

# Essential Functions of Roof Layers

## 1. Roof Decking Is the Foundation

At the very base sits the roof deck, often made from plywood or oriented strand board (OSB). The deck attaches to the rafters and provides the platform for everything else above it. If this foundational layer is weak or damaged, the whole system is at risk.

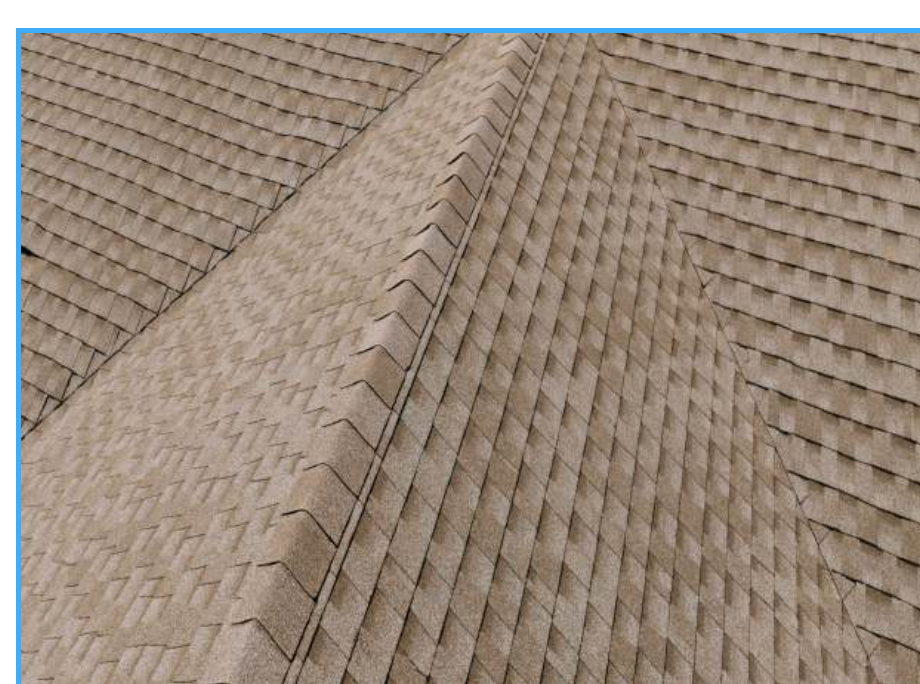


## 2. Underlayment Provides Hidden Protection

On top of the decking lies the underlayment, an unsung hero of the roofing system. This water-resistant or waterproof sheet prevents moisture from seeping into the deck if the outer layer of shingles or tiles is damaged. Options include asphalt-saturated felt and modern synthetic materials.

## 3. Starter Strips Set the Edge

Starter strips are narrow rows of shingles placed along the roof's edges before the main shingles. They anchor the first row of shingles and protect against wind uplift. Without them, edge shingles can blow off more easily, exposing the underlayment and decking beneath.



## 4. Shingles or Final Covering Are the Face of the Roof

The final covering is the layer everyone sees from the street. Whether you choose shingles, metal panels, or clay tiles, the outer covering is both the protective shield and the style statement. However, material choice is only part of the equation. Proper installation matters just as much.

## 5. Flashing Guards the Weak Spots

Flashing is metal (aluminum or galvanized steel) installed around chimneys, vents, skylights, and valleys where water naturally flows. Its job is to divert water from joints and seams, the areas most vulnerable to leaks. That's why flashing deserves careful inspection during routine maintenance.

