



# HOW TO PREPARE FOR A SUCCESSFUL METAL ROOF INSTALLATION

YOUR COMPREHENSIVE GUIDE



**Sheffield Metals  
International**

A MAZZELLA COMPANY

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# WELCOME!

**All of us at Sheffield Metals want to begin by thanking you for download the *How to Prepare for a Successful Metal Roof Installation* e-book.**

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Whether you're a homeowner looking to install a metal roof on your home or a commercial property owner searching for the right contractor for your installation project, one thing remains true: **You don't want to go into a metal roof installation blind.**

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**That's exactly why we created this e-book. It's packed from cover to cover with information from professionals who provide insight about:**

- How to find a roofing contractor who is certified, qualified, and skilled
- What to look for in a contractor's quote or bid and how to pick the right one
- How the price listed on a quote can indicate the quality of work
- Expectations for before, during, and after an installation takes place

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Installing a new roof is an "all or nothing" proposition, which means picking the right quote from the best contractor is the easiest way to ensure the entirety of your roof installation goes smoothly. As you make your way through *How to Prepare for a Successful Metal Roofing Installation*, we believe you'll learn new information, discover more about the installation process, and feel confident in your final pre-installation decisions.

As always, we thank you for your time! If you have additional questions or want to contact us about metal roofing, panel systems, or any other metal roofing solution, we're here to help. Feel free to **call us at 1-800-283-5262** or **fill out the form on the contact page of our website.**



**Adam Mazzella**

Sheffield Metals International



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## CHAPTER

# 1

# How to Find the Best Metal Roofing Contractors for Your Home or Business

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Finding the right contractor or installer for your metal roofing project can be a tough process, especially if you've never been through it before. Learn more about where to find good contractors, what questions you should ask, and what to expect during consultations.

# Going through the process of finding a contractor for any project is stressful.

## Finding the right metal roofing contractor is no exception.

As much as we'd like to tell you that choosing the best pool of metal roofing contractors is seamless and easy, it shouldn't be an overlooked step of buying and installing a metal roof.

We're here to help guide you through the journey by focusing on how to find the best pool of contractors to get quotes from, and then discussing the best methods of weeding out contractors who may be a bad fit for you and your roofing project.

## In this chapter, expect to learn:

**HOW TO FIND GOOD  
METAL ROOFING  
CONTRACTORS**

**WHAT TO  
EXPECT DURING  
CONTRACTOR  
CONSULTATIONS**

**WHAT QUESTIONS  
YOU SHOULD BE  
ASKING ROOFING  
CONTRACTORS**

**SIGNS THAT A METAL  
ROOF CONTRACTOR  
IS RELIABLE**







# How to find the best metal roofing contractors

So you might be asking yourself: Where do I even start looking for contractors? Many property owners just turn to the internet, which is a great place to start. But there are many more options and avenues to check with as well, such as:



**ASK FOR  
REFERRALS**



**REACH OUT  
TO ROOFING  
ORGANIZATIONS  
& ASSOCIATIONS**



**CALL AN  
ARCHITECT OR  
BUILDER**



**ASK THE  
MANUFACTURER  
OF THE METAL  
ROOF**



**SEARCH ON THE  
INTERNET**



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## Ask for referrals

If you have a friend, family member, or neighbor who recently had a metal roof installed on their home or business building, they are one of the best places to start. Ask them who they hired as their contractor, but also ask who they didn't hire and why.

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## Reach out to roofing organizations and associations

Any discipline or line of work has its own organizations and associations dedicated to education, training, advocacy, etc. Contacting one of these organizations that work with metal roofing contractors, such as the National Roofing Contractors Association or a local Home Builders Association, can help you find credible businesses available for hire.

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## Call an architect or builder

Architects and builders have extensive experience with roofing contractors, as they work with them on a regular basis for their own projects. If you know of any architects or builders present in your area, give them a call and ask about the roofing contractors they use or would recommend.

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## Ask the manufacturer of the metal roof

One of the best ways to ensure the metal roof you want to purchase gets installed correctly by a good contractor is to contact the metal roof manufacturer. Manufacturers are often well connected in the roofing industry and can point you in the direction of contractors who have recently done good installation work.

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## Search on the internet

It's the 21st century and we all know that doing your online research can help you find a good contractor. That being said, doing the right online research is key. Don't just look at the ratings, but take some time to read the reviews. You would be surprised how many people are in the same boat as you.

**In addition to just Googling “good metal roofing contractors,” try one of these popular referral sites:**

- Angie's List
- HomeAdvisor
- Everybody Needs a Roof

# Choose the contractors to consult with

Now that you have a pool of metal roof contractors you want to bid on your project, you'll want to research the business before scheduling a consultation. Luckily, most of this research can be done online by looking on search engines and at the business's website.



1

## STEP ONE

Either by using a search engine, looking at the business's website, or finding the business on social media, look to make sure there are positive reviews from past customers. Additionally, you can use the Better Business Bureau's website to look up the business and see if it receives a good rating.

2

## STEP TWO

Make sure the business offers metal roof installation and/or what you want to be installed on your roof. For example, there are roofing contractors who only install asphalt shingle roofing or another type of roofing material that isn't metal.

3

## STEP THREE

Go to the contractor's website and look at their portfolio or gallery of completed projects to make sure you approve of how their final metal roofing projects look.

4

## STEP FOUR

Explore any more of the contractor's resources, such as continued website surfing, social media content, and other available online assets.

# What to expect during a consultation

Once you've done all your research and weeded out the contractors who aren't a good fit for you, it's time to schedule the consultation. This can be done by either calling or emailing the contracting company or using the contact form on their website. We recommend having consultations with at least three different metal roofing contractors. The consultation is your opportunity to measure the contractor up, get to know their business, test their capabilities, ask questions, and decide if you'd be comfortable with hiring them. Here's what you can expect during a metal roof install consultation:



## A site inspection by the contractor, which will focus on:

- Penetration points
- Flashing zones
- Low spots
- Differing roof planes
- Gutters
- Roof access
- Surrounding landscape
- Potential problem areas



## A field measurement

This will determine take-off, which is the quantity and sizing of materials that the estimator needs to put together the bid or quote.



