

PLUS ULTRA
ROOFING

FREE HOMEOWNER GUIDE



10 COSTLY ROOFING MISTAKES

Every Homeowner Must Avoid
Before Replacing Their Roof

Learn how to choose the right contractor
and protect your home for decades

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Understanding Your Roofing Needs

Replacing a roof is a major project for any homeowner. It protects your home, your belongings, and your family from the elements. When done correctly, a new roof should last decades. When done poorly, problems can start much sooner than most people expect.

Before jumping into quotes or materials, the first step is understanding the condition of your current roof and what you actually need from a replacement.

Start With the Condition of Your Current Roof

Most asphalt shingle roofs last around 20 to 25 years depending on installation quality, ventilation, and weather exposure. In Atlantic Canada, roofs take significant punishment from snow, wind, and temperature swings, making regular inspection essential.

Common signs your roof may be reaching the end of its life:

- Curling or lifting shingles
- Heavy granule loss
- Missing or cracked shingles
- Dark streaking or aging shingles
- Interior leaks or water stains in the attic or ceiling

"I've seen many homeowners believe their roof was fine until a proper inspection revealed the shingles were extremely brittle or that flashing around chimneys and vents had failed. Catching problems early gives homeowners more time to plan rather than being forced into emergency repairs."

Understand That Some Problems Are Hidden

Certain issues cannot be fully seen until the old roof is removed. In older homes around Moncton and surrounding areas, contractors frequently find:

- Rotted roof decking
- Multiple layers of old shingles
- Ventilation problems in the attic

A good contractor will explain this possibility ahead of time so there are no surprises during the project.

Do Not Forget Ventilation

Poor ventilation can trap heat and moisture inside the attic, leading to mold growth, rotted decking, higher energy costs, and premature roof failure. Roof replacement is the perfect opportunity to correct ventilation issues and improve the overall system.

Establish a Realistic Budget

A realistic budget lets you compare estimates confidently and helps prevent unnecessary stress if additional repairs are discovered. Be aware that extremely low quotes can indicate that certain components of the roofing system are being skipped. A proper roofing system includes more than just shingles.

Types of Roofing Materials Explained

When it comes to roofing materials, homeowners today have a diverse range of options. The right choice will protect your investment and enhance your home’s appearance for decades.

MATERIAL	PROS	CONS
Asphalt Shingles	Cost-effective, wide colour range, easy installation, proven in harsh winters	Shorter lifespan than metal or slate
Metal Roofing	Exceptional durability, energy-efficient, low maintenance	Higher upfront cost
Wood Shakes	Rustic charm, natural aesthetic	Requires regular sealing and maintenance to prevent rot
Slate & Tile	Timeless elegance, 100+ year lifespan	High cost, complex installation
Synthetic	Mimics traditional styles, lightweight, eco-friendly	Newer product, long-term data still emerging

Key insight: The most important factor is not always the brand or type of material. The quality of the installation is what ultimately determines how well the roof performs over time.

Beyond the material itself, the importance of a complete roofing system cannot be overstated. Ventilation, insulation, and roofing material all work in harmony to protect your home. When selecting materials, also consider your neighbourhood’s style and potential resale value.

Why You Should Always Get 3–5 Roofing Quotes

When it comes to replacing your roof, getting multiple quotes isn't just a smart idea, it's essential. By obtaining three to five quotes you gain a well-rounded understanding of the true market price for roofing services and reveal what features are standard versus upsold extras.

A homeowner named Sarah accepted the first quote she received without comparison. As the project progressed she discovered hidden costs related to rotting wood and inadequate ventilation. Skipping the comparison process led to significant unplanned expenses.

What to look for across your quotes:

- Scope of work — is a full tear-off included or just an overlay?
- Materials specified — brand, grade, and warranty terms
- Timeline and payment schedule
- Cleanup plan and debris removal
- Workmanship warranty length

A higher price tag might feel intimidating, but it can indicate superior materials or more experienced labour. Equally, a suspiciously low quote can indicate shortcuts or poor-quality materials. Aim to collect all quotes within the same week so assessments are fresh and comparable.

Questions Every Homeowner Should Ask a Roofing Contractor

1. What materials do you recommend, and why?

Reveals the contractor's knowledge and whether they tailor recommendations to your situation.

2. Can you provide references from recent projects?

Hearing from past clients gives real-world insight into reliability and workmanship quality.

3. How do you handle unexpected problems discovered mid-project?

A trustworthy contractor will have a transparent plan for cost and scope changes.

4. Will you handle all required permits and licenses?

Compliance with local codes is non-negotiable and protects your home's resale value.

