

roofing

material type	what you need to know	other considerations	durability/maintenance	cost
 <p>composition</p>	Cellulose or fiberglass mats coated with asphalt and mineral granules. Look for Class A fire rating (greatest fire-resistance). Order algae-resistant granules in warm, humid climates.	Lightweight; flat profile. The most economical material and the easiest for do-it-yourself installation. Not much textural beauty.	The heavier the shingle, the longer it should last. Standard weights should last 15–30 years. Make biannual checks for cracked, curled, and loose shingles, which should be replaced.	Composition shingles start at \$50 per square (100 square feet), uninstalled. Premium asphalt shingles can overlap laminated fiberglass shingles in price.
 <p>wood</p>	Shingles are smaller, lighter, and sawn on both sides. Shakes are thicker, often hand-split. Preferred wood is grade 1 Western red cedar. Fire-retardant coatings improve safety.	Cedar resists decay. Natural character blends with landscape. Little color variation. Requires a roof with at least a 4:12 slope to shed moisture.	When grade 1 was first-growth timber, it lasted 50 years or more. Now, second- or third-growth wood lasts 15–25 years. Apply preservative and fungicide every two to five years.	Prices vary according to species (cedar, cypress, redwood, pine), format (shake or shingle), grade, and weight. From \$100 per square, uninstalled.
 <p>metal</p>	Pieces or panels of steel, aluminum, or copper in standing-seam, corrugated, or faux-shake styles. Metal conducts heat; insulate below and look for reflective coatings.	Weights range from 45 to 200 pounds per square. Can be installed on almost-flat roofs and over composition shingles. Fire-resistant and recyclable; can be noisy.	Can last 40–50 years; color coatings guaranteed against fading for 25 years. Aluminum won't rust; lower grades can dent.	Steel and aluminum, \$150–\$260 per square, uninstalled, depending on style and finish. Copper, \$250–\$500 per square, uninstalled.
 <p>clay tile</p>	Molded from pulverized clay and water, curved or flat tiles can weigh more than 1,000 pounds per square. Get professional advice about the need to reinforce roof framing.	Hundreds of glaze colors. Energy-efficient; noncombustible. One of the most expensive roofing materials. High installation costs.	Overall surface is very durable (50–100 years). Occasional cracked or chipped tiles are possible—check annually to biannually.	Clay roofing tiles cost \$250–\$500 or more per square, uninstalled.
 <p>slate</p>	Natural, quarried stone. Grade and color vary by source. Because of weight (700–2,000 pounds per square), it usually requires reinforced roof framing.	Fire-, moisture- and insect-resistant. Moderate range of colors. Expensive, heavy, and requires professional installation.	Natural slate can last 100+ years. Replacing cracked or missing slates is the only maintenance.	\$300–\$600 per square, uninstalled, depending on where quarried. Shipping and labor-intensive installation add to expense.
 <p>concrete tile</p>	Concrete tiles come in a variety of shapes including those that imitate clay, slate, and wood shakes.	Some tiles are molded to interlock so they're easier to install. Roof framing may need to be reinforced.	Several products come with limited lifetime warranties, transferrable to new owners. Annually or biannually check for loose or cracked tiles.	\$150–\$250 per square, uninstalled, for standard-weight, \$350–\$500 for lightweight types. Also consider additional weight-related expenses of shipping and framing.
 <p>laminated</p>	Thicker and heavier than composition shingles, these have a fiberglass core instead of an organic core. Multilayer panels produce three-dimensional profiles and dramatic shadow lines.	From afar many have attractive shake profiles. Greater fire- and wind- resistance than composition shingles. Algae deposits can occur in warm, humid regions.	40–50 years for high-end products weighing up to 450 pounds per square. Perform biannual checks for signs of loose or damaged shingles and replace.	\$60–\$80 per square, uninstalled, with variation for premium or “architectural” product lines.
 <p>rubber composite</p>	Molded from a combination of plastic and rubber and bonded molecularly. Also known as synthetic slate. Optional fire-resistant type.	Convincing texture with color through the material. Lightweight yet strong and flexible. Limited supplier network.	50-year limited warranties are typical. Perform annual to biannual checks for signs of damaged shingles and replace.	\$295–\$400 per square, uninstalled, depending on weight, style, and fire rating.