

THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO
**AUSTRALIAN
ROOF TYPES**

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Introduction

Australia is a country like no other. It boasts a geography that includes desert plains and vast outback ranges to dense rainforests and coastal seascapes, as well as snow-capped mountains in the Australian Alps and Tasmania. Having such a diverse environment means that roofing requirements can vary dramatically depending on where you live.

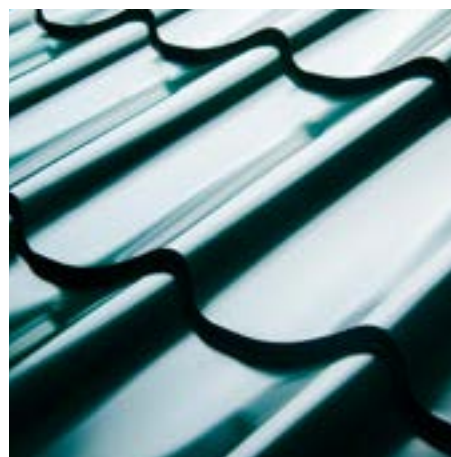
To help give you a better understanding of roofing in Australia, we wanted to share our Ultimate Guide to Australian Roof Types - looking at historical architectural styles, explaining different roof shapes, and also reviewing the best materials to use for your roof in Australia.

4 Main Roof Types

Roo Roofing uses only the highest quality products that come with the industries best available guarantees. Here are some of the roofing materials that we can install, click on them to find out more...



Metal Roofs



Decramastic Roofs



Terracotta Tile Roofs



Concrete Tiles



Factors to consider when choosing your roof

Where you live can dictate the type of roof you need. Here are the key factors to consider when choosing your roof and roofing materials:

- The style of your home or building.
- Australian building codes and state-specific building codes.
- Council requirements and residential community covenants.
- The underlayments and anatomy of the roof.
- Energy efficiency expectations.

Historical Australian Architectural Styles

There are several key periods throughout Australian history where roofing trends emerged.



Victorian - British styles of housing heavily influenced Australian architects in the 19th century and Victorian homes (named for the period in which Queen Victoria reigned) proved to be the most popular particularly in suburban Melbourne and Sydney.

Key architectural features include:

- Intricate stucco facades and verandas with cast iron lacework.
- Arched and double hung timber windows.
- Slate or corrugated iron roofs.





Workers Cottage - commonly built in the 19th century when warehouses, wool stores, breweries, manufacturing plants, and timber yards packed our inner-city suburbs, including Brisbane's West End and Nundah.

Key architectural features include:

- Generally square, symmetrical and gabled, sometimes called a "pyramid" cottage design.
- High-set on timber stumps, which gave rise to the modern Queenslander.
- Steeply pitched corrugated iron roofs and stepped veranda roofs.





Queenslanders - first built in the mid-19th century as inexpensive and simple structures made from timber and tin, they were designed with the subtropical climate in mind. The Queenslander is the quintessential symbol of the Australian lifestyle – embodying hot, humid summers and laid-back indoor and outdoor living.

Key architectural features include:

- High elevation on timber stumps, with ample space underneath for garages or extra rooms, etc.
- Timber frames with expansive and often wrap-around verandahs.
- Pitched, corrugated iron roofs.





Postwar triple-fronted brick veneer - at the end of World War II, servicemen and women returned home and an influx of immigrants moved to Australia. As family life resumed, childbirth rates soared and families worked to own homes large enough for their growing families. Developers seized the opportunity to create large quantities of cheaper and, what were essentially, generic homes to meet the needs of the growing population.

Key architectural features include:

- One-storey design, with triple-fronted brick-veneer replacing double brick construction.
- Utilising mass-produced building materials like glass, cement tiles and wrought iron.
- Hipped or gabled roofs.





Modern Homes - Modern style houses were considered radical when they first appeared in the early 20th century, but today they are the foundation of the contemporary box-like, open-plan houses that populate our suburbs and neighbourhoods.

