

# How Roof Replacement Cost by Roof Size Affects Your Budget in Austin

## Understanding the Numbers Behind Your New Roof

Every homeowner in Austin eventually faces the question of roof replacement. The numbers you hear from neighbors often vary widely, and that is because one factor outweighs almost everything else. I have seen it on dozens of jobs over the years: the biggest single variable in any estimate is the size of the roof itself. When you start looking at roof replacement cost by roof size, the differences become clear fast. A small cottage on a southside lot might need only fifteen squares of material, while a sprawling two-story on a hillside near Lake Travis can push past forty squares. That gap alone changes the estimate by thousands of dollars.

I have been on roofs in this town long enough to know that size is just the starting point. The pitch, the number of penetrations, and the material you pick all layer on top of that base number. But before you get into the details of standing seam versus asphalt shingles, you have to understand how the square footage of your home translates into roof squares and what that means for your final invoice.

## What Roof Squares Mean for Your Estimate

Roofing is measured in squares, where one square equals 100 square feet. So a 2,000 square foot ranch house with a simple gable roof might need around 20 squares of material. That does not include waste, overhangs, or the extra cuts required by valleys and hips. In my experience, most contractors add 10 to 15 percent for waste, especially on complex shapes. That is where your [roof replacement cost by roof size](#) starts to climb.

For a typical Austin home in the 1,600 to 2,400 square foot range, the material alone can run from \$3,000 to \$7,000 depending on whether you choose basic asphalt shingles or a premium architectural shingle from a brand like CertainTeed or Owens Corning. Labor costs add another \$3,000 to \$6,000. Underlayment, ice and water shield at the eaves, and proper roof ventilation all factor in. When you add permit fees and disposal fees for old roof removal, the total for a straightforward job often lands between \$8,000 and \$18,000. That range matches what I have seen quoted for most homes in the Austin area over the past couple of years.

## Material Choice Changes the Math

The size of your roof sets the baseline, but material selection moves the needle faster than anything else. Asphalt shingles remain the most common choice in Central Texas because they balance cost and durability well. A three-tab shingle from a manufacturer like GAF or

TAMKO runs about \$100 to \$150 per square installed. That puts a 20-square roof at roughly \$2,000 to \$3,000 for materials, plus labor. But if you upgrade to an architectural shingle with a thicker mat and longer warranty, the price per square jumps to \$180 or more.

Metal roofing is another option I see more of lately, especially on modern homes and additions. Standing seam metal panels cost more upfront, often \$400 to \$600 per square installed, but they last decades with minimal maintenance. For a home with a steep roof pitch that makes shingle installation tricky, metal can actually simplify the labor. But the material cost is higher, and the skill required to install it correctly means you want a roofing contractor with specific experience in standing seam. Ames Roofing, for example, has done some beautiful standing seam jobs in the Hill Country, but they charge accordingly.

## **Roof Complexity Adds Real Cost**

Roof complexity is the hidden variable that catches many homeowners off guard. A simple gable roof with a single ridge and two slopes is the cheapest shape to cover. Add a dormer, a valley, or a chimney, and the labor hours increase. Each penetration requires flashing, step flashing, and careful underlayment work. A roof with multiple hips and valleys can take 30 to 50 percent longer to strip and reshingle than a plain gable of the same square footage.

I once worked on a house in the Zilker neighborhood that had a relatively small footprint, maybe 18 squares. But the roof had five valleys, two dormers, and a complex intersection with a flat section. The tear-off alone took three days. Compare that to a straightforward 20-square gable on a house in Round Rock that two crews stripped and reshingled in two days. The smaller complex roof cost more than the larger simple one. That is why roof replacement cost by roof size is only part of the story. You also need to account for roof complexity, roof pitch, and the condition of the existing decking.

## **Old Roof Removal and Disposal**

Every full replacement starts with tearing off the old layers. In Austin, most homes have at least one layer of shingles, sometimes two. If the original roof was installed before the 1980s, there might be a layer of wood shingles or even rolled roofing underneath. Removing all that adds weight and time. Disposal fees vary by landfill and by the type of material, but figure \$50 to \$100 per ton for asphalt shingles. A typical 20-square roof generates about two to three tons of debris. That means disposal fees alone can run \$150 to \$300.

Some contractors include disposal in their base price, others itemize it separately. Always ask. The same goes for permit fees. Austin requires a permit for any roofing project that involves structural changes or exceeds a certain scope. Permit fees usually range from \$100 to \$400

depending on the valuation of the job. A reputable roofing contractor will handle the permit process for you, but you should confirm that before signing anything.

## **Labor Costs in the Current Market**

Labor costs have risen steadily in Central Texas over the past few years. Skilled roofers are in short supply, and the demand for new construction and replacement work stays high. For a typical asphalt shingle job, labor runs between \$150 and \$250 per square. That includes tear-off, underlayment, flashing, and installation. For standing seam or other metal roofing, labor can exceed \$300 per square because the work requires more precision and specialized tools.

I have seen some homeowners try to save money by doing part of the work themselves, like tearing off old shingles. In theory that cuts a few hundred dollars off the labor cost. In practice, it often leads to damage that the contractor has to fix, which ends up costing more. A good contractor will price the job based on the full scope of work. If you strip the roof yourself, you might save money on labor but lose time and risk injury. I do not recommend it unless you have experience and the right safety gear.

## **What to Ask Before You Sign**

When you get estimates, ask for a breakdown that separates materials, labor, underlayment, disposal, and permit fees. A line-item estimate lets you compare apples to apples. Ask about the underlayment brand and weight. Ice and water shield along the eaves and in valleys is a smart upgrade in our climate, especially with the hailstorms we get. Ask about roof ventilation. Proper airflow under the deck extends the life of the shingles and prevents moisture buildup.

I also recommend asking about the manufacturer. GAF, Owens Corning, CertainTeed, and TAMKO all make quality shingles, but each has different warranty terms and color lines. If you want a specific look, like architectural shingles that mimic slate or wood, CertainTeed has a good selection. If you want the best value for a rental property, GAF TimberTex is hard to beat. The contractor should be able to show you samples and explain the differences without pushing a specific brand.

## **The Bottom Line on Roof Replacement Cost by Roof Size**

If you are planning a roof replacement in Austin, start by measuring or having a contractor measure your roof in squares. That number will give you a rough ballpark. Then add the variables: material, pitch, complexity, and local labor rates. For most homes, the total will fall between \$8,000 and \$18,000. That range holds true across the city, from the older bungalows in Hyde Park to the newer builds in the Domain area. Keep in mind that roof replacement cost

by roof size is the foundation of the estimate, but the details determine whether you end up at the low end or the high end of that spread.

A good roofing contractor will walk you through every line item and answer your questions without pressure. Take your time, get three estimates, and compare the scope of work as much as the price. Your roof is one of the most important parts of your home. Spending a little extra on quality materials and experienced labor pays off in the long run.