingle manufacturer			
Shingle style and color			
Underlayment included			
Flashing included			
Ventilation included			
Gutters or drainage included			
Wood repair allowance			
Permit costs included			
Tear-off and disposal included			
Cleanup and magnetic sweep			
Manufacturer warranty			
Labor/workmanship warranty			
Estimated start date			
Estimated project length			
Financing available			
Total price			
Notes			

11. Contractor Qualification Checklist

Before hiring any roofing contractor, verify the basics and make sure the estimate is clear.

Company Information

- | | |
|---|---|
| ☐ Company name is clearly stated | ☐ Written estimate is provided |
| ☐ Phone number and website are provided | ☐ Product brand and materials are listed |
| ☐ Physical business information is available | ☐ Warranty details are provided |
| ☐ Contractor license information is provided | ☐ Installation details are included |
| ☐ Insurance information is available | ☐ Cleanup and disposal are included in writing |

Experience and Communication

- | | |
|--|--|
| ☐ Company explains the inspection findings clearly | ☐ Company explains project timeline and cleanup |
| ☐ Company answers questions without pressure | ☐ Company has local roofing experience |
| ☐ Company can explain repair vs replacement options | ☐ Company has reviews or testimonials |
| ☐ Company discusses hidden damage and change orders | ☐ Company provides a clear point of contact |

Trust tip

A strong roofing contractor should educate you, not pressure you. You should understand what is being installed, why it is recommended, what it costs, and what is covered after the job is complete.

12. The 50 Questions Every Homeowner Should Ask

Use these questions when meeting with any roofing company.

Company and Inspection Questions

1. Are you licensed to perform roofing work?
2. Are you insured?
3. How long has your company been doing roofing projects?
4. Do you have experience with homes like mine?
5. Who will inspect my roof?
6. What exactly did you find during the inspection?
7. Can you explain the photos or problem areas?
8. Is this a repair, re-roof, or replacement recommendation?
9. Why do you recommend that option?
10. What problems are urgent and what can wait?

Product and Roof System Questions

11. What shingle manufacturer are you recommending?
12. What shingle style is included?
13. What colors are available?
14. Is the underlayment included in the estimate?
15. What flashing work is included?
16. Are ridge, hip, and starter materials included?
17. How will valleys and roof edges be protected?
18. Will attic ventilation be evaluated?
19. Will ventilation upgrades be included if needed?
20. Will gutters or downspouts need attention?

Project Scope Questions

21. Is tear-off included?
22. Is disposal included?
23. Are permits included, if required?
24. What happens if damaged wood is found?
25. How will additional wood repair be priced?

12. The 50 Questions Every Homeowner Should Ask - Continued

Installation and Safety Questions

- 26. Who will manage the project?
- 27. Who will be on-site during construction?
- 28. How will you protect landscaping, patios, and driveways?
- 29. Will tarps be used to catch debris?
- 30. How will hazard areas be marked?
- 31. How long will the work take?
- 32. What time will the crew arrive each day?
- 33. What access will the crew need?
- 34. How will nails and debris be cleaned up?
- 35. Will there be a final walkthrough?

Warranty, Price, and Follow-Up Questions

- 36. What manufacturer warranty is included?
- 37. What labor or workmanship warranty is included?
- 38. What is not covered by the warranty?
- 39. Is the warranty transferable if I sell the home?
- 40. Who do I call if I have a roof issue later?
- 41. Is the estimate itemized?
- 42. What exactly is included in the price?
- 43. What could increase the price later?
- 44. Are financing options available?
- 45. What deposit is required?
- 46. What is the payment schedule?
- 47. When can the project start?
- 48. How will changes be documented?
- 49. Will I receive warranty paperwork?
- 50. What should I do to maintain the roof after installation?

13. Red Flags to Watch For

Be careful if you notice any of the following.