## Sitting down with the contractor to give you some ideas to think about and provide options pertaining to:

- Panel choices
- Metal material choices
- Colors and finishes
- Profiles
- Accessories (fasteners, underlayment, etc.)
- Add-ons (skylights, snow retention systems, etc.)



## Talking through how payment is handled, whether it's financed, paid in cash or credit, or covered by an insurance provider

Additionally, there should be a discussion on what percentage of the bill needs to be paid upfront or how the remainder needs to be paid. Industry professionals recommend that 20% to 30% should be left to pay at the time of completion.





### **Talking through any questions you have for the contractor**

Asking the right questions is the best way to ensure a contractor is knowledgeable and qualified. In the next section, we'll give you a checklist of questions you should ask during a consultation.



### **Going through the quote the contractor has drawn up based on the field measurement, site inspection, and product choices**

Some contractors may give you one quote for the project, while others provide "good, better, best" options that give varying quotes based on different quality products used at each level.



### **Discussing the possibility of unforeseen problems**

A roofing contractor can only estimate what they can see, so this is also a good time to talk with your contractor about potential unforeseen problems, how they could be resolved, and what they might cost. Examples of this could be mold that has penetrated the roof deck or total roof deck replacement.



**Most roofing contractor consultations last anywhere from one to two hours depending on the complexity of the roof, how long the sit-down conversation lasts, and how long it takes for the contractor to draw up the quote.**



# Best questions to ask metal roofing contractors

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During the consultation, you should be asking as many questions as time allows. Contractors work in a service-based business and shouldn't have a problem answering any questions that you ask. We've split up the types of questions into two equally important categories: Questions related to credibility of the installer and questions about the project.

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## Credibility questions to ask during a consultation

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| ✓ Do you have proof of workman's compensation insurance?                         | ✓ Has your company ever operated under a different name?       |
| ✓ How long has your company been in business?                                    | ✓ Do you have proof of liability insurance?                    |
| ✓ Can you show me photos of jobs or projects you've completed?                   | ✓ Have you done any local installations that I can go look at? |
| ✓ Do you or the manufacturer offer warranties? What are they and how do I apply? | ✓ Do you have proof that you're a licensed roofing contractor? |
| ✓ Are the offered warranties transferable?                                       | ✓ How long have you been installing metal roofing?             |
| ✓ Is your business local?  | ✓ Do you have any references who I can speak with?             |

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## Project related questions to ask during a consultation

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| ✓ Do you need to pull a permit for my metal roof installation?                             | ✓ How many people will be working on my roof?   |
| ✓ Will you need access to my home or business during the installation?                     | ✓ What are potential problem areas on my roof, and how will you address them?               |
| ✓ Can you walk me through the quote?   | ✓ How much am I required to pay up front?   |
| ✓ Do you use manufacturer provided installation details?                                   | ✓ Does someone need to be at my building at all times?                                      |
| ✓ How much of an impact will the installation make on my yard, driveway, and neighborhood? | ✓ Why are you recommending this roof system? How will it work with my roof characteristics? |
| ✓ Who is my primary contact during the installation?                                       | ✓ How long will my installation take?   |
| ✓ Who will actually be doing the installation: Your workers or subcontractors?             | ✓ How will you protect my building, gutters, yard, and other items from damage?             |
| ✓ What should I expect for site clean-up?  |   |



# 6 Signs that a metal roof contractor is reliable

1

## IF THEY HAVE POSITIVE REVIEWS OR CUSTOMER TESTIMONIALS

Like we mentioned earlier, positive reviews from past customers are the key to knowing if the contracting business is capable and equipped to install metal roofing. Getting reviews, especially good reviews, from satisfied customers isn't difficult to accomplish, which is why trustworthy contractors should have them. While Google offers reviews when you search for the business, many of the best reviews can be found on Facebook or other social media sites.

2

## IF THEY ARE A LICENSED OR CERTIFIED CONTRACTOR WITH INSURANCE

Ensuring that the contractor has a license and insurance are arguably two of the most important things to check on before hiring a contractor. A local or state-issued license is a requirement for all roofing contractors to obtain before they can perform any installations. If they are unable to provide proof of license, contact your local licensing office to verify. It's vitally important to check for proof of insurance. If the contracting business doesn't have workman's compensation insurance or liability insurance, you could end up being liable for any workplace injuries or accidents that happen on your property.

3

## IF THEY CAN PROVIDE PHOTOS, REFERENCES, AND PROOF OF EXPERIENCE

Contractors typically have a sense of pride in the work and projects they complete, meaning they should have photos or even videos showing their completed metal roof installations. If they are unable to give you a link to their project portfolio or show you photos in person, it could mean they are inexperienced or lack confidence in their ability to do good work.

# 4

## IF THEY CAN ANSWER YOUR QUESTIONS AND WALK YOU THROUGH THE ENTIRE PROCESS

A reluctance or inability to answer the questions you have during a consultation is an automatic red flag. Reputable contractors should come prepared to answer both the easy and the more difficult questions, especially because they want to make you feel comfortable and reassured that they are worth hiring to complete the project. In addition to answering your questions, they should provide a thorough explanation of their process before, during, and after the installation.

# 5

## IF THEY ARE EASY TO GET AHEAD OF, RESPONSIVE, AND RELIABLE

When you want a contractor to come out to your home or business to give you a quote, they should never be hard to get ahead of. If you find yourself calling or emailing a contractor and receiving little to no response, it might be best to move on to other easier-to-reach contractors. Additionally, if you do get ahead of a contractor and schedule a consultation but they show up late or don't show up at all, think twice about hiring them.

