



Asphalt roofing: The best choice for your home

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You have a large number of options when it comes to the style, material, and color of your next roof. Materials such as metal, clay and concrete tile, slate and cedar shake roofing are all viable alternatives in the marketplace.

If that is true, why do asphalt roofs continue to be the most popular choice, every year?

There are many reasons. But the majority can be summarized into:

1. durability,
2. versatility,
3. sustainability,
4. affordability and of course,
5. aesthetics.

Asphalt roofing materials excel in all of these categories while also offering added benefits that are frequently overlooked.

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How do Asphalt roofs compare to the rest?

What about clay roofs?

Many homeowners can appreciate the nice look that clay roofing tiles can provide. Generally, they are available in a variety of style and colors. One big downside is the weight, however. Most homes were not built with clay tile roofs in mind. Often, an architect or engineer will have to be hired to see if the roof structure can bear the added weight of clay tiles, and make recommendations to reinforce the structure if necessary.

Clay roofing tiles also lack the sealing ability that assures the water-resistant performance of asphalt shingles. Clay tiles rely heavily on the roofing underlayment, which may be deteriorated, especially after many years, to prevent water infiltration.

Clay tile is also highly labor intensive and installation costs can be more than double that of asphalt shingles. Tiles also absorb moisture, providing a place for algae to grow and has poor freeze/thaw capabilities, tending to lead to cracks in cold weather.

	<i>Asphalt</i>	<i>Metal</i>	<i>Clay Tile</i>	<i>Concrete Tile</i>	<i>Slate</i>	<i>Cedar Shake</i>
Color range	X	X		X		
Range of styles	X	X				
EnergyStar compliant options	X	X				
Natural look	X		X		X	X
Ease of installation	X					
Lowest installed Cost	X					
Best life-cycle cost	X					
Consistent quality	X	X				
No deck reinforcement required	X	X				

Okay, what about metal roofs?

Metal roofs are fantastic when it comes to durability and sustainability, but they rank far lower in the affordability scale when compared to asphalt roofs. Metal roof materials vary and therefore so do costs, but on average is more than twice the price of the more highly popular asphalt shingle.

Metal roofs require more complicated installation procedures which adds to the price tag. Many metal roof systems often require a coating, making metal roofs less attractive to the homeowner looking for a low-maintenance roof option.

Metal roofs can trap heat and make your home feel like an oven on warm days. Also, the denting and noise from hail or other weather events can be a nuisance to a homeowner who selected a metal roofing option.

How do asphalt shingles look compared to metal roofs?

The main reason asphalt shingles are so popular is that it is so versatile aesthetically. Asphalt shingles come in a broad selection of styles and colors, asphalt shingle roofs provide a natural appearance and can even match a specific look such as cedar or slate.

Metal panels have far fewer architectural choices and are at a much higher price point than the most expensive architectural, asphalt shingles.

Recently, metal panels have been made with granules to simulate the popular asphalt shingle appearance that we are used to seeing. By just selecting an asphalt shingle, however, you can avoid the rust and discoloration that other roofing materials can be susceptible to due to weather and wear and tear, along with the higher price tag. Algae resistant asphalt shingles are the industry standard today and are available in most color schemes.

I thought there were maintenance advantages to metal roofs...

There are some, but there are disadvantages as well, such as:

1. Thermal expansion and contraction may cause warping.
2. Metal panels are not as walkable and cannot support walking loads easily without bending.

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3. There is a lack of local contractors in many areas that can work on your metal roof.
4. Condensation accumulation issues can arise, such as rust, discoloration and mold.

What about environmental impact?

Recycling asphalt shingles is much more common today than in years past, making them a sustainable option. Also, many asphalt shingles meet reflectivity standards for “cool” roof systems, which reduces your cooling costs throughout the life of the roof. Proper selection of the right roofing material can reduce long-term costs for you and the environment.



What is more widely available?

In more regions of the US, asphalt shingle production is much more common than other roofing material, covering a wide geography. This results in less transportation and lower price. Since shingles are plentiful and less expensive overall when compared to other materials, it is easier to find a supplier and qualified installers (like Pro Home Improvement).

With aesthetics, versatility, reliability and affordability among the highest factors for roofing material selection, it is obvious why asphalt shingles continue to beat its roofing materials competitors every single year.



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