



Home inspection

Program leader Enrique De Paz checks for damaged shingles and siding, which can signal hidden structural damage. Photograph by Michael Smith

This article is the archived version of a report that appeared in [June 2009 Consumer Reports magazine](#).

Curled shingles and cracked boards can lead to tens of thousands of dollars in water and insect damage. Our top picks for roofing and siding can protect your home for decades. They're also the most visible way to give your home a makeover now and make it much easier to sell later.

Our latest tests of more than 55 products include asphalt roofing and vinyl siding that look more like real slate and wood for roughly half the cost of other asphalt and vinyl. We also found values among fake-slate roofing and fiber-cement siding that looks real even up close (see [Other Tested Types](#), for fake slate).

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The best are strong yet flexible and resist weathering, impacts, and lifting.

CR Best Buy

All offer top value and are recommended. Prices are per square (100 square feet).

Recommended

These high-scoring models stand out from the crowd for the reasons below.

Recommended

Best for most; all are fine values:

A6 Tamko \$125
A7 Owens Corning \$70 CR Best Buy
A8 CertainTeed \$105
A9 CertainTeed \$65 CR Best Buy
A10 Atlas \$90 **B1 Atlas** \$135

Most are available with algae resistance for damp areas. Paying more for **A6** or **A8** buys more weather resistance or a longer warranty. **B1** was tops among flatter three-tab shingles.

Even tougher but pricier:

A1 Owens Corning \$225
A2 CertainTeed \$215
A14 Tamko \$150

A1 and **A2** were strongest and carry 10-year full coverage for materials. **A14** proved less resilient in our strength tests but is the best choice for areas where high winds are common.

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CR Best Buy
 Recommended

● Excellent ● Very good ○ Good ● Fair ● Poor

Recommendation	Rank	Product	Price 100 sq. ft.	Overall score 0 100 P F G V G E	Weight (lb.) 100 sq. ft.	Test results				Warranty
					Strength	Wind	Weathering	Impact	10-yr. full	Materials (yr.)
A LAMINATED SHINGLES They're relatively thick and mimic the look of wood or slate.										
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	1	Owens Corning Berkshire Collection	\$225	87	371	●	○	●	●	● life
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	2	CertainTeed Grand Manor	215	87	430	●	○	●	●	● life
	3	IKO Crowne Slate	220	86	243	●	●	●	●	● life
	4	CertainTeed Presidential Shake	215	69	347	●	○	●	●	● life
	5	GAF-Elk Camelot	215	68	459	●	○	○	●	● life
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	6	Tamko Heritage 50	125	68	308	●	○	●	●	50
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	7	Owens Corning Oakridge	70	67	247	●	○	●	●	30
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	8	CertainTeed Landmark Premium	105	67	296	●	○	●	●	● life
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	9	CertainTeed Landmark	65	66	257	●	○	●	●	30
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	10	Atlas Pinnacle	90	61	223	●	○	●	●	35
	11	IKO Cambridge 30 AR (East)	85	60	236	○	○	●	●	30
	12	GAF-Elk Timberline Prestique Lifetime	105	60	337	○	●	●	●	● life
	13	Tamko Heritage 30	90	59	244	●	●	●	●	30
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	14	Tamko Heritage Vintage	150	59	390	○	●	●	○	50
	15	GAF-Elk Timberline Natural Shadow	85	59	242	○	●	○	●	30
	16	Owens Corning Duration	70	58	240	●	●	○	●	30
	17	Malarkey #273 Legacy	340	58	275	○	●	●	●	● 50
	18	Owens Corning Duration Premium	110	53	259	○	○	○	●	● life
B THREE-TAB SHINGLES These are thinner and lighter but lack the depth of laminated shingle.										
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	1	Atlas StormMaster Slate	135	61	239	○	○	●	●	life
	2	GAF-Elk Royal Sovereign	70	59	215	○	●	●	●	25
	3	Atlas GlassMaster	75	58	192	○	●	●	●	25
	4	Malarkey #204 Dura-Seal	200	58	245	○	○	○	●	25
	5	CertainTeed XT 25	60	58	220	○	●	●	●	25
	6	IKO Gentry Ultra AR	85	57	225	○	●	●	●	30
	7	Tamko Elite Glass-Seal	70	55	222	○	●	●	●	25
	8	Owens Corning Supreme AR	60	55	233	○	●	○	●	25