# 6

## MOST IMPORTANTLY: IF YOU FEEL COMFORTABLE HIRING THEM TO WORK ON YOUR ROOF

The ultimate goal is to hire a contractor who you feel comfortable with and trust to do the best installation of your metal roof. Stay cognizant of your comfort level when talking with the contractor and be realistic about how you would feel if you hired them. At the same time, a nice contractor doesn't always mean they're capable doing good work; however, if they demonstrate knowledge and adhere to everything discussed in this article, they're very likely to be a good company to hire for your metal roofing project.

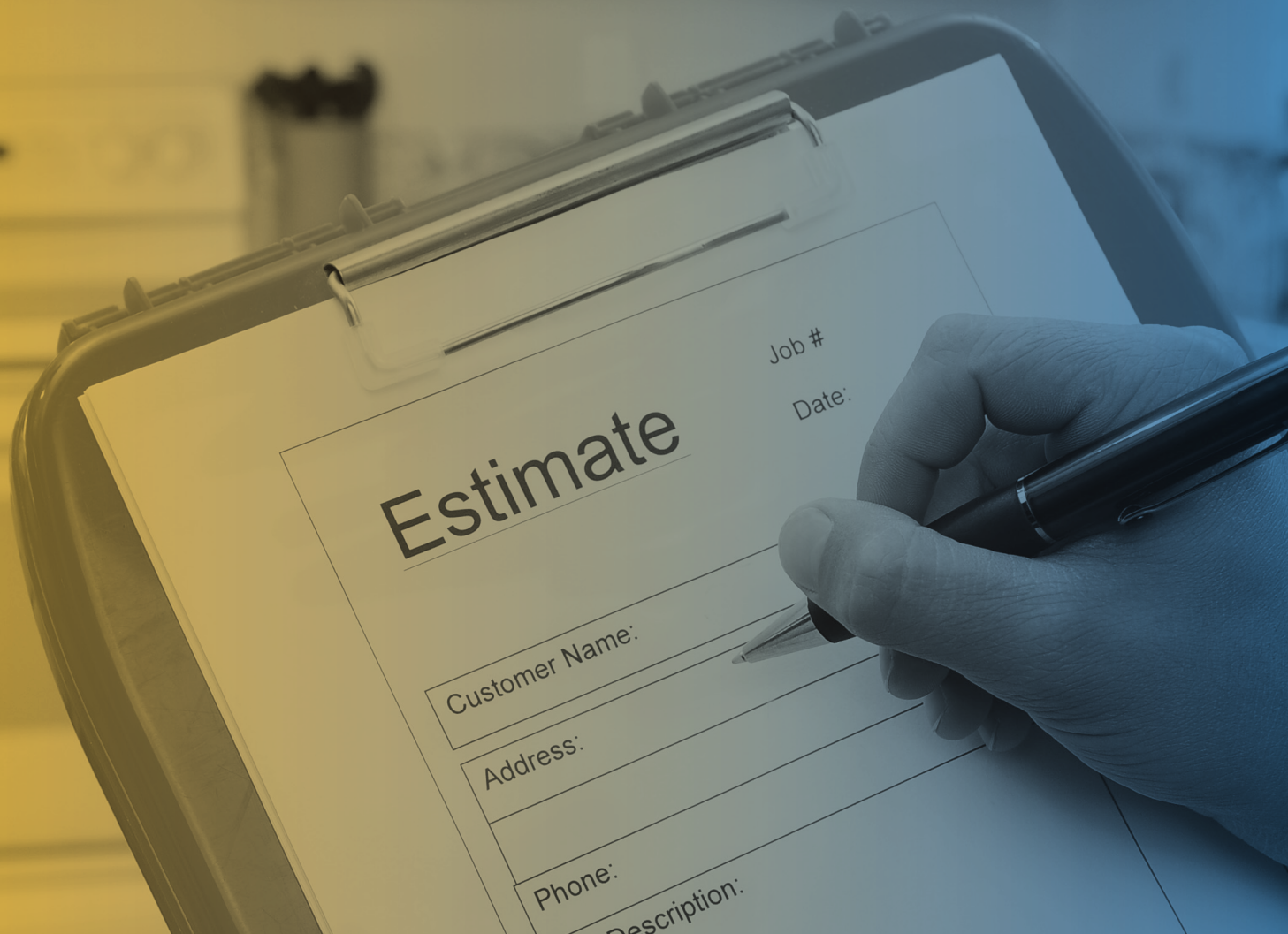


## WRAPPING IT ALL UP

Finding the right pool of metal roofing contractors may take a little bit of time, but it's well worth it when you're spending your hard-earned money on something as important as a metal roof.

### Keep these simple recommendations in mind when finding a good contractor:

- Do your research
- Consult with more than one contractor
- Ask as many questions as possible
- Make sure you understand each contractor's process
- Don't be afraid to say no or challenge a contractor if you don't agree with something



## CHAPTER

# 2

## Metal Roofing Bids: How to Choose the Best Price Option for You

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The next step of the pre-installation process involves contractors quoting and providing the price it will cost to complete the installation. Ensure you don't go into the quoting process blind.



# Once you've found the best pool of metal roof contractors, it's time to get bids for your project from each business.

## Stay educated on what to look for in a bid or quote, and what may or may not be a red flag.

Finding qualified metal roofing contractors to bid on your roof project is one step of the installation process. The next step is equally as important: Understanding the quotes you receive during a consultation and ultimately choosing the best one for you and your home or business.

You might be thinking to yourself: *"Well, all of the contractors I consulted with are qualified and able to successfully install a metal roof..."*

While this might be true, there are specific items to look for in a quote to make sure you're getting everything required to make a metal roof function correctly and still get a fair price.

