

STRAP HANGERS



OF THE ACCEPTABLE METHODS FOR REPAIRING SLATE ROOFS, THE USE OF STRAP HANGERS IS NOT ONE OF THEM. It's ironic, then, that we see so many strap hanger "repairs" on slate, tile and hard-shingle roofs.

A strap hanger is a strip of copper, or any sheet metal, nailed to the roof where the roof shingle is missing. The bottom of the strap is left to hang below the replacement shingle, then it's bent up to hold the shingle in place. The problem with this system is two-fold: the strap hangers look bad. They constitute a repair that leaves unsightly repair evidence on the surface of the roof. In addition, the strap hangers won't work when something like ice or snow slides down the roof because the weight of the sliding material will flatten out the strap and the roof shingle will slide out.

What to do then? Use a slate hook or use the "nail and bib" repair technique. A slate hook is a copper or stainless steel hook that will not bend open and is virtually invisible on the roof. The nail and bib technique requires nailing the replacement slate in the slot between the overlying slates, then sliding a bib flashing under the slates but over the nail. Again, this repair is virtually invisible when done right.

A video showing how to repair slate roofs is available at SlateRoofCentral.com/videos.html. We show how to make and use roof tile repair hangers at TraditionalRoofing.com (issue # 1). 

Slate hooks and copper bibs are available at SlateRoofWarehouse.com.



▲ Correct: Slate hook repair.

◀ Incorrect: The strap hanger repair at left has already failed and the slate has fallen out.

So You Have Roofing Slates for Sale?

YOU TORE DOWN A BUILDING AND SALVAGED THE SLATES. Or you tore off a perfectly good slate roof because a roofing contractor talked you into it. In any case, you now have a pile of good, salvaged roofing slates that you want to sell. Well here's a bit of advice — when you call a company that buys salvaged roofing slates, you need to give them the following information before they're going to know whether they want to buy your slates or not:

1) SIZE — What is the size of the slates? 12"X24"? 6"X12"? People call and say, "Well, it looks like they're maybe ten inches wide and maybe 15 inches long." "Maybe" doesn't work. Exact measurements are necessary. Also, if the slates are "standard thickness," meaning 3/16" to 1/4" thick, there will be about 50 per foot of stack. If the slates are thicker than that, the buyer needs to know that too.

2) SHAPE — What is the shape of the slates? Are all the corners square? Is one end rounded? Are two corners cut off at an angle? This is important information.

3) QUANTITY — How many do you have? If you have 50 or 100, don't waste your time trying to sell the slates to a company that buys them for resale unless they are very special slates. Most companies want lots of at least 500 and preferably thousands if they can get them. The quantity has to be large enough that a buyer can do something with them other than paint on them, like repair or install roofs. If you want to sell them for arts and crafts, run an ad in the local paper or on Craigslist.

4) TYPE — What type of slate is it? Red? Green? Black? Mottled green and purple? Sea green? Chapman? Bangor? Unless you're an expert in slate roofing, you probably won't be able to identify the type, which means you'll have to either deliver samples to the buyer or send them photos, either by snail mail or email. No serious buyer will commit to buying slates without knowing what type they are.

5) CONDITION — What is the condition of the slates? Are they good and hard? Are they flaking and falling apart? Do they have paint on them? Roof cement? Rust stains? Are there holes in the face (the part of the slate that shows on the roof)? If the slates have any foreign material or holes on the face, they're rejects and worthless.

6) LOCATION — Where are the slates? Are they still on the roof? Are they on the ground? Are they in pallets on your truck, ready to deliver? Do they have to be picked up? Are they hundreds of miles away, or right around the corner? The buyer needs to know this information.

7) PRICE — Most people don't know what salvaged roofing slates are worth. That may be because the prices can be all over the place. If the buyer has to take them off a roof, his labor and insurance costs will be high and he will have paid handsomely for them before he has given you a penny. So if the slates have to be removed by the buyer, don't expect to get paid much, if anything. Size, shape, condition, type, location and quantity all affect the price as well. Odd sized, odd shaped slates in small quantities are usually worth least. About the only time you're going to make money on small lots of odd shaped slates is if someone needs those exact slates for roof repairs, or if someone wants to paint on them.

8) STORAGE — Make sure you have the slates stacked on edge during storage. Don't pile them up flat like a stack of dishes. The weight bearing down on the stack will damage the lower slates. Pile them on edge on boards or lath, or in pallets. With the above information, you will have the best opportunity to sell your slates. Good luck! 

Sources of salvaged roofing slates can be found at:
SlateRoofers.org/sources_salvaged_slate.html