

Since the roof provides protection from a number of factors such as the weather, it is one of the most important structural aspects of your home. Learn how to have a long-lasting structure.

What to consider before roofing a new house

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A roof is such a key element on a house that if not handled with care, it can cause harm to a family. Anthony Nakedde, a civil engineer, explains that while choosing roofing materials, style, value, design, climate and durability should be considered.

Durability
Choose materials that will last long. For example, iron sheets which come in different gauges (30-26) allow you to choose what you want depending on how long you need the structure to last. What you choose also impacts on cost.

Environment
Before roofing, consider the surroundings or neighbourhood to avoid being the odd man out. If all the houses in the neighbourhood have clay tiles, roofing yours with iron sheets will make your house stand out. This also includes style, design and size of the structures around.



materials that wear out easily such as timber, roofing tiles and iron sheets can push one to reroof the house," he says. "Other factors are change in tastes and introduction of newer materials on the market."

The other factor that may cause one to reroof is the effect of the weather which may require one to change their type of roof.

Roofing materials
These include clay tiles, iron sheets, plastic tiles, roofing shingles, stone-coated tiles, timber and stone slates. Others are nail, ridges and steel bars. Identifying genuine from fake materials may be tricky, according to Nakedde. He says it is better to go to certified dealers and to avoid using unqualified workers.

Spelling out the terms of the contract with your contractor, one of which is to deliver quality materials, will help you avoid being conned.

Before roofing your house, bear the above in mind.

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Hire a professional to roof your house to avoid future disasters.

Climate
In places with lots of rain, your house will require a roof with good slopes to enable the water run off easily. This also prevents the roof from getting soaked which in the long run damages the material.

You may also need roofing materials that deflect sunlight and keep the home cool during hot weather.

House design
The architectural type of the structure will determine the type of roof to be used. The thickness or lightness of the walls matter a lot during the roofing process. Light walls will require light roofs and vice versa. Also, the weight of the roofing material affects the strength of the walls.

Topography
Structures built on slopes should have hipped roofs. These are less vulnerable to high winds and can be used in all types of climates.

Roof design
This usually depends on preference. For example, whether you want the roof to match the colour of exterior walls and the overall design of the house. In most cases, houses with bright colours look better with dark-coloured roofs. The materials used differ depending on whether it is a flat or a slope type of roof. A slope is the angle at which the iron sheets are inclined. The material to be used will depend on the roof's slope or flatness.

Purpose
The purpose of the building will determine the kind of roof to have. Churches need to be well-roofed to keep noise out. A factory roof that comes in contact with acid on a regular basis will over time breakdown and deteriorate. In this case, the best long term solu-

tion would be to install a stainless steel roof.

Reputable roofers should let you know exactly what they're doing, but it never hurts to be informed so you can make good decisions if necessary. PHOTOS BY CHRISTINE KATENDE

SHOPPING GUIDE

Iron sheets: Super eco iron sheets with a box-like design come in gauge 30 and 28. Gauge 30 costs Shs33,000 while gauge 28 goes for Shs42,000. Eco tile and Roman tile gauge 28 cost Shs78,000. Super tile gauge 28 (smooth) costs Shs58,000 and the rough type goes for Shs78,000. Ordinary gauge 30 iron sheets, cost Shs33,000 while gauge 28 go for Shs42,000.

Ridges: These are used to cover gaps left between the iron sheets when roofing while valleys act as links; they connect iron sheets especially on fashioned roofs. They are available in gauges 30 and 28 gauges at Shs15,000 and 28,000.

Nails: There are different types including ordinary roofing nails at Shs4,000 a kilo. J-bolts range between Shs5,000 and Shs6,000. Rubber nail guards cost Shs10,000 a packet.

Timber: Timber comes in two types: hard and soft wood. Soft wood is cut and gauged by a machine while hard wood is done manually. Hard wood costs more.



Cost
The materials and roofing style will determine the cost of roofing. Durable and genuine materials will cost you more as well as hiring qualified personnel. Deo Nsambu, a sales' person at Mabati Roofing System, says iron sheets come in different gauges, types and colours. The different types include super eco, eco tile, Roman tile, galvanised and ordinary. These differ in texture as well as price.

When to reroof
Nakedde says a house can be reroofed depending on the type of material used. "Defective ma-



Iron sheets differ in size and cost. When buying, ask the experts for advice. PHOTOS BY CHRISTINE KATENDE.

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