

Rubber Roof Installation Techniques

Repairing or replacing roofs with rubber is an effective, low maintenance option. Rubber roofs are highly flexible and are less likely to leak than a rigid aluminum or fiberglass roof. Use the following instructions to make sure your installation is problem free.

First, remove all existing roof vents, moldings, air conditioners, etc., and clean off any putty tape and seep the old roof clean. Because rubber is flexible, any dents or other imperfections on the old roof will show through. To avoid this, you may want to install ¼" plywood over the existing skin. The water-based adhesive used to install rubber roof will adhere better to the plywood. Cut the plywood to length and cut out all vent holes. Screw down the plywood and then use a belt sander to round the edges. This will eliminate any sharp edges that may pierce the rubber. Make sure all screw heads are recessed as well.

You must use water-based adhesive! Contact adhesives that work well on metal and fiberglass will not work with rubber. Apply the adhesive to the plywood only. It is not necessary to apply the adhesive to both sides. While the adhesive is still wet, roll out the rubber sheet starting from the front of the vehicle. When the roof is completely rolled out, remove bubbles or wrinkles by lifting the edges. Remove any air pockets with a broom or rubber squeegee. Do NOT stretch the rubber.

At the front and rear of the coach, use a flat molding to secure the edge of the rubber roof. Butyl rubber tape should be used under all accessories and moldings that come into contact with the rubber. Finally, use a lap sealant to seal all roof vents, screw heads and where anything else has been installed on the roof.

Rubber roofs can be repaired. To patch inadvertent small tears or to splice a new piece of rubber to an existing roof, simply cut a large round patch and adhere using splicing adhesive.