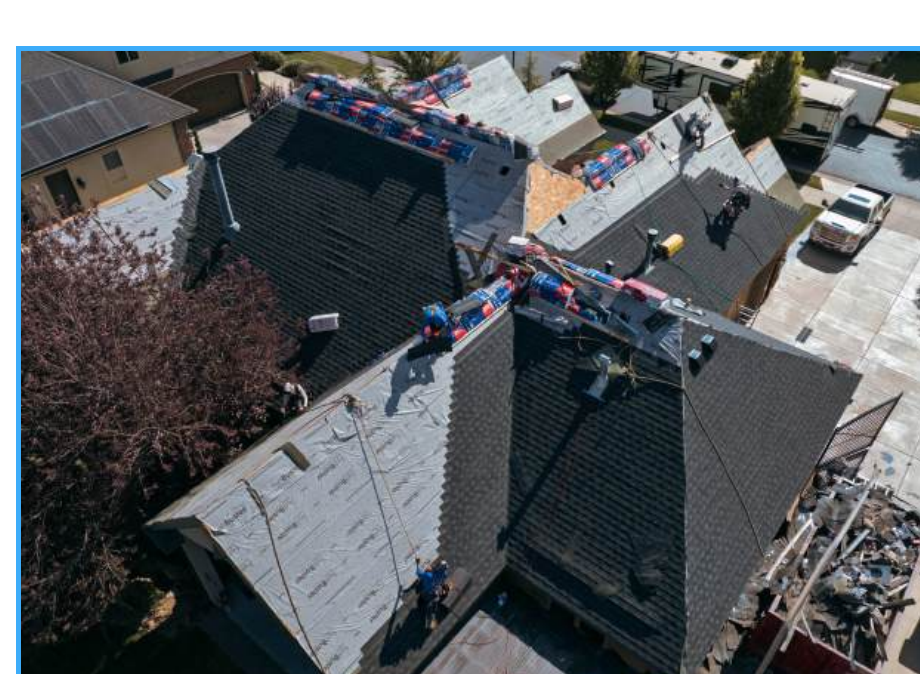
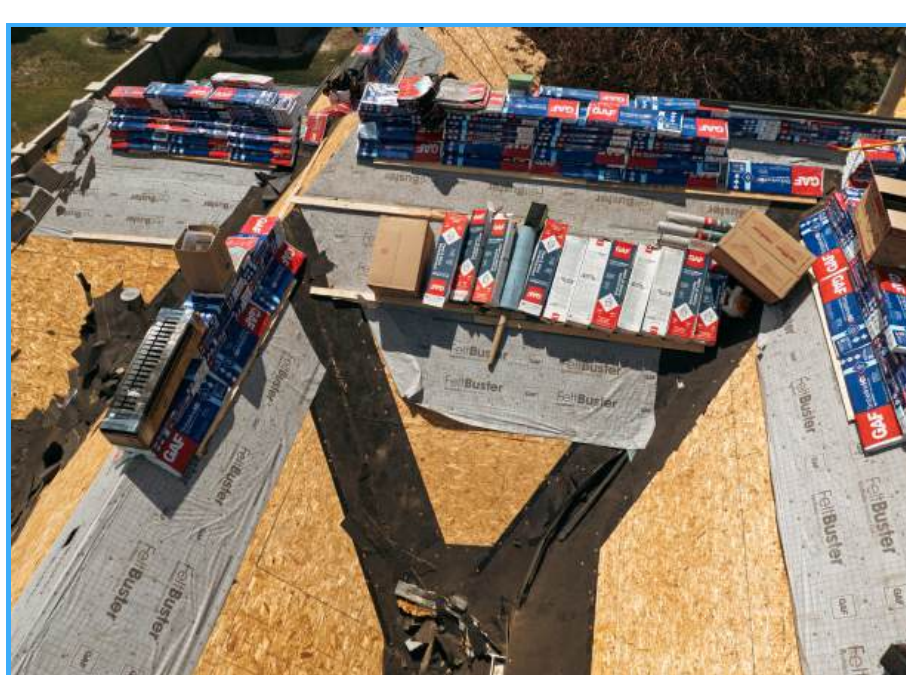


## 6. Ridge Caps Seal the Top

Once the main roof covering is in place, your roofer will install ridge caps along the peaks. These caps protect the top seam of the roof from water penetration and often provide ventilation. Neglecting ridge caps or using mismatched materials can shorten the system's life at its most vulnerable point.

## 7. Ventilation Keeps Things Balanced

Attic ventilation might not be glamorous, but it's one of the most essential elements in roof longevity. Intake vents at the soffits and exhaust vents at the ridge or gables create airflow that removes excess heat and moisture. Without proper ventilation, hot air and humidity build up in the attic.



## 8. Insulation Boosts Energy Savings

Though technically part of the attic, insulation works hand in hand with your roofing system. It helps regulate indoor temperatures by reducing winter heat loss and blocking summer heat gain. Paired with reflective or energy-efficient roofing materials, insulation helps lower utility bills and makes your home more comfortable.