

## A CHECKLIST ...

**a homeowner can use to quickly evaluate and compare the qualifications of a roofing contractor, particularly for an asphalt shingle roof.**

**The more questions answered yes, then more than likely the better the quality of the contractor and the roof.**

A consumer being asked by a roofing contractor to rely solely on the contractor's word-of-mouth reputation qualifications, should sound alarm bells and **BUYER BEWARE** (*Caveat Emptor*)!

A homeowner's roof is one of the most important components of one's home, as well as one of the more costly one's to replace.

There are many roof contractors who you can select from who you will need to trust to install a reliable roof, at a competitive price, safely, cleanly and in a timely manner.

As in any trade, there are the **good**, the **bad** and the **ugly** roofing contractors. Sorting out which is which is often times not an easy thing to do, or the homeowner just does not have the time to do all the research to assess the quality of a contractor.

This **CHECKLIST** can help with that research.

It is always useful to consult with at least two contractors (ideally 3) to gauge whether or not the price is right. Competition brings out the best in folks.

To further determine if a price is competitive, consult HomeAdvisor, "*How much does it cost to replace or install a roof*?" (<https://www.homeadvisor.com/cost/roofing/install-a-roof/>), which provides guidance of typical range of national and State roof replacement costs (labor and material). A comprehensive roofing cost estimator is available from me in another blog.

Contractors talk about labor and material guarantees and/or warranties, which should be in writing. Typically, what this means is that ...

- The manufacturer of the roofing material provides the warranty for the material which the contractor passes on to the homeowner – which is probably enforceable if the material fails to perform as warranted. Material manufacturers are big companies with deep pockets.
- Labor warranty is less sure. It is really only as good as the contractor is willing to protect its reputation in the community and make good on its labor warranty if the roof installation did not perform as warranted.

**HIRING A 'GOOD' ROOFING CONTRACTOR GENERALLY MEANS  
WARRANTIES WILL BE HONORED.**

As an added feature to this CHECKLIST, there is provided a summary explanation why a CHECKLIST question is important, since being an informed and knowledgeable homeowner and consumer are powerful tools to possess.

**ROOFING CONTRACTOR QUALIFICATION CHECKLIST**

**QUESTIONS FOR THE CONTRACTOR TO ANSWER**

**PRIMARILY FOR ASPHALT SHINGLE ROOFS**

**[NOTE: QUESTIONS HIGHLIGHTED IN RED IF ANSWERED**

**'YES' BY A ROOFING CONTRACTOR, INDICATES THE CONTRACTOR HAS ADOPTED BEST PRACTICE PERFORMANCE COMMITMENTS]**

CATEGORY	QUESTION	PURPOSE
SAFETY	Are OSHA safety regulations followed (particularly in regard to use of ladders and protection against falls when working at height)?	Safety first is very important. Many roofing contractors don't follow OSHA safety rules nor require their workers to wear PPE. Safety sometimes requires more time to do a job which a contractor may wish to avoid...since time is money
	Do roof installers wear safety fall harnesses when working on the roof?	
	Are roof installers required to wear Personal Protective Equipment – PPE (such as hard hats, gloves, eye protection, hearing protection, toe protected non-slip shoes) when appropriate to do so?	
CODES	Will any required permits, such as building permits, be obtained by roof contractor?	Building Codes must be followed...most roofing contractors do this. Building permit must be posted at the work site.
	Will applicable roofing building codes and regulations be followed?	
	Are all necessary licenses in full force and effect (particularly if a roofing license is required)?	
	Have there been any written non-compliance citations issued to contractor by relevant government officials for not complying with applicable roofing codes and regulations?	
QUALIFICATIONS	Is contractor a member of the National Roofing Contractors Association (NRCA)?	A contractor having industry certifications gives a high degree of confidence the contractor work is good quality. A contractor wishes to protect its certification by honoring the certification requirements.
	Does contractor have a current NRCA ProCertified Roof Installer certification?	
	Does contractor follow NRCA suggested roofing guidelines?	
	Is contractor a factory-certified contractor for GAF?	
	Does contractor follow GAF or Owens Corning or Certainteed suggested roofing guidelines?	

