

What New Roof Construction in Austin Entails: Process, Costs, and Design Choices

Understanding New Roof Construction in Austin

When I first moved to Austin and bought a 1970s ranch house, I thought a roof was just a roof. Then I learned the hard way that replacing an old roof and building a new roof from scratch are two completely different animals. If you are planning new roof construction Austin, you need to know what you are getting into before you call a contractor. The process is longer, the permits are more involved, and the design decisions you make now will affect everything from energy bills to curb appeal for decades.

New Roof Construction vs. Roof Replacement: The Core Difference

A roof replacement means tearing off the old shingles, fixing damaged decking, and laying new shingles over the existing structure. The framing stays. The pitch stays. You are essentially refreshing the skin. New roof construction, on the other hand, starts from the ground up - or from the top plate up. You are designing a roof system that may not have existed before, or you are rebuilding a failed structure entirely. This distinction matters for timelines, budgets, and the number of people you need to involve.

In Austin, where we get both scorching summers and the occasional freeze, [new roof construction Austin](#) often means dealing with a house that was poorly framed or one that needs a second story added. I have seen projects where the old roof was so undersized for modern loads that the only safe move was to strip everything and start over. That is when you get to make choices you do not get with a simple replacement.

The Permit Process in Austin

Before any work begins, you need a city of Austin building permit. This is not optional. The city requires a full set of structural drawings stamped by an engineer. You will also need an elevation survey if you are changing the roof height or adding a new structure. The survey shows how your new roof will sit relative to your neighbors' homes and property lines. I have seen permit applications get held up for weeks because the survey was missing or the truss design did not meet the local wind load requirements.

Speaking of trusses, they are the backbone of most new roof construction in Austin. Engineers design them to handle the specific span, pitch, and load of your house. In a replacement, you might reuse old trusses if they are still in good shape. In new construction, you are ordering

custom trusses from a manufacturer. That alone can add two to four weeks to the timeline just for fabrication and delivery.

Timeline and Process

A typical new roof construction project in Austin takes six to twelve weeks from the day the first nail is pulled. Here is a rough breakdown:

- **Permitting and design:** Two to four weeks. This includes the elevation survey, structural engineering, and city plan review.
- **Demolition and site prep:** One week. Old roofing, decking, and any damaged framing come out. This is also when soil compaction is checked if you are adding a new foundation or support wall.
- **Framing and truss installation:** One to two weeks. The roof framing goes up, including collar ties for stability on steep pitches and the rake board along the gable ends.
- **Decking and underlayment:** One week. OSB (oriented strand board) sheathing is nailed down, then a synthetic underlayment is rolled out. In Austin, an ICE barrier is often recommended in the valleys and eaves to prevent ice dams during rare winter storms.
- **Flashing, venting, and finishing:** Two to three weeks. This includes valley flashing, ridge vent installation, soffit and fascia work, and the final shingle or metal roof.

The weather in Austin can throw off the schedule. A week of rain in April can push everything back. Good contractors build in a buffer, but you should expect at least a couple of unexpected delays.

Design Decisions You Only Get Once

When you are building a new roof from scratch, you have the freedom to choose materials and details that are nearly impossible to change later. For example, if you want a standing seam metal roof, that decision has to be made early because the framing, underlayment, and flashing details are different from what you would use for asphalt shingles or composition shingles. Standing seam panels require specific clips and a different type of synthetic underlayment to prevent corrosion from trapped moisture.

If you prefer the look of architectural shingles, which are thicker and more dimensional than standard three-tab shingles, you need to confirm that your roof framing can support the extra weight. GAF and CertainTeed both offer architectural shingle lines that look like slate or wood shakes, but they are heavier. The same goes for composition shingles that mimic natural materials. Your truss spacing and OSB thickness may need to be upgraded.

Warranties and Long-Term Costs

Warranties on new roof construction in Austin are typically better than on replacements because the entire assembly is new and designed to current codes. Most manufacturers like GAF and CertainTeed offer 25 to 50 year warranties on their shingles, but only if the underlayment and ventilation meet their specifications. That means you need a ridge vent at the peak and proper soffit vents at the eaves. Skipping these details can void the warranty.

The cost of new roof construction in Austin in 2026 is expected to run between \$12,000 and \$25,000 for an average single-story home, depending on pitch, materials, and complexity. A steep roof with architectural shingles and a standing seam metal roof on a dormer will push that number higher. But you also save money over time because a well-designed roof with good ventilation and quality materials lasts longer and reduces cooling costs.

Practical Advice from the Field

I have seen homeowners try to save money by reusing old valley flashing or skipping the ICE barrier. That rarely ends well. In Austin, we get intense sun that can bake the underlayment if it is not rated for high temperatures. A good synthetic underlayment with a reflective surface can lower attic temperatures by ten to fifteen degrees. That is real savings on your electric bill.

Another thing I always tell people: do not let the roofer talk you out of collar ties. They are required by code for certain roof pitches, and they keep the walls from spreading under load. I have inspected houses where the collar ties were cut to make room for an attic storage shelf, and the walls had shifted visibly. That is a structural failure waiting to happen.

Finally, pay attention to the rake board and fascia. These are the visible edges of your roof. A poorly installed rake board can let wind drive rain under the shingles, and a sagging fascia looks terrible no matter how expensive the shingles are. Good carpenters take pride in these details. If your contractor seems rushed at the end of the job, that is a red flag.

Final Thoughts

New roof construction in Austin is not a weekend project. It requires permits, engineering, careful material selection, and a crew that knows how to work with trusses, OSB, and synthetic underlayment. But if you do it right, you end up with a roof that handles the Texas sun, the occasional freeze, and the next fifty years of weather. The key is to plan ahead, ask questions, and never assume that a replacement mentality applies to a new build.

Whether you choose GAF Timberline shingles or a CertainTeed standing seam metal roof, the decisions you make during new roof construction will define your home's comfort and value for decades. Take the time to get it right.