Replacing a roof is part craft, part logistics, and part judgment call. For homeowners the process can feel opaque: trucks show up, shingles appear on the roof, and by the end of a few days there is a new surface overhead. For roofers, each job is a series of routine choices shaped by site specifics, weather, and budget. I have worked around roofs for years and have overseen dozens of re-roofs from start to finish. Below I walk through how roofers install new shingles, the decisions they make on the fly, common pitfalls, and what to expect as a homeowner.

Why this matters A shingle roof is not a single product, it is a system. Flashing, underlayment, ventilation, nail pattern, and the shingles themselves must work together to shed water and shed it reliably for 15 to 50 years depending on the material. Small mistakes in preparation or installation cause major failures later. Understanding the process helps you hire the right roofing contractor, evaluate bids, and spot red flags during the job.

Before work begins: inspection, permits, and planning A good job begins with a proper inspection. A roofer should climb and inspect from the ridge, but nearly as important is the structural assessment. Is the decking sound? Are there soft spots from past leaks? Do vents and chimneys need upgraded flashing? When I bid a job I spend time measuring slopes, counting valleys, and noting eaves and rake details. That tells me how many shingles, underlayment rolls, drip edges, and nails I will need, plus whether plywood replacement will be required.

Permits matter. Most municipalities require a permit for a full roof replacement. That triggers an inspection, which catches basic code items like ridge venting or ice barrier placement. A reputable roofing company will pull permits Roofing contractor near me and schedule inspections, and a homeowner should verify the permit is in place before work starts.

Two short lists below summarize typical safety gear roofers use and the key materials you will see on the roof.

Typical personal protective equipment used on a re-roof

1. Harness and lifeline when roof slope or conditions require fall protection.
2. Hard hats and work gloves for crew safety and material handling.
3. Non-slip footwear with good ankle support for traction on shingles.
4. Eye protection and dust masks when cutting decking or removing old material.
5. High-visibility vests and proper signage around the work area.

Common materials and components on a shingle roof

1. Asphalt shingles, chosen by type and warranty length.
2. Underlayment, either traditional felt or synthetic products.
3. Ice and water shield for eaves and critical areas in cold climates.
4. Drip edge, ridge vent, and starter shingles for edge protection and ventilation.
5. Metal flashings for chimneys, vents, valleys, and roof-to-wall intersections.

Tear-off or roof-over: deciding the substrate On many houses a roof tear-off is required. Single-layer tear-offs are straightforward: we remove the existing shingles and sometimes the underlayment to expose the plywood decking. On older roofs with two layers of shingles, code in many areas forbids adding a third layer, so we either tear off both layers or, if allowed and prudent, leave the existing layer in place and re-cover a single layer.

A roof-over saves time and disposal costs, but it adds weight and hides any damaged decking. I once saw a roof-over where the homeowner later experienced repeated leaks because the old underlayment trapped moisture and the deck had been partially rotted. For roofs with significant age, complex details, or unknown decking condition, I recommend a full tear-off.

Removing old materials is noisy and dusty. Crews use roof rakes or stripping bars to pry shingles free and nail guns to fasten new decking where a splice or partial replacement is needed. Disposal is usually by roll-off dumpster. For a 2,000 square foot roof, expect 6 to 10 tons of waste removed depending on layers and decking.

Deck preparation and repair Once the roof is stripped to the decking, we evaluate for soft spots and loose boards. Standard plywood thickness is 1/2 inch or 5/8 inch depending on span and local code; OSB is common. When decking is rotten or excessively cupped, we replace the affected panels. While doing that, we install or verify proper ventilation. Ridge vents combined with soffit vents create cross-flow that reduces attic moisture and heat, extending shingle life.

Underlayment choice affects performance. Traditional felt underlayment remains widely used and is breathable, but synthetic underlayments offer better tear resistance, lighter weight, and more consistent coverage. In cold climates, we also apply an ice and water shield along the eaves and up valleys for two to six feet depending on code and roof

complexity. That sticky membrane adheres directly to the deck and provides a secondary barrier against wind-driven water and ice dam backup.

Flashing, valleys, and tricky details Flashing is where many installations fail. A proper flashing detail at chimneys, skylights, valleys, and roof-to-wall connections demands skill and care. Metal counterflashing is not glamorous but it protects the house. I prefer step flashing for roof-to-wall intersections: each course of shingles gets a piece of flashing that diverts water over the course below. For chimneys we combine step flashing and a counterflashing set into a chase or reglet in the masonry when possible.