CATEGORY	QUESTION	PURPOSE
	Is contractor an Owens Corning Platinum Preferred Contractor?	
	Is contractor a CertainTeed Select Shingle Master roofer?	
	Does contractor hold any other certifications? (if so, list them)	
	Has contractor been in business less than 5 years?	
	Has contractor been in business less than 10 years?	
	Has contractor been in business in excess of 10 years?	
<b>CONSUMER</b>	Is contractor recommended by Angie’s list?	A contractor high rating by an independent third party is an indication of a good contractor
	Is contractor rated by HomeAdvisor? (if so, what is it)	
	Is contractor rated by Better Business Bureau? (if so, what is it)	
	Does contractor have a Facebook rating? (if so, what is it)	
	Does contractor have a Google rating? (if so, what is it)	
	Is contractor recommended by BestPickReport?	
	Is contractor rated or recommended by any other third party agency? (if so, what is it)	
	Is contractor currently involved in a roofing project?	Checking on actual projects that have had the test of time is a good way to test the qualification of a contractor.
	If contractor is currently involved in a roofing project, may the homeowner conduct a drive-by inspection? (if yes, provide location of project and time a drive-by is allowed)	
	Will the contractor provide at least two references of prior roofing projects that are at least three years old, that the homeowner may contact as references? (if yes, provide contact details)	
	Is contractor registered to do business in the State and county where the roofing project is located?	How a contractor is legally organized indicates whether it is a ‘Mom and Pop’ operation. Also, if there is claim against a contractor for performance failure of roofing material or labour installation, any legal action is brought against the company – which may not have ‘deep pockets’ from which a successful claim could be collected.
	Is the contractor organized as a limited liability company- LLC? (if yes, in what State is it organized)	
	Is the contractor organized as a corporation? (if yes, in what State is it organized)	
	Is the contractor organized as a partnership? (if yes, in what State is it organized)	
	Is the contractor organized as a limited liability partnership - LLP? (if yes, in what State is it organized)	
Is the contractor organized as a sole proprietorship? (if yes, in what State does it do business)		
Is the contractor organized as any other legal entity? (if yes, what legal entity is it organized and in what State is it organized)		
Does the contractor sponsor a website to advertise its business and its qualifications?	A contractor taking the time and spending funds for a website are	

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		generally traits of a good contractor.
	Does the contractor have an email contact for communicating with the homeowner? (if so, what is it)	A contractor allowing good communication contact with a homeowner is an indication of a good contractor.
	Does the contractor have a business phone number contact for communicating with the homeowner? (if so, what is it)	
	Does the contractor have a mobile phone number contact for communicating with the homeowner? (if so, what is it)	
	Does the contractor have a fax number contact for communicating with the homeowner? (if so, what is it)	
	Does the contractor have a business office location that the homeowner can visit? (if yes, what is the address)	A very high quality contractor will generally have a physical office address and warehouse the homeowner can visit. Many contractors work out of the back of their truck or home office or give an address which is really only a postal service box and not an actual physical business address. Ask to meet the contractor at their office and see what response you get?
	Is cost estimate a lump sum price, inclusive of all costs, including taxes, insurance, permits?	No hidden costs, full disclosure
	Is the cost of any unused material refunded to the consumer (such as unused decking material)?	Typically, the consumer pays for roofing materials whether they are used or not. A contractor who retains unused material can inventory that material, use it on another job and most likely charge a new consumer again for the already paid for material. In some circumstances may offer a 'discount' for a new consumer as an incentive to do a job and the discount being

CATEGORY	QUESTION	PURPOSE
		based on the already paid for inventoried material.
<b>WARRANTIES</b>	<p>Does the contractor provide at least 10-year guarantee/warranty on labor?</p> <p><b>Does the contractor provide at least 20-year guarantee/warranty on labor?</b></p> <p>Does contractor/roofing material vendor provide at least 15-year guarantee/warranty on material?</p> <p>Does contractor/roofing material vendor provide at least 30-year guarantee/warranty on shingles?</p> <p><b>Does contractor/roofing material vendor provide at least 50-year guarantee/warranty on shingles?</b></p> <p><b>Does contractor have in force a comprehensive liability insurance policy? (if yes, provide a copy of the summary of the policy)</b></p> <p>Does contractor provide any performance bonds?</p> <p>Does contractor offer any other form of performance security? (if yes, please provide details)</p> <p><b>Does the contractor provide written guarantees/warranties to the homeowner for labor and material?</b></p> <p>Always ask for roofing contractor Insurance Certificate and check if it is current. Many insurance carriers have the roofing trade listed at the highest rate of uninsured subcontractor additional premium percentage penalty, since it is probably the most dangerous job in residential construction projects.</p>	<p>Guarantees for labor and material must be in writing.</p> <p>Material guarantees are from the product manufacturer and passed on to the homeowner.</p> <p>Labor guarantee for installation is from the contractor and generally only as good as the reputation of the contractor.</p> <p>So Buyer Beware!</p> <p>The contractor <b>MUST</b> have some form of comprehensive liability insurance (ask to see the policy). If someone gets hurt on the job the homeowner wants that insurance to cover a claim.</p> <p>Difference between a 'Warranty' and a 'Guarantee'..</p> <p>A <b>warranty generally</b> has a time limit, such as 12 or 24 months, but it may be extended to a longer period like 36 or 48 months.</p> <p>Conversely, a <b>guarantee</b> isn't time-bound and can't be extended. One way to think of it is that a <b>guarantee is</b> more general and a <b>warranty is</b> a more</p>