Guide to Ratings

Overall score is based on performance in lab tests, with strength more heavily weighted. Displayed scores are rounded; products are listed in order of precise overall score. **Strength** denotes flexibility and resistance to tearing, stretching, and nail pull-through. **Wind** is how well edges resisted lifting force, based on how well shingles held together. **Weathering** simulates resistance to elements, based on successive exposure to water spray, intense heat, and ultraviolet light. **Impact** is resistance at 0° F to blows from 5-pound weight simulating tree limbs or other fallen

[x Close](#)

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Our [Ratings](#) (available to subscribers) include enough top picks to give you plenty of options, even if your installer prefers certain brands. Considering the differences, we suggest you opt for a special order or even use another installer to get one of our recommended products. Here's what else to bear in mind:

Check the details

Most roofing warranties include full reimbursement for materials and installation but only for a limited time. That usually doesn't cover winds above 85 mph or faulty installation, so get a labor warranty from the installer. Save all receipts, invoices, and a bundle of shingles for repairs. And be sure roofing has the highest fire rating, Class A, as found on all roofing we tested.

Think twice about layering

Building codes mandate a tear-off down to the sheathing if you already have two layers of shingle. We suggest tearing off even a single layer to avoid missing any rot, water damage, or insects beneath. (Figure on another \$100 or more per 100 square feet.)

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You could spend an extra \$30,000 for real slate or shakes. Or you could get the look without the expense. Prices are per 100 square feet (one square) for materials only; figure on roughly 30 squares and \$3,500 to \$10,000 labor for a 2,300-square-foot house.

Asphalt

Best for style on a budget. Relatively light and easy to install. Lasts 30 years or more. Laminated shingle looks more like slate or shakes than three-tab versions at similar prices.

But it can be vulnerable to high wind and, unless it's treated, algae.

Cost \$60 to \$350.



Fake Slate

Best for the look of stone without the weight. Fools the eye even up close. Weighs about the same as asphalt, eliminating the need for structural upgrades.

But some can crack under impact or fade. And all are relatively pricey.

Cost \$380 to \$500.



Metal

Best for light weight and easy installation. Roughly half as heavy as asphalt. Offers lots of colors, patterns, and metals (aluminum, copper, and steel). Won't burn.

But some, such as copper, are pricey and discolor. It's easily dented and noisier in a storm.

Cost \$120 to \$650.



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Practical can also be handsome when it comes to your roof: Owens Corning's Oakridge and CertainTeed's Landmark, both CR Best Buys, are among the asphalt products that deliver the layered, dimensional look of laminated shingles for less than some flatter, three-tab versions.

We subjected almost 30 asphalt products to months of pulling and pounding to see which are likeliest to last under wind and impacts. We also put shingles under intense heat and UV light in our weathering tests. We found that paying more doesn't guarantee a tougher shingle.

At \$340 per square, the 100 square feet by which shingles are sold, Malarkey's #273 Legacy laminated shingle costs five times the price of some top picks. Yet unimpressive performance in our strength and wind tests put it near the bottom of our Ratings. Malarkey's #204 Dura-Seal three-tab shingle was also unimpressive in our tests despite its high price.

Some of the best roofing could be too heavy for some homes. Both top-scoring laminated shingles weighed 100 to 200 pounds more per square than some others that scored almost as well. That could overstress rafters and other structural parts if you shingle over an existing layer.

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We tested four composite shingles that look like real slate, are warranted for 50 years, and have Class-A fire ratings. We also tested a new take on metal.

Our fake slate included CertainTeed Symphony, DaVinci Slate, EcoStar Majestic Slate, and Tamko Lamarite Slate. All weigh about the same as asphalt, and most cost about \$450 per 100 square feet. The CertainTeed costs less but faded in our tests. One of 10 DaVinci shingles and two of 10 Tamko shingles cracked under impact.

The steel Tamko Metalworks, \$275 per 100 square feet, is light and didn't fade. Flames only charred its finish. Some reflective color choices can net you up to \$1,500 in energy rebates. But it dented and was noisiest, though its textured surface hid minor damage in our tests.

The bottom line

For the look of real slate, consider the CertainTeed or EcoStar, which faded but didn't crack. The Tamko Metalworks is a good choice if you like the look of metal. And be sure to use an installer familiar with the material.

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