

# TOP TEN HINTS FOR INSTALLING HALF ROUND GUTTER ON A SLATE ROOF

by Barry Smith

1. **Avoid using galvanized gutter and parts.** The little bit of money saved on materials won't off-set the extra maintenance costs down the road, and if it isn't painted regularly, it will have to be replaced much sooner than copper or painted aluminum gutter.

2. **Don't mix metals.** Use all the same material from the circles, to the nuts and bolts, to the gutter, to avoid problems with galvanic reaction.

3. **Install shanks and circles every 16 to 24 inches.** I usually install shanks every 20 inches.

4. **Attach shanks to the sheathing, under the starter slates, for the sturdiest result.** Often, the slate is beaten up along the drip-edge from old gutter straps and needs replaced anyway, so this isn't that much extra work. You



World Slating and Tiling Gold Medal winner John Ball (c.) at the International Federation of Roofing Trades Congress with Barry Smith (l.) and Brent Ulisky (r.), both American slate roofing professionals.

might decide to attach the shanks to the fascia or rafter tails if they are sturdy, and the slates are in good shape. Use screws if you use this method.

5. **The outer lip of the gutter must be below the plane of the roof or sliding snow and ice will damage it.** With the use of extension shanks the gutter can be installed low enough to be missed by sliding snow and ice, but still able to catch dripping water. To determine the position of the high end of the gutter, install a shank (and probably an extension shank) and then hold a circle with a short piece of gutter in place. Looking over the top of the gutter and up the plane of the roof, adjust the height of the circle until the outer lip of the gutter is below the roof plane. Now install a shank, extension and circle on the low end of the run. A drop of  $\frac{1}{4}$ " per 10' of run is about right. Stretch a line between the two by tying the string around the shanks right at the top of the circles. Use a level to make sure you have an incline. Don't assume that the house is level. Now you can use the string to set the height of the circles in between.

6. **If you are replacing a previously snow-damaged gutter, contact the insurance company.** Even if the previous gutter wasn't half round, the insurance company will often pay for the cost of replacing it with half round gutter. Often, there has been a reoccurring problem with gutters tearing off because conventional gutter can't be

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## CONTRACTORS NEEDED TO INSTALL NEW SLATE ROOFS OR TO RE-ROOF WITH SLATE. MUST BE ABLE TO TRAVEL.

There is a need in the US for workers skilled in traditional slate roof installation who are willing to travel to jobs in various states. If you are such a contractor, we need to get you on a list. Please write or email Joseph Jenkins, Inc., 143 Forest Lane, Grove City, PA 16127 USA; Ph: (814) 786-9085; [www.josephjenkins.com](http://www.josephjenkins.com)


## TRADITIONAL ROOFING


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### **Traditional Roofing Association of North America**

There is a dire need in the United States to preserve and develop traditional roofing techniques, knowledge, wisdom, skills and information. Much of this has been lost under the trampling feet of "progress," which translates, in this country, into "chemical roofing." Consequently, there has been an interest expressed in establishing a Traditional Roofing Association for the north American continent. This message is just a feeler to see if any of you would be interested in joining or contributing to such an organization. If so, please drop a line to Jenkins Publishing, (TRANA), P.O. Box 607, Grove City, PA 16127 and give us your contact information, or email mail@jenkinspublishing.com. We'll get back to you and let you know what's happening.

### **IPTW**

The 5th annual International Preservation Trades Workshops will be held on October 26-28 (Friday-Sunday), 2001, at the Floyd Bennet Field, Gateway National Recreation Area, Jamaica Bay, Brooklyn, NY. The focus will be on the pragmatic hands-on application of historic preservation. Slate and tile roof restoration presentations will be conducted by Joseph Jenkins. Last year there were also thatch roofing and copper roofing presentations by other craftsmen. For more information contact the Preservation Trades Network, Inc., 731 Hebron Avenue, Glastonbury, CT 06033; Tel: 860-633-2854; email: info@ptn.org; website: www.ptn.org.

## **TOP TEN HINTS**

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installed low enough to avoid getting hit by sliding snow and ice. If you make a compelling case to the insurance adjuster, you're in luck. Don't forget to include the slates that were damaged by the gutter straps being nailed on through them (unfortunately quite common).

7. **Attach the circles to the shanks with two bolts.** There is a little nubbin on the circle that is supposed to keep it from sliding down, but it isn't enough. Drill a 2nd 1/4" hole through the shank using the circle hole farthest from the first bolt as your guide and install the 2nd bolt.

8. **Join two gutter sections together with a simple lap joint.** Start piecing the gutter together from the lowest point and overlap the next piece on top of it with about a 2" lap. Use a pair of needle-nose pliers to wrap the rolled lip of the lower section a little bit tighter so that it can fit into the roll of the top piece. Install all of the spring clips before riveting the pieces. Attach the two sections together with 4 rivets, trying to keep the joint as tight as possible, especially as seen from the top, which is where it will be soldered.

9. **After attaching the spring clips, bend the ends around the lip of the gutter with a pair of pliers.** The clips will pop off easily otherwise.

10. **Install strainers in each of the drops.** This detail is the finishing touch that will go a long way toward keeping the gutters flowing freely. ☒



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