Key architectural features include:

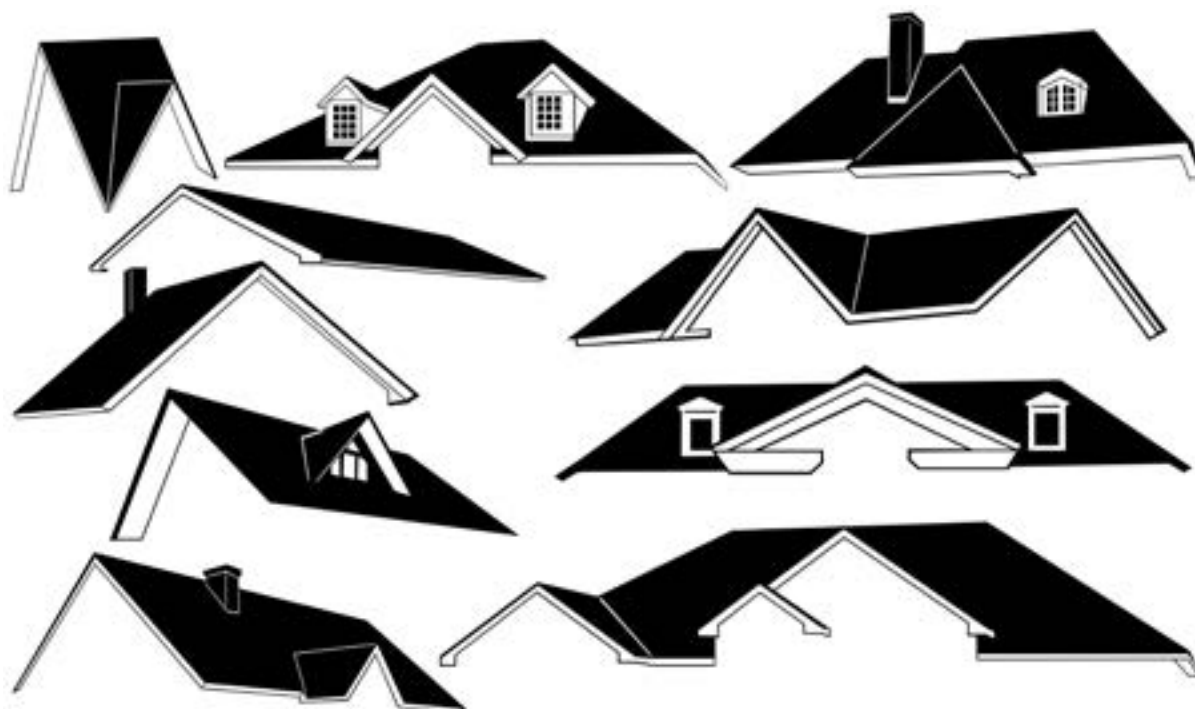
- Flat or skillioned roofs.
- Reinforced concrete frames, with blank walls and minimal architectural decoration.
- Large glass panes/ windows.



Roof Shape Types

Many of the architectural styles we just looked at feature a roof type, such as hipped or skillion. But what do these terms actually mean?

We take a closer look at the many variations of roof shape and what they can offer for your home.



Here are some of the most common ones used in Australia:



Hip - A hipped roof has three, four or more pitched planes, depending on the shape of the house, and all planes slope downwards from a ridge at the top of the roof. This type of roof is the most popular in Australia. Hipped roofs often offer shady eaves and great strength, which makes them good for high wind rated areas.





Gabled - Gabled roofs are usually steeply pitched, so they offer great space for an attic, and are often used in combination with a hipped roof. They have two sloping sides that come together at a ridge, creating end walls with a triangular extension, called a gable, at the top.





Flat - while they appear flat, these roofs always have some pitch (around 10°) for water run-off. The benefits of a flat roof are that it's easy to construct, safer if you're going to stand on top of it, and generally more accessible.

The main drawback is that this type of roof requires more maintenance than other roofs, largely due to debris gathering on the roof. In contrast to hip and gabled roofs, they aren't suited to regions with large amounts of rainfall or precipitation as there's only a small slope to aid runoff.





Skillion - a flat roof that has a visibly significant pitch. This is normally a single sloping roof surface, not attached to another roof surface.

The term skillion can also be used for a smaller addition to an existing roof, where keeping to the same slope (roof pitch) puts the skillion roof lower than the ceiling height of the main structure. In this case, even though the main roof has a flat ceiling, the skillion part will have a sloping ceiling line to maximise ceiling height.

One modern architectural option is to use skillion roofing on a multi-level home to create unique shapes from the home's exterior.





Butterfly - two skillioned roofs with a box gutter in the middle. A butterfly roof is a more expensive option due to the need for box gutter detailing, engineering requirements, and the difficulty of installation.

This roof shape resembles the wingspan of a butterfly and consists of two planes that slant down towards each other, instead of away from each other. It eliminates the need for a traditional gutter and downspout system, as rainwater drains into the central trough where it can be harvested or drained away.