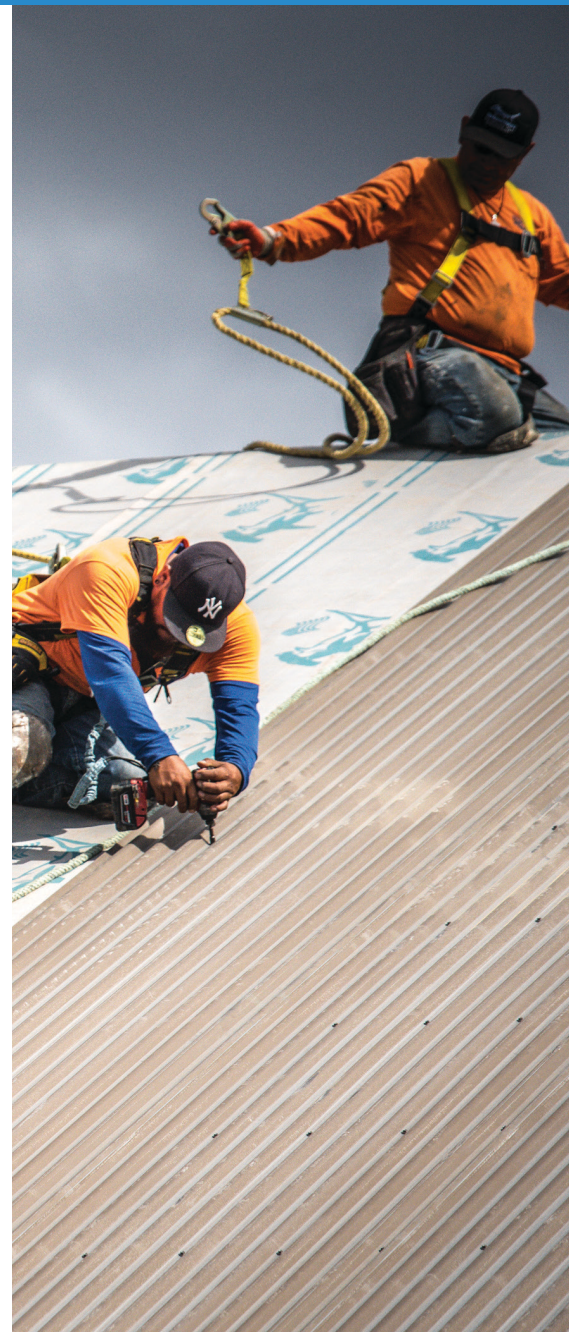
## Ahead, we'll discuss:

WHAT YOU SHOULD EXPECT DURING A CONSULTATION

THE IMPORTANT ITEMS TO LOOK FOR IN A QUOTE

REASONS WHY A QUOTE/BID IS TOO LOW OR HIGH

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CHOOSING THE BEST BID





# What to expect during the quoting process

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**To recap, the following conversations and actions will take place during a typical metal roof install consultation:**

- A full site inspection.
- A field measurement to determine the take-off, which includes the quantity and sizing of materials that the estimator needs to draw up a quote.
- The contractor giving you with options and ideas to think about, such as panel choices, materials, profiles, colors, finishes, accessories, etc.
- Discuss how payment(s) are handled (i.e. financing, paying in cash or credit, or covered by an insurance provider).
- Asking all questions you have for the contractor.
- Going through the quote the contractor has drawn up based on the field measurement, site inspection, and product choices.

# What to look for in a quote

When you're going over the bids or quotes provided by your narrowed pool of contractors, knowing exactly what should be included makes a monumental difference. The document should include the entire cost of the metal roof along with a full scope of the work to be completed. This includes:



## Roof specs

- Pitch/slope
- Layers
- Square footage
- Number of flashings/penetration



## Material costs

- Cost of metal + quantity/size
- Cost of underlayment + quantity/size
- Cost of fasteners, rivets, or screws + quantity
- Cost of clips or clamps + quantity
- Cost of sealants or butyl tape + quantity
- Cost of flashings or pipe boots + quantity/size
- Cost of plywood or other roof deck materials + quantity/size
- Any other material required



## Labor costs


- Tear-off cost per hour + number of hours to complete tear-off (shingles, metal, etc.)
- Installation cost per hour + number of hours to complete installation
- Installation cost per hour includes panel install, accessory install, drip edge install, roof deck installation or repair, and other added materials that require time to install.



## Available warranties

- Paint, substrate, workmanship, etc.
- Most warranties are included with the purchase of a metal roof, but there could be ones that come at a cost and/or aren't transferable under certain conditions. If it is new construction and you are purchasing a home with a metal roof, it is worth reaching out to the builder to verify that the manufacturer is willing to transfer the warranty in such a case.





# **Always ask if the contractor is using manufacturer details, which are industry approved installation methods.**

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Keep in mind that some of these details could cost more. That being said, using manufacturer details is the best way to ensure the success of an installation.





# Choosing the best metal roof quote for you

We wish we could just tell you there will always be a clear best choice among the bids you receive. While that may be true for some property owners, it could be a little more difficult for others. The best thing you can do is to be educated on the reasons the cost listed on the quote may be high or low. This can help you rule out quotes that may not be an appropriate fit.

## WHY A METAL ROOFING QUOTE MIGHT BE LOW

You might be thinking to yourself: I'm going to take the lowest quote that I receive. It's true that it may end up being a perfectly fine choice, especially if the contractor is trustworthy and experienced.

But there's also the other side of the fence where the contractor is unqualified or has bad intentions, which is why the price is lower and could lead to system failures and other issues, such as oil canning, leaks, or corrosion.

## WHY A METAL ROOFING QUOTE MIGHT BE HIGH

While we are discussing bids being too low, one or more bids might come in at a price noticeably higher than the others. High bids are difficult to put into acceptable or unacceptable categories because it's subjective and up to the consumer to define.

---

## Acceptable reasons for a bid to be low

1

The contracting business is small with less overhead costs to compensate for.

2

The roof project isn't complex (i.e. simple planes or little roof penetrations).

3

The old roof doesn't need to be torn off.

4

The contractor or installer uses portable rollforming equipment or a strategically located regional manufacturer.