5. What warranties do you offer on workmanship?

Manufacturer warranties cover materials; workmanship warranties protect against installation errors.

6. What is your safety protocol on-site?

A professional crew prioritises safety for both workers and your property.

7. Who is my point of contact throughout the project?

Clear communication channels prevent misunderstandings and reduce homeowner anxiety.

8. What is your timeline, and what causes delays?

Sets accountability and helps you plan around the disruption.

9. Can you provide proof of insurance?

Protects you from liability should any accidents occur during the project.

10. How will you protect my property during installation?

Recognizing Warning Signs Your Roof Needs Replacement

Your roof is the ultimate protector of your home. Recognising the warning signs early gives you time to plan a replacement rather than scrambling after an emergency.

- **Curling, Cracked, or Missing Shingles** — Even a handful of damaged shingles signal the roof's protective layer is failing. Small issues escalate quickly if left unaddressed.
- **Water Stains or Mold Inside** — Stains on ceilings or walls indicate the roof is already allowing water penetration. Untreated water damage compounds rapidly.
- **Sagging Areas** — A drooping roofline suggests structural concerns beneath the surface that require immediate attention.
- **Age — 20+ Years** — Most roofs have a lifespan of 20 to 30 years. If yours is approaching that mark, budget for replacement before problems force your hand.
- **Significant Granule Loss** — Granules in gutters indicate shingles are nearing end-of-life and losing protection against UV and weather.
- **Damaged or Missing Flashing** — Rusted or absent flashing around chimneys and vents is a leading cause of leaks.
- **Moss or Algae Growth** — Organic growth indicates moisture retention that threatens the roof's structural integrity over time.
- **Spiking Energy Bills** — Unexplained increases can signal poor insulation or ventilation tied to roof deterioration.
- **Visible Daylight in the Attic** — Light coming through roof boards is a definitive sign that replacement cannot wait.

After significant weather events, always schedule a professional inspection. An expert can identify issues a homeowner might miss and catch problems before they become costly.

Hidden Problems Discovered During Roof Replacement

When you decide to replace your roof, it's easy to focus on what you can see. But sometimes it's what you can't see that leads to an avalanche of unexpected costs.

Rotted Wood Decking

Once shingles are stripped away, the decking beneath may be crumbling. This compromises the entire structure and must be replaced before new roofing is installed.

Multiple Layers of Old Shingles

Discovering stacked shingle layers complicates removal and inflates costs. Each layer needs careful removal to avoid damaging the decking below.

Poor Ventilation and Mold

Ventilation issues in older homes often go undetected for years. Once uncovered, mold remediation can cost thousands on top of the roofing project.

Failed Flashing

Flashing around chimneys, vents, and valleys may look intact from the outside but be corroded or improperly sealed underneath.

Before installation, ask your contractor to make exploratory cuts to check decking condition. This simple step surfaces hidden problems early and prevents surprises mid-project.

When hidden issues are discovered, effective communication with your contractor is essential. Transparency about added scope and cost keeps the project on track and the relationship intact. Always document discovered issues through photos and written reports.

Understanding Roofing Contracts and Scope of Work

One of the most critical steps in any roofing project is defining the scope of work upfront. Vague contract language might sound harmless but can lead to costly misunderstandings.

What a Solid Contract Must Include

- **Clearly defined scope of work** — Full tear-off vs. overlay, decking replacement conditions, flashing work
- **Payment schedule** — Tied to project milestones, not arbitrary dates
- **Project timeline** — Start date, estimated completion, and penalties for delays
- **Material specifications** — Brand, grade, colour, and warranty terms for every component
- **Permit and code compliance** — Contractor is responsible for pulling all required permits
- **Cleanup plan** — Daily site tidying, nail collection, and final debris removal
- **Contingency clause** — How unexpected issues (e.g. rotted decking) will be handled and priced
- **Workmanship warranty** — Duration and what it covers beyond the manufacturer warranty

Red flag: If a contractor provides vague information or resists putting details in writing, that's a clear signal to walk away.

Preparing Your Home for Installation

A little preparation before your roofing crew arrives makes the project safer, faster, and less stressful for everyone.

- Walk the property and identify gardens, outdoor furniture, or vehicles that need protection.
- Communicate with your contractor about any prized plants or fragile landscaping.
- Secure or relocate pets — roofing is loud and disorienting for animals.
- Create a designated parking and material storage area for the crew.
- Clear all pathways to the home's exterior and any gate or backyard access.
- Confirm the cleanup and debris-removal plan before work starts.
- Get a daily schedule so you know when crews arrive and what to expect each day.
- Discuss the contingency plan for rain or snow.
- Remove wall decorations inside the home near the work area — vibrations can cause items to fall.
- Keep communication lines open throughout — flag concerns early before they become problems.