CATEGORY	QUESTION	PURPOSE
		specific and legal term. Contractors prefer use of warranty, homeowner prefers use of guarantee.
<b>INSTALLATION</b>	Does contractor remove old roof material down to decking and responsible for disposal in approved waste disposal site?	Disposal cost at local waste dumps are going up because of more demand.
	Will contractor clean up the worksite, use a dropped nail magnet retriever, and repair any collateral damage caused by the roofing installation, including cleaning up of tar marks left on home siding and walls caused by dropped shingles?	When shingles are removed, some will fall and skid against the side of the house leaving tar marks. These marks should be cleaned off as part of the cleaning process. Worksite clean up includes picking up debris and nail magnet pick up of adjacent neighboring property not just the homeowner property.
	If after roof material is removed, there is discovered damage or rotting of decking or other structural component, will the contractor repair such damage? (if yes, what is the extent of the repair, specifications followed and is such subject to an additional charge?	Surprises can be detected after an old roof is removed, especially water damage to roof decking. The contractor should be required to repair a certain amount of damage (such as up to 3 4x8 sheets of decking).
	Does contractor repair any fascia or soffit damage as part of its estimate?	Normally contractors do not repair fascia or soffit.
	Will contractor take precautions to avoid any damage (especially from falling objects) to adjacent neighbor property?	
	Does contractor provide temporary protection of exposed roofing should a weather event temporarily halt the roof project before it is completed?	
	Is 'D' style drip edge installed?	Some contractor's use the least costly and

CATEGORY	QUESTION	PURPOSE
		lower quality drip edge - not as good as channeling water away from the roof. Use at least 'D' style drip edge.
	Is drip edge installed under the underlayment on the eaves?	Normal practice
	Is drip edge installed on top of the underlayment and ice/water shield on the rakes?	Some contractors nail drip edge down on rakes first because it is quicker instead of over the underlayment. The better practice is over the underlayment and ice/water barrier to help hold down such barriers in high winds.
	Is ice/water barrier shield installed on the valleys?	Normal practice
	Is ice/water barrier shield installed on the rakes?	Ice/water barrier protection on rakes and eaves is normally not done, so homeowner has to ask for it. A much better roof. (Normal practice in cold environments)
	Is ice/water barrier shield installed in eaves?	
	Is asphalt/fiberglass underlayment used? (if yes, what weight)	Cheapest underlayment available; comes in different weights (15 or 30 pounds); if used always use higher weight (costs a little more)
	Is synthetic underlayment used?	The better underlayment though a little more costly
	Are all manufacturer's recommended installation procedures for material product followed? (if no, what are the variances)	
	Are starter shingles used?	Better quality starter shingles (designed for the application) should be used and not use regular shingles turned upside down to substitute as a starter shingle. Starter
	Are roof shingles turned upside down and used as starter shingles?	



CATEGORY	QUESTION	PURPOSE
		shingles are a little more expensive.
	Are ridge shingles (not regular shingle cut to fit) used on all ridges?	Better quality ridge shingles (designed for the application) should be used on all ridges and hips and not use regular shingles cut to substitute as ridge shingle. Ridge shingles are a little more expensive.
	Are ridge shingles (not regular shingle cut to fit) used on all hips?	
	Is the minimum length of any cut shingle, particularly on the rakes, greater than 12 inches?	Require a minimum of 12 to 18 inch length shingle. Some contractors come to the end of laying down shingles and at the rake will nail down a short piece shingle (4 inches or so). Such short shingles are not very wind resistant and can blow up. A bigger shingle is more likely to stay in place in high winds.
	Will shingles be installed with at least 6 nails?	6 nails are much better though longer to install
	Will short shingles be installed with at least 3 nails?	3 nails insures short shingles will not blow up. (1 or 2 nails are inferior).
	Will shingles withstand 130 mph or greater wind load?	Hurricane resistant shingles which may not be necessary at all locations...but higher wind rating is better shingle anywhere
	Will metal flashing be used in valleys?	Not essential but nice to have. Protects valley's better against leakage, especially if someone walks on the roof and breaks through valley shingles.
	Will ridge vent be installed on all ridges (especially in warm climates)?	Should always vent ridges and not just rely on wind turbines.