Green - also known as a living roof. The green roof is a flat or pitched surface planted partially or completely with vegetation, over a soil-covered waterproof membrane. These roofs can absorb and redirect rainwater, provide insulation, create a habitat for wildlife, and help to lower urban air temperatures.



Roofing materials - what's best for you?

If you are looking to restore your roof or building a new one, choosing the right material can seem like a difficult task. We break it down for you...

What are your options?



Metal Roofs

Metal roofs are an incredibly popular option in Australia. The main advantage is their longevity, but they also offer an environmentally friendly option, as many use recycled materials. The main downside though is rust.

Most metal roofs are made from blends, such as zinc, silicon, and aluminium. This type of material can also be known as galvalume or Zinalume.

Decramastic roofs consist of pressed metal sheets covered in a bitumen compound embedded with stone chips. For conditions here in Australia it's generally a bad choice (this is why it was discontinued, but some older homes still have this kind of roof). On hot days, you will find you can't walk on the roof without the surface sliding under your feet (because the bitumen softens when heated).

Metal Roof replacement is the best choice for those with decramastic roofs, as even restoring them doesn't prevent the same problems occurring in the future.

Advanced metal roofing always has protective coatings, and the type you choose depends on the weather conditions and environment that you live in. For most in Australia, heat is the main consideration. At Roo Roofing, we can supply metal roofing products such as (but not limited to) Colorbond, Zinalume, Galvanised, and Stainless Steel and advise you on your best option.

Painted polyester coated steel such as **Colorbond** works well with contemporary and Queenslander-style houses and is great for homes in regional or beach-side environments. Colorbond comes in different grades; the one that is right for your home will depend on the air environment around your property.

Made with a steel base and an added protective coating, Colorbond can last up to 100 years with proper maintenance. It also weighs little and is weather efficient.

If energy efficiency is also one of your concerns, Colorbond utilises its patented Thermatech technology, which can help you reduce your cooling costs. In summer, a lightweight insulated roof made from Colorbond causes less heat to be radiated into your home. It has a low thermal mass - so it cools down fast once it's no longer in direct sunlight. In winter, the same metal roof (properly insulated) helps keep heat inside.



An even more durable option is **Zincalume Steel**. It is a combination of zinc and aluminum, an improvement on zinc plated steel. The main advantage of this product is its anti-corrosion property, allowing for longer lasting life. However, it can get very hot under the Australian sun, which is why it is best used for homes with high ceilings.



Terracotta Tile Roofs

Meaning 'baked earth' in Italian, terracotta is a natural clay product that has been used throughout the ages for protection against the elements. Terracotta tiles are a very popular roofing type in Australia, but they can be an expensive option compared to concrete tiles.

Terracotta tiles are hard to beat for their good looks and durability. They're available in many different profiles and colours. Terracotta roof tiles are also a great choice when it comes to energy efficiency because their natural density helps to even out temperature fluctuations. They do this by storing and then slowly releasing retained heat during the day and night.

Roo Roofing can help with terracotta tile roof restorations or builds, with the help of our supplier **Bristile** for high quality terracotta tiles.





Concrete Tiles

Also a popular choice in Australia, concrete tiles are durable and can last for more than 50 years. **Bristile** creates concrete tiles that have similar profiles to terracotta tiles, but are a cheaper option. They are also the chameleons of roofing - they can be created to resemble many other styles and materials.

Concrete roof tiles play a big part in controlling internal temperatures and reducing energy consumption. Like terracotta tiles, they absorb heat and slowly release it, which can help regulate internal temperatures.

However, concrete tiles are generally more porous and don't have the same luster as terracotta. They can also fade quickly in comparison to terracotta tiles, due to the coloured paint only being applied to the surface of the tile.



Thank you

We hope you enjoyed our mini-guide to Australian roof types and we hope you got some great ideas about which roof to choose to suit your home and style.

Need some more guidance? You can book in a free consultation by visiting us at www.rooroo ng.com.au or give us a call on **(61) 7 3396 1911**

We offer the following services

Click to learn more about each service.



Roof replacment



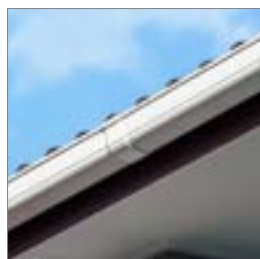
Roof restoration



Asbestos removal



Gutters & Downpipes



Facias, Soffit & Carpentry Work



Roof and Wall Insulation



Ventilation + Skylights