Sales Red Flags

- | | |
|--|---|
| ☐ The salesperson pressures you to sign immediately | ☐ The contractor cannot explain repair vs replacement |
| ☐ The price changes dramatically during the appointment | ☐ The contractor avoids warranty questions |
| ☐ The company avoids putting details in writing | ☐ The contractor will not discuss license or insurance |
| ☐ The estimate does not list materials or scope | ☐ The contractor tells you not to get other opinions |

Estimate Red Flags

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ No shingle manufacturer listed | ☐ No plan for hidden wood damage |
| ☐ No underlayment details listed | ☐ No labor warranty listed |
| ☐ No flashing details listed | ☐ No timeline listed |
| ☐ No cleanup or disposal details | ☐ No written change-order process |

Installation Red Flags

- | | |
|--|--|
| ☐ No safety or debris plan | ☐ No contact person during the job |
| ☐ No protection for landscaping or property | ☐ No explanation of how the roof will be sealed |
| ☐ No final walkthrough | ☐ No plan for skylights, solar, vents, or accessories |

14. Installation Preparation Checklist

Use this checklist before roofing work begins.

Outside the Home

- | | |
|--|---|
| ☐ Move cars away from the driveway or work area | ☐ Remove or secure items attached near roof edges |
| ☐ Move patio furniture, potted plants, and grills | ☐ Make sure sprinklers are off during work hours |
| ☐ Clear access around gates and side yards | ☐ Tell the crew about ponds, fragile hardscape, or special areas |
| ☐ Protect fragile landscaping if possible | ☐ Confirm where materials and debris containers will be placed |

Inside the Home

- | | |
|--|--|
| ☐ Secure fragile items on shelves or walls | ☐ Plan for pets, children, elderly family members, or remote work needs |
| ☐ Cover valuables stored in the attic | ☐ Make sure someone is available for questions if needed |
| ☐ Expect noise and vibration during roof work | ☐ Confirm whether attic access is needed |

Before work starts

Confirm the start time, crew contact, parking, access, material delivery, project schedule, cleanup plan, and what to do if you have questions during construction.

15. What Happens During Roofing Construction

Every home is different, but a professional roofing project should follow a clear process. Family Home Improvements describes roof construction beginning with property protection, debris-catching tarps, hazard marking, and safety planning.

Step	What It Means
1. Set Up	Crew arrives, confirms work areas, places protection, and marks hazard areas.
2. Tear-Off or Prep	Old roofing materials or damaged areas are removed as needed so the roof system can be evaluated.
3. Decking and Wood Review	Damaged or decayed wood is identified and addressed according to the agreed scope or change-order process.
4. Underlayment and Flashing	Protective layers and detail areas are installed to help manage water.
5. Shingle Installation	Composite shingles and accessories are installed according to the roof design and manufacturer requirements.
6. Ventilation and Accessories	Ridge, vents, skylights, solar-related areas, and other roof penetrations are handled carefully.
7. Cleanup	Debris is removed, nails are collected, and the site is cleaned.
8. Final Review	The contractor should review the completed work, answer questions, and provide warranty information.

Project communication tip

Ask who your point of contact is before construction begins. You should know who to call if you see a problem, have a schedule question, or need clarification during the project.

16. Final Walkthrough Checklist

Before the project is complete, walk through the job with the contractor.

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Roof work appears complete from accessible viewing areas | ☐ Driveway, patios, and walkways were cleaned |
| ☐ Shingle color and style match the agreement | ☐ A nail/debris sweep was completed |
| ☐ Ridge, hip, and edge details appear complete | ☐ Landscaping and exterior areas were checked |
| ☐ Flashing details were reviewed | ☐ Warranty information was provided |
| ☐ Ventilation work was reviewed | ☐ Final photos were provided or discussed |
| ☐ Skylights, vents, and roof accessories were reviewed | ☐ Any remaining touch-ups were documented |
| ☐ Gutters and downspouts were checked, if included | ☐ I know who to contact for service |
| ☐ Old materials were removed | ☐ I understand maintenance recommendations |

Ask Before Final Payment

Is the full scope complete?

Are all change orders resolved?

Do I have warranty paperwork?

Are there any photos of hidden areas or repairs?

Is there anything I should watch for after the first rain?

17. Warranty and Maintenance Checklist

A roof warranty is only useful when you understand what it covers and how to request service.