5

The contracting business is larger and therefore has more buying power and lower prices.

6

The business is newer but still has experienced employees.

7

The economy is stale and the contractor is just trying to stay busy.

---

## Unacceptable reasons for a bid to be low

1

The proposed materials are low-quality or cheap.

2

The contractor forgot to include an item in the bid, such as an entire roof plane, penetration points, flashing, accessories, etc.

3

The contractor is using or employing under-qualified or low-wage workers.

4

A contractor is deliberately undercutting the price of a competitor they don't like and not focusing on the customer or the project.

5

The business is new and/or inexperienced in metal roof installation.

6

The contractor isn't offering warranties, whether it's for the workmanship, paint, substrate, or otherwise.

7

The contractor is proposing using different materials on unseen or less visible areas of the roof, such as the back of a home or building.

## Why a metal roofing bid might be high

1

Miscalculation, such as a human accounting error, an incorrectly measured roof, or getting quoted for the wrong material that is higher in price. Oftentimes, it is easier to walk away thinking the contractor is trying to pull one over on you; however, more often than not, it is worth having a candid conversation about this.

2

The contractor only quoted you high in materials and is attempting to upsell every product.

3

The contracting company doesn't think you're a good fit for them and tries to raise the price so you don't choose their bid. Believe it or not, there are contracting companies who meet with a prospective customer and come out of the meeting not wanting or able to do the roofing project. This can be because the roof is too complex, the contractor viewed the customer as "high maintenance," the contractor was asked to bid and cannot do it within the desired time frame, or the contractor didn't feel the chemistry was right. We're not saying this is an ethical practice, but it does happen from time to time.

4

The roof structure is very complex with an extensive installation schedule.

5

The old roof is difficult to tear off and requires extra labor.

6

The contractors belong to a union (union contractors typically cost more when compared to non-union contractors). This is not a bad thing because union contractors are generally more skilled and thoroughly trained. It may be worth asking if the labor was bid using apprentice or journeyman laborers.





# A roof is an all or nothing proposition.

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You can't just tear off half of it and then not finish the project, which is why it's important to choose the right bid from the right contractor the first time.



# Which quote should I take?

## First consideration

First and foremost, it has to fit your budget and what you feel comfortable spending on a metal roof. If you try to overextend your budget too much, you could put yourself in a bad financial situation that affects other areas of your life.

## Second consideration

Second, make sure the quote contains the correct style for your roofing requirements. It's imperative to check the manufacturer's minimum slope requirements before installation. For example, standing seam metal roofing is not "one size fits all". If you have a low-slope application (3/12 or less is the industry standard), it is important that the contractor plans to use a mechanical system that is double locked. If you have a steep-slope application (3/12 or greater is the industry standard), snap-lock systems with a clip would be acceptable.

## Third consideration

Third and most importantly, you should choose the bid you feel most comfortable with. If you've received bids from experienced contractors who are trustworthy and their quotes contain the attributes described in this chapter, it's likely a good choice. Additionally, once you do choose the bid that you feel best about, make sure to keep an open dialogue with your contact at the contracting company throughout the project to ensure the bid price is followed as closely as possible.



## WRAPPING IT ALL UP

Choosing a metal roofing bid or quote can be stressful, but if you educate yourself on how to analyze them, you're more likely to make the best choice for you.

### To recap, always make sure you check:

- The entire scope of the project is included in the quote
- The contractor isn't overcharging or undercharging you
- The quote is within your budget range
- The quote has the correct application for your roof



## CHAPTER

# 3

## 7 Reasons the Lowest Metal Roofing Installation Bid Could Cause Problems

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The lowest price on a metal roofing bid could spell trouble and lead to even more money being spent in the end on repairs. Know what to look for in a project quote that could attribute to the low price so you can prevent potential issues in the future.

# Everyone is always looking for the best deal they can get, right?

**As buyers, we are often inclined to choose the lowest price for items or products we want to purchase.**

Why? Because we don't want to spend too much of our hard-earned money on something we could get at a lower price. Unfortunately, the lowest price on something like a metal roof could spell trouble in more ways than one and lead to even more money being spent in the end to fix problems. It doesn't mean it always will, but it's important to know what to look for on a quote or bid that could attribute to the low price and potentially create issues and failures in the future.

## **7 reasons why the lowest metal roofing installation quote could cause problems:**

- Materials are missing, incorrect, or low-quality
- The contractor is using a non-engineered system
- The contractor is trying to make your budget work when it doesn't
- The contracting business is small and/or younger
- The contractor doesn't offer after-the-sale benefits
- An accounting error occurred on the bid
- The contractor deliberately underbid to get the job





# 7 Reasons the lowest metal roof installation bid could cause problems

1

## **MATERIALS ARE MISSING, INCORRECT, OR LOW-QUALITY**

Contractors who are quoting jobs aren't always perfect and sometimes make honest mistakes. But it's their job to quickly correct their mistakes and ensure that you are happy with what is included in the quote.

The success of a metal roof is contingent on all of the panels, accessories and components, materials, and add-ons included during the installation stage. Also, not only should there be all the parts, but they should be the correct parts you've specified, such as the right color, gauge, profile, finish, or other choices for metal roofing.

The full list of items that should be included in the quote is available on page 17 in chapter two.

2

## **THE CONTRACTOR IS USING A NON-ENGINEERED SYSTEM**

One easy way to determine why a metal roof bid is too low is to check if the contractor quoted a non-engineered metal roof system, as these can be significantly less expensive than engineered systems.

First, we want to mention that engineered metal roofing systems, which are tested in a third-party lab and adhere to strict metal roofing industry standards, are not always a requirement. These engineered systems tend to be used more in commercial projects over residential homes because many localities require it and also because of the size, complexity, and functionality of commercial buildings. If you want to know if it's a requirement for your home or building, contact your local building department to check. Even if it's not required, you should always have the option to choose if you want to buy one, which the contractor should take into account when calculating the estimate.

