

Q A client has hired me to build a large outbuilding with a single-plane shed roof. How do I weatherproof the uppermost edge?

A Mike Guertin (on Instagram @mike_guertin), a builder and remodeler in East Greenwich, R.I., and a presenter at JLC Live, responds: We framed and roofed a number of contemporary homes in the 1970s and 1980s with mono-slope (aka mono-pitch) roofs. Back then, local lumberyards stocked mono-slope ridge flashing that looked like oversized drip

edge. But instead of being installed before the roofing (in the usual drip-edge fashion), mono-slope flashing is installed with the roof leg on top of the roofing and the vertical leg extending down over the fascia.

Mono-slope ridge cap flashings are still fabricated by flashing manufacturers and can be found online, but the lumberyards in my area no longer stock those flashings. Rather than wait for a special order, I make my own—mono-slope ridge flashing is easy to make on a sheet metal brake,” May/17).

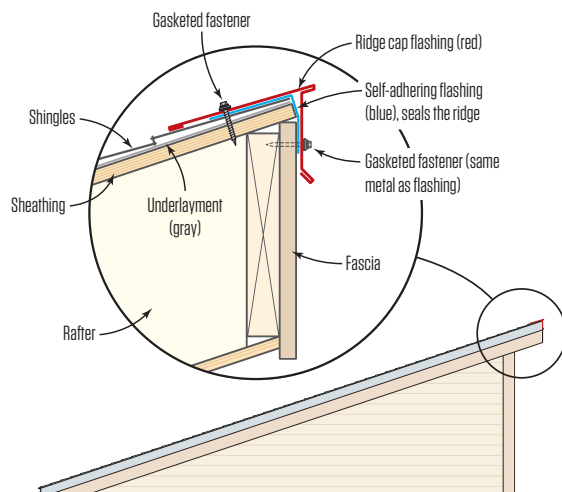
I start with regular colored aluminum coil stock 0.019 inch thick or thicker (galvanized, copper, or stainless steel can also be used). Standard sizing calls for a 6-inch-wide roof leg and a 4-inch drop leg with a 1/2-inch drip bend at the bottom. I hem the 6-inch edge and the 1/2-inch drip bend to stiffen the flashing and minimize oil-canning when it expands. I adjust the angle between the roof and drop legs to match the slope of the roof.

I often form an extended edge of the roof leg of the flashing (similar to the projection found on most drip edges). The projection is mainly cosmetic, creating a shadow line along the ridge, and doesn't improve the water resistance of the flashing.

I install the flashing over the roofing (such as asphalt shingles) along the ridge, with the roof leg face-nailed or screwed down. Ideally, you should use the same metal for the fasteners and the flashing—aluminum fasteners with aluminum flashing, galvanized steel with galvanized steel—to avoid corrosion due to galvanic reaction. If you're concerned about the flashing leaking at the fastener penetrations, you can use gasketed fasteners commonly used to fasten metal roofing.

If you're in a high-wind area, I recommend applying a 4-inch strip of self-adhering flashing (SAF) tape to help seal the roofing to the fascia. The ridge flashing then goes over the SAF. In the event that wind-blown rain makes its way under the drop leg of the ridge flashing, the flashing tape will block the water. You can also nail the drop leg to the fascia board for extra hold-down.

Mono-Slope Ridge Cap



Custom-bent flashing (photo) and self-adhering flashing weatherproof the top edge of a mono-slope roof. Gasketed fasteners hold the flashing in place.

Q My tile installer recently told me that he wanted to use caulk in the corners of a tiled shower instead of grout. Is that necessary?

A Tom Meehan, a second-generation tile installer and co-author of *Working with Tile* who lives and works in Harwich, Mass., responds: The vast majority of showers that I've tiled have had no problems when I use grout in the corners. But on that subject, the Tile Council of North America (TCNA) offers the following recommendation: "Technically, anywhere there is a change in substrate or backing surface such as the joint between walls and floor and wall joint, caulk should be used in place of grout since these surfaces move independently of each other." But the TCNA then goes on to list five reasons that installers use grout instead of caulk. Matching the grout color—both when the caulk is new and as it changes over time—are major reasons. Caulk's tendency to support mold growth as well as its greater need for maintenance are others.

The key word in this recommendation is "technically." Clearly, the TCNA recognizes that many tile installers use grout alone to seal shower corners. But the point of allowing surfaces to move independently of each other is an important one. To that end, I am

very careful when prepping the backerboard in a shower. I finish all backerboard corners and seams using a special moisture-resistant mesh tape bedded in latex-modified thinset mortar. I never use the standard mesh tape used for regular drywall. Before applying the tape, I put a layer of thinset on both mating surfaces without filling up or "packing" the joint. This joint space allows for slight movement, which helps to keep the grout from cracking, in most cases.

In those extremely rare cases where cracks develop in the grout in a corner, I thoroughly scrape out the old grout and completely clean the joint. Then I run a bead of caulk in the corner. To minimize the chances for mold, I use nothing except 100% silicone caulk. In addition to silicone, the TCNA recommends urethane or multi-polymer caulks. It cautions against acrylic caulk, which it says can break down in horizontal wet applications.

As the TCNA recommendation notes, it can be difficult to match the color of the caulk with the color of the grout used in the rest of the shower. I've found that caulk manufacturers always seem to be expanding the color choices for their caulk to meet this challenge. As a word of caution, however, note that some caulks change color in the process of curing, becoming opaque or turning clear. So it's always a good idea to test a small area before caulking the entire seam. If I can't find a close color match, I often resort to using clear silicone.