

8 Warning Signs That Your Roof Is Shot

A solid roof above your head is pretty crucial if you've become accustomed to having a warm, cozy, and leak-free home. Here's how to notice and deal with potential issues before they become big ones.

1. Your roof's 25th birthday is approaching.

"An asphalt shingle roof should last between 20 and 30 years," says Claude McGavic, executive director of The National Association of Home Inspectors. *"If you have a 40-year-old roof, there could be a problem — even if it looks good from the ground."*

How much time you've got left: Five to 10 years, depending on your roof's condition. If you live in a development and your neighbors are all starting to replace their roofing, that could be a sign that you should do the same.

2. The shingles are curling.

Shingles can curl in two ways: There's cupping, which happens when the edges of the shingles turn upward; and there's clawing, which is when the edges stay flat and the middle starts to come up. *"Both are signs of weathering and indicate that problems — potentially leaks — are relatively close to fruition,"* says Mark Graham, vice president of the National Roofing Contractors Association.

How much time you've got left: *"Depending on the extent of the curling, it could be anywhere from a year to five years before you need a new roof,"* says Graham.

123 Mary Street East | Whitby, Ontario, L1N 2P3

289-314-8786 | 647-417-0561 | steve@truststevetallo.com | Lic. M14001732

3. Entire shingles are missing.

From a functional standpoint, there should be no problem with just replacing a few shingles here and there. *"What you do need to be prepared for is the fact that it's just about impossible to get a new shingle to match the color of an old one,"* says Graham. *"Granule colors have changed pretty significantly over the years. Plus, the colors change slightly with weathering."*

How much time you've got left: You can keep patching until a bigger issue presents itself, but if a roof starts to look like a checkerboard, people often opt to replace the whole thing.

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