Not using an engineered metal roofing system isn't always a bad thing, but just know that these systems have been substantiated and have the testing results to prove that it will withstand harsh weather and environments.



# 3

## THE CONTRACTOR IS TRYING TO MAKE YOUR BUDGET WORK WHEN IT DOESN'T

Your budget is important. It's as simple as that.

You should have a budget range that you feel comfortable spending on a metal roof before you schedule any consultations or receive any bids from contractors. You want to ensure that you're not trying to overextend how much money you can spend and leave yourself in a bad financial situation.

One of the first indicators that your contractor might try to low-bid you is if they ask what your budget is before they ever see your roof or provide any quotes or bids. For an example, if a contractor finds out your budget is around \$8,000 and they're accustomed to quoting jobs at \$10,000 or over, they might be inclined to include low-quality products in the bid in order to get the job. This isn't true with all contractors, as some might hear your budget and be truthful by telling you that they don't quote projects that low.

It's best not to tell contractors your budget before you receive bids. That way, if you get quotes that are well over your budget, you might end up realizing you can't afford a metal roofing system after all.

# 4

## THE CONTRACTING BUSINESS IS SMALL AND/OR YOUNGER

We want to preface this by saying not all small contracting businesses are bad; you just need to ensure the contractor has the capacity, knowledge, and ability to complete your roofing project before hiring them. There are a few different ways that hiring a small business as your metal roofing contractor could get you into trouble, including inexperience and longevity.

### INEXPERIENCE

Most new contracting companies start out as a small business. Some of these small businesses may be an experienced contractor who branched off and started their own business. But there are also inexperienced or young contractors who just start businesses on a whim and might not have enough experience to be a reliable metal roof installer. To combat this, always be sure to ask how long the business has existed and how many years each installer has of experience. If the answer is under five years, it may be worth questioning and checking online ratings, reviews, project photos, anticipated installation details, and other indicators of good performance in metal roof installations.

### LONGEVITY

It's an issue we've heard about in the past: Businesses changing their names every few years in order to escape a bad review or reputation. With smaller businesses, there is less room for error, especially when they often rely on positive reviews to grow their business. One or two bad reviews could significantly affect how much work a contractor is getting, which is why contractors with bad reviews have been known to change their name every few years.

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#### **If the business is newer or smaller, be sure to ask:**

- Why is your business small?
  - Has your business ever gone by another name in the past? If so, what was the name and why did you change it?
  - If you are offering me a five-year (or other time range) warranty, can you guarantee that you will still be in business in five years? If you aren't in business, what would I need to do?
- 

Like we said, not all small business contractors are bad. Some of them are very qualified and perfectly fine with having a smaller contracting business. The biggest challenge contractors face today is maintaining a qualified labor force, so many companies choose to remain small so they can better manage their crews. Just do your due diligence and always ask the right questions.



# 5

## THE CONTRACTOR DOESN'T OFFER AFTER-THE-SALE BENEFITS

Contractors are responsible for providing customers with the peace-of-mind before, during, and after the installation. Part of this involves offering after-sale benefits to buyers, which are often reasons that many people buy metal roofing, including:

### WARRANTIES



#### **Substrate**

Offered by the manufacturer



#### **Weather-tight**

Offered by the manufacturer for non-residential buildings



#### **Paint/Finish**

Offered by the manufacturer on behalf of paint/coating companies



#### **Workmanship**

Offered by the contractor

### MAINTENANCE

While it's not common with every contractor, offering metal roof maintenance is a great benefit for the property owner to receive with their purchase. A low price could indicate that maintenance isn't included with the installation, so be sure to check with the contractor before you buy.

### REPAIRS

This goes along with the workmanship warranty. Just think about it: If the contractor won't back up their own work and installation abilities, including any after-the-fact repairs or fixes, should they really be trusted?

Also, before you sign a contract, make sure there is a clause about workmanship or leak repair for a specified period of time, which ranges anywhere from 12 to 60 months after the installation date.

### TIP!

The easiest way to tell if a contractor isn't offering any of these benefits is to look at the quote. If the price seems too low, or if you don't see any of the above items listed, it's worth asking about. It's the contractor's responsibility to discuss warranties, maintenance, and repairs with the property owners before any sale is made.



# 6

## AN ACCOUNTING ERROR OCCURRED ON THE BID

There are many different scenarios where an error in the accounting on a bid could make the price lower than normal.

### **This could include:**

- A math or accounting mistake was made
- Low bidding (in materials or hours of work) to get the job and then having to purchase extra materials or add extra time after the contractor is hired
- Something substantial is missing from the bid

As we mentioned before, everything should be included in the bid, plus there should also be a clause about unforeseen product additions that are found during the installation. Such as, “If we find this condition/problem, then this will happen.” If it’s missing or you haven’t discussed potential added costs with the contractor, make sure to ask how it will be handled. Often times, contractors will include “escalation clauses” in their quotes. This is absolutely acceptable and common in the metal roofing industry; however, if the installed price is much higher than the quoted price, it is fair to have the contractor prove why the increased cost is necessary prior to just accepting the costs.

Bottom line: If the company is experienced and well-versed in quoting and providing bids, there shouldn’t be any mistakes on the bid, whether it was just an accounting issue or a missing part.

# 7

## THE CONTRACTOR DELIBERATELY UNDERBID TO GET THE JOB

Accidents in accounting could be made, but there are also situations where a bid is deliberately low just so the contractor gets the job. They could be underbidding the number of labor hours needed or could be using under-qualified, uninsured, or even cheap laborers. Be wary of this, especially because it could lead to extra charges for time and replacement materials later on in the installation or afterward.

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**There is also the scenario where a contractor is undercutting their own prices in order to win over jobs from their direct competitors.**

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Many contractors are familiar with their competition and have an idea of where they will bid work, so it is not necessarily a bad thing to communicate who the other players are on a project. This may or may not end up causing issues, but it could be seen as not focusing on the needs of the customer. Just keep this in mind and always ask if you suspect the bid is deliberately too low.



