



METRO DETROIT ROOFING

36927 Schoolcraft Rd.
Livonia, MI 48150

(800) 750-1326
Fax (734) 464-7291

TERMS THE ROOFER USES

Words like “exposure”, “rake” and “valley” that are bandied about freely in the roofing industry probably don’t have quite the same meaning for you.

Looking at them through a roofer’s eyes though will streamline the project you undertake. Here are some of the more commonly used terms:

Built-up roof: a flat or slightly sloped roof surfaced with alternating (or built up) layers of roofing felt and hot-mopped asphalt, and a layer of gravel or crushed rock on top.

Butt: the exposed end of a shingle or shake.

Courses: the horizontal rows of roofing material, laid successively from the eave to the ridge of the roof.

Drip edge: a type of flashing made of thin strips of metal or plastic that extends the length of eaves and rakes to facilitate water runoff.

Eave: the edge of the roof that projects beyond the house wall.

Exposure: the portion of each shingle or tile exposed to the weather. Also called “weather exposure”.

Fascia: wood or other trim covering the ends of the rafters.

Flashing: waterproofing materials, usually metal, that connect roof shingles or tiles to chimneys, valleys, vent pipes, vertical walls, eaves, and rakes.

Gable: a type of roof with two slopes meeting at a horizontal ridge. Also, the triangular area formed by such a roof.

Hip: a downward-sloping intersection of two roof planes that extends from the ridge to the outside corner of the house. Also, a type of roof.

Rake: the edge of a pitched roof at the gable end.

Ridge: the top edge of the roof, where two roof slopes meet in a horizontal line.

Sheathing: boards or plywood sheets that form the nailing base for roofing shingles or tiles.

Slope (or pitch): the number of inches of vertical rise of the roof over a horizontal distance of 12 inches. A “4 in 12” roof has a slope that rises 4 inches over a 12 inch run.

Soffit: the underside of the rafters and roof at the eaves.

Square: unit of measure equaling 100 square feet, used as a basis for measuring roof area. Also, the amount of roofing material, allowing for overlapping, needed to cover 100 square feet of roof.

Tab: the cutout part of an asphalt shingle, three-tab shingles usually have three 5 inch tabs in a strip that measures 12 by 36 inches.

Underlayment: the material, usually asphalt-saturated roofing felt used to cover deck sheathing before the roof surface is put down.

Valley: the junction where two downward sloping roofs meet an angle, an important channel for water runoff.