Valleys receive special treatment. For an open valley we might run a continuous metal valley flashing, folding shingles back to reveal the metal. Closed-cut valleys use shingles cut over the valley with an underlayment beneath. Each valley type has pros and cons. Metal valleys are durable and shed water quickly, but they are more visible. Closed-cut valleys are cleaner visually but can trap debris and water if not flashed correctly.

Starter strip and shingle layout Starter strips are the first visible line of shingles along eaves. They provide a straight edge and seal the first shingle course. I insist on manufacturer-recommended starters to maintain wind uplift ratings. From there we lay the first full course, using a chalk line to maintain straight rows. On larger roofs we snap two chalk lines to ensure square alignment and consistent exposure, preventing a staircase look down the slope.

Shingle exposure, the visible portion, often ranges from 5 to 7 inches on architectural shingles, varying by product. Installation instructions from the manufacturer are not merely suggestions. Warranty coverage can be voided if the nail pattern, exposure, or starter application do not match the instructions. I make sure every crew member has the product spec sheet on-site.

Nailing patterns and fasteners Nails are simple but critical. For asphalt shingles, we typically use 1 1/4 inch to 1 1/2 inch roofing nails with a 12 gauge shank and a galvanized or stainless finish. Nails should be driven flush with the shingle, not overdriven into the mat and not left proud. The nail head must clear the adhesive bands but be below the shingle surface to prevent tearing. Wind zones affect the number of nails per shingle. In high-wind areas the code or manufacturer may require four or six nails per shingle rather than two.

I remember a job where the crew had switched to cheaper roofing nails to save cost. A summer storm with 60 mile per hour gusts pulled dozens of shingles off that roof, which then required a rework and warranty fight. Cheap fasteners are a false economy because they can lead to premature failures and warranty denials.

Sealing and adhesive considerations Shingle adhesive granules and factory-applied asphalt seals are the primary adhesion method, aided by wind-driven pressure and heat. In cooler climates crews sometimes use a bead of roofing cement at hips and ridges or where shingles are likely to lift. Some modern shingle lines include thermal sealers or require special adhesive strips. Using the right sealant at the right place matters because too much adhesive can bleed through, and the wrong product can degrade the shingle surface.

Ridge caps and ventilation The ridge is both a finishing detail and part of the roof’s breathing system. A ridge cap covers the peak and usually fits over a continuous ridge vent that draws warm, moist air from the attic. Proper ridge venting requires intake at the soffits. When I install ridge vent, I calculate net free area per linear foot of vent and match it to intake area. If intake is insufficient, the ridge vent underperforms and the attic remains hot.

Ridge caps are cut from the same shingle or purchased pre-formed. They are installed with four nails per cap piece, centered to avoid splitting, and sealed for aesthetics. For steep hips and ridges I sometimes use extra underlayment to prevent wind-driven rain from finding gaps.

Cleanup, final inspection, and customer walk-through A clean job site indicates care. Crews should remove nails from lawns using magnetic sweepers and collect debris. I require a final inspection checklist: nails check, flashing detail, venting checked, nail pattern, starter courses, and attic inspection for light leaks. I also perform a water test for suspect flashings when there is any uncertainty.

When handing the job over to the homeowner I walk the roofline with them, point out where the warranty and manufacturer instructions apply, and explain simple maintenance tasks like clearing gutters and removing overhanging branches. I show them where loose nails might be found around the perimeter and advise a second sweep of the yard after the first storm, because wind sometimes dislodges stray debris.

Common issues homeowners should watch for Blistering or premature granule loss can indicate poor ventilation or cheap shingles. Curling shingles often mean improper nailing or thermal movement. Flashing failures near chimneys and skylights are common leak sources because those penetrations require precise metalwork and sealant.

If you are getting bids, pay attention not only to price but to written scope. Does the estimate specify tear-off or roof-over? Does it list underlayment type, ice barrier extent, nail specifications, and ventilation changes? Vague bids leave room for expensive change orders. Also confirm that the contractor carries general liability and workers compensation insurance, and that they will pull the necessary permits.

Trade-offs and budget realities A roofing contractor near me will likely offer several options. At the budget end you will see three-tab asphalt shingles with a shorter warranty and minimal profile. For mid-range work architectural shingles give improved wind resistance, better appearance, and longer warranties. At the top end you might find designer shingles, metal, tile, or slate, each with their own structural and installation demands.