Trust the process. Your contractor is there to help. Their experience is invaluable, and a collaborative approach leads to the smoothest possible installation.

Can Roofs Be Installed in Winter?

(Roofing Myths)

Myth: Roofing work stops completely in winter.

Fact: Reputable contractors install roofs year-round using cold-weather adhesives and flexible underlayment designed to perform in freezing temperatures.

Myth: Winter-installed roofs are more likely to leak.

Fact: A well-installed roof performs equally well regardless of season. Outcome depends on contractor skill, not the calendar.

Myth: You have to wait until spring to get a good price.

Fact: Lower contractor demand in winter often translates to better pricing and faster scheduling.

The real challenge with winter roofing isn't temperature, it's precipitation. Snow and rain on the work surface create safety hazards and can delay progress. Ask your contractor specifically how they handle winter scheduling and site safety.

Why Workmanship Matters More Than Manufacturer Warranties

Statistics show that roughly 80% of roof failures stem from installation errors rather than defective materials. A warranty is only as good as the installation behind it.

Many homeowners focus on manufacturer warranties when selecting a contractor. But a warranty is only as useful as the workmanship it is applied to. A 50-year manufacturer warranty will not cover failures caused by improper installation, and those are the most common failures.

What Manufacturer Warranties Typically Cover

- Material defects (not labour)
- Product replacement, often without covering labour costs
- Voids if installation does not follow manufacturer specifications

What Workmanship Warranties Cover

- Contractor's installation quality
- Labour costs if repairs are needed due to installation error
- Issues like improper flashing, inadequate ventilation, and poor sealing

When evaluating contractors, ask about their training, certifications, and how they handle warranty claims. A contractor who proudly stands behind their workmanship with a multi-year warranty is demonstrating real confidence in their craft. At Plus Ultra Roofing, we pride ourselves on being that trusted local expert.

How to Inspect a Finished Roof and Protect Your Investment

Once your new roof is installed, a thorough walkthrough ensures everything was done to standard and sets the baseline for long-term maintenance.

Visual inspection from the ground

Use binoculars to scan for misaligned shingles, uneven surfaces, or missing components.

Attic check

Look for water stains, dark spots, mold, or daylight visible through boards.

Flashing inspection

Confirm flashing around chimneys, vents, and skylights is properly seated and sealed.

Gutter and downspout check

Ensure gutters are clear and water flows freely away from the foundation.

Review warranty documentation

Understand what is covered, for how long, and how to file a claim.

Photo documentation

Photograph the completed roof immediately, this record is invaluable if issues arise later.

Request contractor photos

Reputable contractors use tools like CompanyCam to provide transparency and proof of proper installation.

Schedule a follow-up inspection

Book a professional inspection 3–6 months after installation to catch any early issues.

Ongoing habits matter too: avoid walking on the roof unnecessarily, clear debris and branches regularly, and learn the seasonal maintenance needs for your specific climate.

Finding a Trusted Local Roofing Contractor

Not all contractors are equal. Thorough research upfront saves you from costly mistakes and ensures the investment in your roof delivers decades of performance.

1. Search local social media groups

Facebook groups and neighbourhood apps surface honest, real-time homeowner feedback.

2. Read online reviews critically

Look for trends, not just star ratings. Consistent complaints about communication or workmanship are red flags.

3. Verify licensing and insurance

Request proof. This protects you from liability and confirms the contractor meets local legal requirements.

4. Ask for references

Speak directly with recent clients about reliability, quality, and how surprises were handled.

5. Check with the Better Business Bureau

Reveals unresolved complaints or dispute history.

6. Schedule in-person consultations

Punctuality, preparation, and communication style in person predict how they'll perform on-site.

7. Evaluate proposals in detail

A solid proposal includes scope of work, materials, timeline, and payment schedule. Vague bids are a warning sign.

8. Understand both warranty types

Manufacturer warranty covers materials; workmanship warranty covers the installation. Both matter.

9. Be cautious of the lowest bid

A significantly lower price often means corners being cut or inexperience. Quality roofing is an investment.

10. Trust your instincts

If something feels off about a contractor's demeanour or terms, explore other options.

Ready to replace your roof the right way?

At Plus Ultra Roofing, we combine expert craftsmanship with full transparency, from your first quote through final inspection.

Contact us today for a free assessment.

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