## WRAPPING IT ALL UP

The lowest bid for a metal roofing installation project won't always cause problems, but it's happened enough times in the industry to warrant talking about so it can be prevented.

Our best advice is to keep an open dialogue with the contractors. If you feel like something is priced out too low and could be a cause for concern, talk to them and ask questions; it's their job to provide the best experience for their customers as possible.

Don't let yourself be "sold" on accepting sub-par workers, products, or details on your roof just to save a few dollars.

### Keep an eye out for:

- Low-quality or cheap materials
- The types of materials included in the bid
- Smaller businesses with only young/inexperienced workers
- Contractors who don't offer after-the-sale benefits
- Accounting problems or mistakes





## CHAPTER

# 4

# Expectations & How to Prepare for Your Best Metal Roof Installation

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Knowing what to expect and how to prepare before, during, and after a metal roofing installation is one of the best ways to ensure the project goes smoothly without any problems.

# Choosing the right contractor is just one piece of the metal roof installation puzzle.

The next part of the installation of a metal roof, or any kind of roof for that matter, can be just as stressful. This is especially true if it's your first home/business or just the first time you've ever purchased a roof. Let's help ease some of that stress by educating you about what to expect before, during, and after the installation of a metal roof.

## Some of the most common worries we hear about from customers include:

**HOW DO I NEED TO PREPARE MY PROPERTY FOR AN INSTALLATION?**

**DOES SOMEONE NEED TO BE AT MY HOME/BUILDING AT ALL TIMES?**

**WHERE WILL THE CONTRACTORS PUT THEIR VEHICLES, EQUIPMENT, ETC.?**

**HOW CAN I PREPARE MY PETS, CHILDREN OR NEIGHBORS FOR THE LOUD NOISES?**

**WHO IS WORKING ON MY HOME OR BUSINESS? WILL IT BE MY MAIN CONTACT?**

**HOW LONG WILL THE INSTALL TAKE?**







# What to expect before, during, and after the installation of a metal roof

## BEFORE

- Metal roofing consultations
- Choosing the best bid or quote
- Contractor prep work
- Home or building owner prep work

## DURING

- Metal roof installation basics
- Property expectations during a metal roof installation
- Home or building owner accessibility during installation

## AFTER

- Contractor cleanup
- Project walkthrough with the contractor
- Final discussions with the contractor





# What to expect before the metal roof installation

Before any installation occurs, you'll be going through the process of finding the best metal roofing contractors and ultimately choosing the best metal roofing bid for you.

Once you've received the bids, reviewed them, and chosen the one that best fits you, you'll need to contact the business and let them know you accept their bid.

## **During this conversation, you should be discussing and deciding on:**

- The date to begin the installation that works for both you and the contractor. Try to show flexibility if the contractor is busy. This is actually a good thing; the busiest contractors are busy for a reason: they do good work.
- The upfront payment terms and how it will be collected.
- The best way to communicate with one another.

It will also be helpful to ask the contractor what you should be doing to prepare your house/building, yard, driveway, pool, and other affected parts of a property for the installation, as each contractor's recommendations will be different. We will cover some common prep work for contractors and property owners next.

## **TIP!**

If each contracting business you meet with wants to run your credit for financing, make sure you call your lender ahead of time to tell them you are meeting roofing contractors who will be checking your credit score. They can help make sure your credit score isn't negatively affected.

## Contractor prep work

- ✓ Make at least one reminder call to the property owner at least one week before the scheduled installation date
- ✓ Arrange for a dumpster or recycling bin to be delivered to the property, especially if a tear off of the old roof is included
- ✓ Provide contingency plans in case of poor weather
- ✓ Provide an exterior outlet (if needed)
- ✓ Drop off any necessary metal materials, accessories, tools, or equipment
- ✓ Know about building access and advise installers of areas not to go, gates/doors to shut, etc.

## Home or building owner prep work

- ✓ Clear any and all sidewalks around your home/building
- ✓ Move any potted plants from underneath the roof
- ✓ Clear any driveways of vehicles, bikes, or other items taking away from the contractor's workspace
- ✓ Commercial properties: Consider setting up blockades so patrons or customers stay safe
- ✓ Have the contractor clearly define the workspace and storage area for their tools and equipment for the duration of the project
- ✓ Protect the flowers, plants, and other shrubbery located beneath the roof or next to the building with tarps (most contractors can provide them)
- ✓ Clean up items around the yard, patios, decks, balconies, etc.
- ✓ Define a reasonable expectation for the timeframe for the project and occupancy
- ✓ Move sculptures, birdbaths, wind chimes, or other lawn ornaments that could get damaged or broken
- ✓ If the roof deck needs to be fixed or replaced, consider covering or moving the exposed items in the attic
- ✓ Make arrangements for children who might be disturbed by the noise
- ✓ Warn neighbors of potential loud noises they will likely hear during the install
- ✓ Make arrangements for pets needing to go outdoors
- ✓ Ask the contractor if there is an entrance/exit that is the safest to go through with your pets

# Metal roof installation basics

Needless to say, there will be a lot of activity during the days of the actual installation. Like we mentioned before, each contractor's process will be different, but there are some common expectations you should be able to prepare for.

1

There will potentially be a lot of workers in your yard/ on your roof during the entirety of the installation.

2

It could be loud at times, and might even cause the house to shake in some cases.

3

Pets and small children have been known to become irritated with the noises and level of activity outside.

4

Items could be falling from the roof at any time, especially if a tear-off is scheduled.

5

Your yard/property will become dirty and dusty, which could come indoors through open windows and doors.

6

Your yard and surrounding areas may not be cleaned up until the installation is completely finished, which includes any accessories, plastic coverings, or torn off roof pieces in the yard. The dumpster may also not be immediately picked up on the day the installation is completed; it could take up to a week afterward.





