

Hip and Ridge Cap Shingles From Style to Installation

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With new hip and ridge cap shingles, finishing a roof installation with a ridge cap is a much simpler process than with the old three-tab shingles. In summary, to install the ridge cap shingles, you simply separate them where they are perforated, “bend” them over the peak, and nail them down. Of, course, there’s a little bit more to the process than that. You need to understand the function of ridge cap shingles, learn how to choose them, and understand how to make your installation look orderly and attractive.

- **Step One:** Ensure the shingles aren’t too cold. Since ridge cap shingles have to be formed over the ridge, the shingles will be easier to handle if they are warmed a bit prior to cold-weather roofing. Since you only need a few bundles of capping per roof, many cold-weather contractors will simply pre-warm a few bundles in their truck cab prior to use.
- **Step Two:** Chalk lines should be used to help ensure clean, straight professional-looking shingle ridge cap installation. Determine the width of the shingle pieces and snap a line a little less than half that dimension on one side of the hip or ridge peak, then align the side of the shingles along that guide.
- **Step Three:** Installing ridge cap and hip shingles on the hips, you’ll start at the bottom, trimming the first piece so the corners of the hip shingles don’t extend into the gutter.
- **Step Four:** Nail the ridge cap shingle five and five-eighths inches above the butt edge, one inch in from each edge. You will have to nail higher if using over-sized ridge cap shingles, like IKO UltraHP.
- **Step Five:** When installing ridge cap shingles to the peak of a gable roof, you should begin at the end of the ridge opposite the prevailing wind direction, for optimum ridge cap wind resistance.
- **Step Six:** To finish a shingle ridge cap, you should set the final shingle in cement. Also cover the exposed nail heads in cement.
- **Step Seven:** If you need to replace a missing ridge cap shingle down the line, you will need a crowbar to gently pry up the shingles above the shingle you’re replacing.

When ridge cap shingles are installed properly, they accentuate the roofline; when done incorrectly, they detract from the roof. Below is an example of poorly installed capping. Note how the roofer neglected to trim the unexposed part of the shingle.



Combined with the apparent lack of chalk lines, this resulted in a messy-looking job. Using one of IKO's pretrimmed ridge cap products could have greatly improved this installation.

For a full review of hip and ridge shingle installation, visit the [IKO Blueprint for Roofing video series](#), Part 13. If you want to learn more about choosing hip and ridge cap shingles, visit IKO's [Design Center](#) or use our [Contractor Locator](#) to find a contractor near you.

You can accentuate the roof ridge cap and enhance the overall roof appearance with this simple ridge cap trick: double them up. In standard application, the ridge [cap shingles](#) are installed and lapped one at a time. But if you install them doubled up, with the top one about three quarter inches higher, it gives the appearance of a richer, thicker ridge cap or hip. The double look complements the double-layer thick structure of laminated shingles, thereby giving the whole roof a heftier, more robust appearance.



Many years ago, this desirable, thicker roof ridge cap look inspired the introduction of a new type of ridge cap shingle: IKO UltraHP®. These high profile ridge cap shingles are thicker and packaged prefolded. They are made with polymer-modified asphalt for added flexibility.

An impact-resistant option is also available. UltraHP®IR high profile ridge cap shingles are designed to be used with IKO Nordic shingles for a complete impact-resistant roof. IKO UltraHP IR hip and ridge shingles have a Class 4 impact-resistance rating tested against UL 2218, which IKO is pleased to present for the sole purpose of enabling homeowners using these shingles in conjunction with Class 4 impact-resistance-rated shingles to obtain a discount on their home insurance premiums, if available in their area. This rating is not to be construed as any type of express or implied warranty or guarantee of the impact performance of this shingle by the manufacturer, supplier or installer.

Both types of ridge cap shingles, IKO UltraHP and IKO UltraHP IR, have an oversized eight and a half inch exposure for a more impressive, high profile look.

How to Install Ridge Cap Shingles

You should not use architectural shingles for ridge caps unless they are specifically intended to be used on the ridge cap or hips of the roof. Architectural shingles are thicker than 3-tab shingles and are challenging to cut to size for the ridge and hips. You cannot bend architectural shingles into the appropriate curve as the two different layers will not bend in tandem.

If your roofers tried to use architectural shingles for the ridge cap on your roof, the shingles would fail to adhere correctly and would look warped and disorganized. This poor adhesion would impact their performance and could increase your likelihood of leaks.

All of this is not to say that you should use 3-tab shingles for the ridge cap over your architectural shingles. You can buy ridge cap shingles that are thicker and share the advantages of regular architectural shingles. You should also be able to find ridge cap shingles that match the unique look, dimension, and color of your architectural shingles.

Roofing manufacturers introduced specific roof cap shingles made to work with laminated shingle installations that will look great and save you time.

IKO's hip and ridge cap shingles are lightweight and perforated so that they can be quickly and cleanly divided by hand into three or four pieces. They are perfect to speed up roof installation without undermining the quality of the final product.

For quick installation IKO Hip & Ridge 12TM have factory-trimmed upper edges. This narrower, tapered cut allows for a clean installation, avoiding the possibility that upper parts of the shingle may be exposed along the sides of hips and ridges. This pre-trimmed capping saves you labor time, translating directly into lower costs. Also, homeowners will appreciate the neater finished look.

A Bolder Look: Doubled and High Profile Ridge Cap Shingles

Can Architectural Shingles be Used for the Ridge Cap?

What Size Nails for Ridge Cap Shingles?

Ridge cap shingles are installed to overlap the field shingles. This means the nails that hold them onto the roof have to be a bit longer to ensure they fully penetrate the additional roof layers and can anchor themselves firmly into the roof deck. So don't forget those longer nail coils for your equipment. Use at least two inch roofing nails.

IKO manufactures many types of ridge cap shingles, in a few different sizes, to meet local market preferences.

IKO Hip & Ridge 12TM has been popular for many years and has just undergone a product enhancement. While each piece is still 12 inches wide, the exposure has been increased from five and one-eighths inches to five and five-eighths inches.