Cost trade-offs include fastener quality, underlayment type, and the decision to replace decking. Skimping on underlayment or using inadequate fasteners reduces upfront cost, but increases risk of earlier failure. Replacing decking is unpleasant and expensive, but it prevents future leaks and provides a stable substrate for shingles. In one job I supervised, an initial low bid saved the homeowner 20 percent up front but required a decking replacement six years later, roughly doubling the long-term cost.

Roof warranty realities Shingle manufacturers offer limited warranties that cover manufacturing defects for a set number of years. Such warranties often require the shingles to be installed according to their instructions. Additionally, the roofing contractor often provides a labor warranty. A "best roofing company" label means little if the contractor will not honor a labor warranty or goes out of business soon after installation. When evaluating warranties, ask how claims are handled and whether the contractor will provide a written labor warranty with a contact number.

When things go wrong: repairs, leak diagnosis, and insurance claims Diagnosing leaks is partly detective work. Water can travel along a rafter or trim for several feet before showing as a stain. We sometimes use a hose to simulate rain and find the leak source. Insurance claims for roof damage depend on policy language. Hail and wind claims require quick action to document damage with photographs and to secure temporary patches to prevent interior damage. I advise homeowners to notify their insurer promptly and get a professional assessment before signing any waivers or accepting an adjuster estimate.

Working with the crew on site A reliable crew communicates progress and surprises. Expect a busy first day removing old materials and staging. The middle days are about deck repair, underlayment, and shingle courses. Final day focuses on ridges, clean-up, and punch-list items. For safety and efficiency I prefer crews of three to five experienced roofers for an average 2,000 square foot house. Larger crews reduce time on roof but increase traffic and coordination needs.

Final thoughts on maintenance and longevity Simple maintenance extends life. Keep gutters clean to prevent backwater and ice damming. Trim overhanging branches that drop debris and create shade, which encourages moss. Check attic ventilation and insulation; a cool, dry attic prolongs shingle life. Typical asphalt shingle roofs last 20 to 30 years for good products installed correctly, but local climate, installation quality, and maintenance determine actual performance.

Finding and hiring a contractor Search for "roofing contractor near me" with attention to local reviews and Better Business Bureau records. Ask for references with similar roof types in your neighborhood, and request a written scope

and timeline. Confirm that the roofing contractors you consider carry insurance and will pull permits. If you want the best roofing company for your house, focus less on a single metric and more on the fit: communication, transparent scope, and a track record of quality installations.

Open in Maps

A final anecdote: I once replaced the roof on a modest craftsman bungalow where the homeowner insisted on the cheapest option. Midway through the job we found that homemade vents and odd flashing details had been installed poorly decades earlier. The cheap shingles were not forgiving of those imperfections, so we ended up specifying a better underlayment and upgraded flashing. The small extra investment up front avoided repeated callbacks and kept the homeowner dry for many years.

A properly installed shingle roof blends materials, technique, and attention to detail. Knowing what your contractor should do and why makes you a smarter buyer and helps ensure the roof over your head performs as promised.

HOMEMASTERS – Vancouver

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Popular Questions About HOMEMASTERS – Vancouver

What services does HOMEMASTERS – Vancouver provide?

HOMEMASTERS – Vancouver offers residential roofing replacement, roof repair, gutter installation, skylight installation, and siding services throughout Ridgefield and the greater Vancouver, Washington area.

Where is HOMEMASTERS – Vancouver located?

The business is located at 17115 NE Union Rd, Ridgefield, WA 98642, United States.

What areas does HOMEMASTERS – Vancouver serve?

They serve Ridgefield, Vancouver, Battle Ground, Camas, Washougal, and surrounding Clark County communities.

Do they provide roof inspections and estimates?

Yes, HOMEMASTERS – Vancouver provides professional roof inspections and estimates for repairs, replacements, and exterior improvements.

Are they experienced with gutter systems and protection?

Yes, they install and service gutter systems and gutter protection solutions designed to improve drainage and protect homes from water damage.

How do I contact HOMEMASTERS – Vancouver?

Phone: (360) 836-4100 Website: https://homemasters.com/locations/vancouver-washington/

Landmarks Near Ridgefield, Washington

- **Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge** – A major natural attraction offering trails and wildlife viewing near the business location.
- **Ilani Casino Resort** – Popular entertainment and hospitality