

## Asphalt Shingle

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In recent years, we have seen more & more asphalt shingle adopted as the roof material even for the original wood roof replacement. If we look into that, we can find that the asphalt shingle has the advantage over the other materials on the ratio of the performance to cost. Based on my work experience, it takes about \$4.5/sf to replace the roof locally at present, which includes cleaning out the original roof material, placing plywood and underlayment, also the 25 years warranty asphalt shingle. It may be more or less that depends on the roof structure, pitch, difficulty of the construction and quality of the material. Another benefit on roofing asphalt shingle is that the technique is easy to learn. The cost could be reduced sharply if we can do it ourselves. But the safety is more important. I would suggest hiring a qualified roofer rather than risk of potential injury and amateurish work. This is not a frequent cost anyway.

Let us get to know asphalt shingle. There are 2 kinds on material constituents. One is asphalt impregnated felt covered with asphalt then the small granular applied on the top to diffuse to ultraviolet. The other is almost the same except for using fiberglass instead of felt to enforce the laminated shingle. Most products are the conventional 3-tab laminated asphalt shingles on the market. The size is either 12"X36" or 13.25"X40". There are 3 tabs in the front half of the whole piece. Originally, the 1/8" to 1/4" slot cut in between. Nowadays most manufacturers laminated another piece under the 3-tab and keep the tabs in the wide space to show the aesthetic of the stacked shingles on the roof. In addition, there are interlocked shingles which is good for the windy climate. Regarding the quality, normally the manufacturers offer 15 to 25 years warranty by the weight of 210 lbs to 255 lbs per 100 square feet; even 35 years warranty around 300 lbs. But due to the light weight of fiber glass, the products get lighter by the same quality products. Therefore, the data provided by the manufacturer is more referable. In terms of the material, asphalt is the low end petrochemical product; the fiberglass is the common industrial product; the sand is everywhere. The components are so plentiful that the massive production is quite easy. Plus the packaging, storage and transportation requirement is very low. All these contribute to its success comparing with the other roof materials.



Also asphalt shingle needs maintenance regularly. 1<sup>st</sup>, to check if there are any premature cracks in any direction just 1 year after roofing, which could be the manufacture defect; The distributor has to be contacted; 2<sup>nd</sup>, check the loss of granular, which lost the UV protection to asphalt and means shingle worn out; 3<sup>rd</sup>, also this may combine with cracking, cupping and clawing, which needs fix; 4<sup>th</sup>, once there is mold or moss growing, use the lower concentrated bleach to wash it away, power wash is not recommended; 5<sup>th</sup> check the roof valley and gutter before raining season every year, clean the leaves and debris to avoid them holding the moisture and mold growing, which can cause leaking; 5<sup>th</sup>, check the width of slots and joints on shingles, which means the age of the roof; once the whole roof appears old, it is the time to replace.