## PROPERTY EXPECTATIONS DURING A METAL ROOF INSTALLATION

Most contractors don't expect the home or building owner to provide them with anything that isn't associated with the installation. They often just require that you give them the space they need to complete the installation.

### KEEP IN MIND

- Most contractors don't require much space to park their transportation, as they usually come as a crew in one or two vehicles. But it's important to try to create as much space as possible to accommodate for rollforming equipment and other tools that may be used.
- While you can offer, contractors typically do not expect to use the restroom inside of your home or business. Many will go to a nearby establishment if needed. Additionally, it is NOT appropriate for any contractor to relieve themselves anywhere on the project site (other than a portable restroom).
- Contractors often bring their own refreshments and food to the job site and do not require or expect anything to be provided to them.
- Some tools and machinery/equipment need electricity to operate, which is something that should be discussed beforehand to make sure you are okay with them using your outlets or other power sources.
- Again, make sure you communicate to the contractor if a gate or door needs to stay shut. If a roofing contractor needs access to the inside of the building, there should be a reasonable explanation for it. Additionally, they should take the necessary precautions to maintain a clean environment if they do need to come indoors.

# Home or building owner accessibility during the install

Another way to ensure the installation goes smoothly is to know your involvement in the project. For example, any decisions that affect the price of the metal roof should directly involve the home or building owner. If it's a topic related to processes or how to install, it might not be something the property owner is involved in. Here are some other recommendations based on information we've heard over the years:

1

If you can be at home or in the business during the install, we would recommend it. If it's not a possibility, discuss how to handle this with the contractor.

2

You should only have ONE person as your main contact, which is generally the overseer of the project. Conversely, there should be one main contact for the contractor.

If you have a question, get in touch with your contact and not one of the installers or other workers. If your contact has a question for you, they will typically just come knock on your door to ask.

Your contact should also be the person who discusses any unexpected expenses or additions to the original cost of the metal roof with you. Make sure they thoroughly explain the problem, tell you how they will fix it (and tells you before they fix it), and gives you a variety of remedies to choose from.

3

Try to refrain from hovering outside during the entirety of the installation. It's okay to go outside to look at the progress once in a while, but the installers/contractors don't need to be watched the entire time.

4

Most of all, trust your own decision of hiring this contractor or business to install your metal roof. If you went through the process of becoming an educated consumer and hired the best contractor that does great metal roofing work, you should feel comfortable with your buying decision.

# What to expect after the metal roof installation

## CONTRACTOR CLEANUP

After the installation is complete, one of the first things the contractor is expected to do is put the yard and surrounding areas back in order.

### This includes a number of tasks, such as:

- Walking the yard with a magnet to pick up any nails, rivets, fasteners, or other metal components on the ground.
- Picking up any metal panels, asphalt shingles, or other unused or torn-off materials.
- If they were indoors at any point and made some kind of mess, they are expected to come back and clean it upon completion.
- Putting back any lawn ornaments, pots, or other items they moved before or during the installation. Please note: They likely won't put back anything you moved before they arrived.
- Scheduling for the dumpster to be picked up.

## PROJECT WALKTHROUGH WITH THE CONTRACTOR

One of the most important parts of the post-installation stage is the project walkthrough with the contractor. During this conversation, expect to talk about the installation, how it went, problems they ran into, and what to expect with your new roof.

Before the walkthrough is completed, ask for a 48-hour window to evaluate the roof and make sure it's done to your liking. In this time, walk around, look at the metal roof, your surroundings, your yard, and anything else the installers worked on or around. From there, you can develop a list of areas of concern to bring up with the contractor when the 48-hour window is over. This list might include:



**SPOTS THEY  
NEED TO FIX OR  
REDO (SCUFFS,  
SCRATCHES, DENTS,  
UNEVEN CUTS, ETC.)**



**INCOMPLETE  
OR POORLY  
DONE AREAS  
(FLASHING ZONES,  
TRIM, ETC.)**



**ANY LEFT-BEHIND  
ITEMS OR TOOLS**



**POTENTIAL  
PROBLEM AREAS  
(OIL CANNING,  
STRUCTURAL  
ISSUES, ETC.)**



# Final discussions with the contractor

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After everything has been addressed and resolved after the project walk-through, it's important to discuss a couple of final topics with the contractor, including:



## Final payments

How the remainder of the bill will be invoiced is completely dependent on the contractor, so make sure you discuss how you should be paying for it.



## Warranties

You should already know your warranty options on your new metal roof, but now is the time to ask how to apply for warranties and if any actions are needed on your end to ensure you get the correct documentation. Depending on if your structure is residential or commercial (most weather-tight warranties are just available to commercial properties), the warranties you have to choose from may vary.

Keep in mind, warranties may not be available until all invoices are paid. However, it's common for building owners to negotiate that they will make their last payment after warranties have been issued. Most contractors should offer a workmanship warranty for a period of time, usually two to five years, to protect against leaks in the short-term after the installation. Also, find out what action needs to be taken if a failure occurs and get it in writing (most good contractors have a plan of action).



## After-sale benefits

Some contractors provide maintenance on a metal roof they've installed. Make a point to ask if this is offered with your purchase.



## Feedback

Many contractors ask for feedback on both your satisfaction with the job and/or any improvements they could make. Roofing contractors thrive on reviews and testimonials, especially on Google and their company Facebook pages, from past customers to grow their business. If you do provide feedback, many contractors provide some kind of incentive or discount.



## WRAPPING IT ALL UP

When you know what to expect, you can better prepare yourself for your metal roof installation, which is one easy way to alleviate some of the stress that comes with a buying a metal roof.

### To recap:

**Before:** After choosing the best contractor and bid, prepare your building, yard, neighbors, children, and pets for the install.

**During:** Expect a lot of activity, people, and loud noises during the installation. Try to avoid hovering over workers and only communicate with your main contact about any concerns.

**After:** Make sure the work is done to your liking, you know how final payments are collected, and you know how warranties are handled.