Warranty Questions

- | | |
|--|---|
| ☐ Manufacturer warranty explained | ☐ Transferability explained |
| ☐ Labor or workmanship warranty explained | ☐ Warranty registration explained |
| ☐ Warranty length provided in writing | ☐ Service request process explained |
| ☐ Exclusions explained | ☐ Maintenance responsibilities explained |

Maintenance Checklist

- | | |
|--|---|
| ☐ Keep gutters clean | ☐ Watch for missing or damaged shingles after wind |
| ☐ Trim branches away from the roof | ☐ Schedule professional inspections when concerns appear |
| ☐ Remove debris from valleys and roof edges when safe | ☐ Address small issues before they become bigger repairs |
| ☐ Check ceilings after heavy rain | ☐ Keep roof records, warranties, invoices, and photos together |

Maintenance reminder

Do not pressure-wash shingles or climb on the roof without proper training and safety equipment. When in doubt, call a roofing professional.

18. Emergency Leak Action Plan

If you notice an active leak, focus first on safety and reducing interior damage. Do not climb onto the roof during rain or unsafe conditions.

Immediate Steps

- ☐ Move people and pets away from wet electrical areas
- ☐ Place a bucket or container under dripping water
- ☐ Move furniture and valuables away from the leak
- ☐ Use towels to protect flooring where safe
- ☐ Take photos and videos of the interior damage
- ☐ Write down when the leak started and weather conditions
- ☐ Call a professional roofing company for help
- ☐ If damage is severe, contact your insurance company for guidance

Do Not

- ☐ Do not climb onto a wet roof
- ☐ Do not touch wet electrical fixtures
- ☐ Do not ignore ceiling bulging or sagging
- ☐ Do not assume a small ceiling stain means a small roof problem
- ☐ Do not wait through multiple storms before calling for help
- ☐ Do not attempt risky temporary repairs without proper safety equipment

Why quick action matters

When a leak is visible inside the home, water has already traveled through parts of the roof system. A prompt inspection can help prevent additional damage to decking, framing, insulation, ceilings, and walls.

19. Solar, Skylights, and Roof Accessories

Family Home Improvements notes roofing experience around skylights, solar panels, and other roof items. These areas need careful planning because they create additional roof penetrations, flashing details, and coordination issues.

Tell Your Contractor About

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Existing solar panels | ☐ Satellite dishes or antennas |
| ☐ Planned solar installation | ☐ Chimneys or decorative roof features |
| ☐ Existing skylights | ☐ HVAC or exhaust penetrations |
| ☐ Planned skylight replacement | ☐ Patio covers attached near roof areas |
| ☐ Roof vents | ☐ Future exterior remodeling plans |

Questions to Ask

Will solar panels need to be removed before roofing work?

Who coordinates solar panel removal and reinstallation?

Are skylight flashing details included?

Should old skylights be replaced during the roof project?

How will roof vents and penetrations be sealed?

Will any accessory work affect the roof warranty?

20. Homeowner Notes Page

Use this page during roofing appointments.

Contractor name:

Representative:

Phone:

Appointment date:

Roof recommendation:

Shingle brand and style:

Color:

Estimated timeline:

Warranty:

Total estimate:

What I liked:

Concerns or questions:

Follow-up needed:

21. Schedule Your Free Roofing Estimate

Choosing the right roofing company does not have to be confusing.

Family Home Improvements helps Southern California homeowners with composite shingle new roofs, re-roofs, roof repairs, inspections, estimates, and professional roof construction. The company roofing page explains that the process includes inspection, consultation, a written estimate, and construction with attention to safety and cleanup.

During Your Roofing Consultation, You Can Ask About

- | | |
|--|---|
| ☐ Repair vs. re-roof vs. full replacement | ☐ Gutters, drainage, and ventilation |
| ☐ Composite shingle options | ☐ Skylights, solar panels, and roof accessories |
| ☐ Roof leaks and visible damage | ☐ Permits, timeline, warranties, and financing options |
| ☐ Underlayment, framework, and wood repair concerns | ☐ A written estimate for your home |

Ready to get started?

Contact Family Home Improvements today to schedule your free roofing estimate.

Call: (562) 464-0684

Website: familyhomeimprovements.net

Source notes: This guide was prepared as a homeowner education and lead magnet document for Family Home Improvements. Company-specific service details were based on the Family Home Improvements roofing page and the roofing video topic provided by the user. Homeowners should rely on an in-home inspection and written estimate for final recommendations and pricing.

Website source: familyhomeimprovements.net/roofing/

Video source: YouTube video titled '18 Most Common Roofing Questions Customers Ask'