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		Ridge vents allows hot air to escape from the roof interior better.
	Will ridge vent be installed with screws?	Not essential but screws hold ridge vents down better...does take more time to install
	Will ridge vent be covered with ridge shingles?	Cover ridge with ridge shingles and not just regular shingles cut to fit. Ridge shingles better application.
	Are ridge shingles oriented and installed facing down wind of predominate wind direction?	Check local weather and wind pattern ('wind rose') and orient ridge shingles to face downwind to help avoid ridge shingles being blown up.
	If a chimney, will a cricket be provided?	Cricket's are essential on larger chimney's (say wider than 3 feet). Greatly prevents water leakage into the chimney.
	On slope sides of chimney, will step flashing be installed?	Chimney flashing is critical. Make sure the design is 'water proof'. Never rely on just a sealant to act as the only water proofing...always rely on mechanical flashing (edge of flashing embedded into groves cut in the chimney and sealed).
	On chimney, will cap flashing (such as overstep flashing) be mechanically inserted into chimney groove and sealant added?	
	Will step flashing be installed on sloping wall abutments?	Step flashing overlaid with capped flashing is best flashing next to abutements on sloping walls. Sometimes when a roof is replaced existing flashing must be reused since it may not be removed (nailed under siding)
	Will vertical side of step flashing be installed under home siding?	

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	Will any flashing performance depend solely on sealant placed between the flashing and surface being protected from water? (if yes, what locations are solely dependent on sealant waterproofing)	Never rely on sealant as the only flash (leak) protection.
	Will existing flashing be reused? (if yes, what locations)	
	Will old flashing be removed, and new flashing used on all roof penetrations?	All roof penetration flashing should be replaced and reflashed.
	Will any sealant be either butyl rubber or polyurethane? (if not, what is used)	Never rely on cheaper asphalt based sealant...
	Will roof penetration flashing be rubber boot or better slip-on flashing? (except for hot water vent or other hot surfaces)	Better quality roof penetration flashing
	Will roof penetrations be installed with rain/debris/animal/ insect barrier caps (not including sewer vent pipes)?	
	Will any nails be driven into shingles exposed to the weather? (if yes, what are the locations)	
	Will all exposed nail heads be coated in sealant?	
	If required, will rain-gutters be removed and reinstalled?	
	Will roof penetration flashing also be sealed with a sealant?	Better quality flashing but takes more time.
	Will roof penetration flashing also be covered with ice/water barrier shield?	Better quality flashing but takes more time
	Are window screen removed before roof installation?	Falling material can tear window screens and such should be removed before the roof work starts.
	Will coil nail guns be used in the shingle installation process?	Nail guns increase efficiency and reduce cost of installation.
<b>DRONE</b>	Will a drone be used to assess roof condition and characteristics?	Many roofing contractors use drones to assess a roof (and take photos). If a drone is used and weighs more than 0.55 pounds, someone must be present (a Remote PIC – Pilot In Command) who is licensed by the FAA as a commercial drone operator...if not, there can be severe penalties (fines and/or jail time); and someone
	Will the drone operation be under the direct supervision of an FAA licensed Remote Pilot In Command person?	
	Will the drone be in visual line of sight at all the times by a one or more designated visual observers under the supervision of the Remote Pilot in Command?	

CATEGORY	QUESTION	PURPOSE
		on the ground must at all times be in visual contact with the drone and report any issues to the drone pilot.
MISCELLANEOUS	Will contractor ensure any vents that penetrate the roof (such as attic hot water heaters) are securely reattached?	New vent flashing often results in vents being moved and possibly dislodged from equipment located in the attic.
	Will contractor touch up paint on siding?	Shingles that drop from height (especially 2 story and more) will sail into the side of the home leaving tar skid marks.
	Be careful not to track into your home/car tar residue left on the ground from fallen shingles.	

