

“Anyone can hammer shingles down, it's only a roof, right?” This roof is made of 11 major components (at least 9 of which always require replacing), but these components vary greatly in price and quality. Some can void shingle warranty, which do not cover installation costs anyway (ask any supplier if they've ever seen a successful material warranty claim).

If the roofer's paperwork is not in order you are liable for his safety and any damage to even your neighbors' property. Your roof life is *directly affected* by how it is installed. If the roofer *cannot* show you what components they use and why, if you have enough venting, and give you a warranty they can honor – it would be wise to keep on looking. In such a high turnover industry, below is what to look for on your quote and in a roofing contractor.

01 Components

The cheapest quote usually means the cheapest roof components as well, if they even replace *all* components. Eaves treatment ranges from \$50 to over \$100 a roll, and others substitute proper ice and water membrane with tar paper. Cheap ice and water will deteriorate like tar paper and cannot be used in valleys. Venting using cheap square-top vents leak if under snow (if installed in front of a gable where snow accumulates); tops can actually be pried off in high winds as well. If you are offered shingle underlay, what do they use? Even though tar paper is cheapest, it can actually *reduce* shingle life .

02 Shingles

A knowledgeable roofer will explain your many shingle choices and experiences with different manufacturers and types. If you have questions regarding warranty they should be clearly answered (labor versus material coverage). Lastly, you should have pricing for different options to compare which material is best in your case.

03 Venting

This is one of the most *determining factors* in roof's life: improper venting deteriorates the shingle by heating it from underneath, causing ice dams in the winter, resulting in structural rot to your home. The roofer should explain if you have enough venting, how much you need, and present your options. It should not cost a fortune to add vents seeing that mechanical venting requirements are very rare. Shingle warranties are based on proper venting.

04 Liability

Does your contractor carry workman's compensation and proper training certification? If the crew is not properly covered, you are personally liable for their safety as they are on your property. In Ontario they must show you a WSIB Clearance Certificate. If they do not show you such a document, they should not be on your roof. They should also be able to show you proof of Fall Arrest Certification as part of the proper roofing safety training. Do they have liability protection and insurance against damage to you

or your neighbor's property? Again, you are liable when your roofer is not properly bonded.

05 Waste Removal

One of the largest parts of the project is safely removing the tones of shingles and nails off your roof into the dump. Does the roofer use a dump trailer or a bin (a bin is more likely to damage your driveway)? Do they magnetically remove nails from your grass?

06 Warranty

Will your contractor give you written warranties for labor and materials? You should know clearly what you are covered for, and the duration. Your Workmanship and Shingle warranty slips should be properly looked after.

07 Reputation

Does the company have a solid reputation for excellence? How long has your contractor been in business? Do they have an office? Without a proven track record you have no way of gauging the likely-hood of the roofer returning to service your requests, or being around for the years they write you a warranty.

08 Reliability

Can you reach your contractor 24 hours a day, 7 days a week? Ask for references. Do they stand behind their work and service their customers?

