

Wood-look shingles — safe yet beautiful



THE RICH LOOK OF WOOD SHINGLES is highly prized for the roofing on traditional and modern homes. The rugged appearance of these random-sized shingles provides a "ruffling touch" to the overall design of a home, and complements virtually any kind of siding — from brick, fieldstone or stucco to clapboard, paneling or hand-split shakes. The random pattern of these shingles also delights the eye as movement of the sun creates subtle changes in highlights and shadows through the day. Wood, however, has some serious disadvantages: one of them is minimal fire resistance. Timberline asphalt and glass fiber roofing shingles, made by GAF Corporation, closely match the rustic look of wood shingles and have none of their disadvantages. Highly resistant to fire — they're UL Class A rated — and exceptionally durable, these shingles provide the lasting natural beauty and dependable performance that architects, contractors and homeowners call "the best of both worlds."

Back in style...

How wicker can reweave its old magic — even on ceilings

Home-furnishing styles come and go, but the good ones always come back.

Wicker, for example. Wicker is a general term for furniture woven from natural materials like rattan, willow, reed, rush. It was very popular in this country from the close of the Civil War to the late 1920s.

Chairs, tables, settees, baby carriages and other wicker pieces were valued for several reasons: they were strong yet lightweight, they eliminated sharp corners, they looked relaxingly rustic.

Wicker makes comeback

Wicker went out of fashion when Art Deco became the dominant decorative style in the 1930s. The natural, handcrafted and rounded was replaced by the metallic, machine-made and angular.

During the past few years, however, wicker furniture has staged a comeback, reappearing not only on porches and in sun rooms but throughout the house.

Decorators — pros and amateurs alike — have rediscovered wicker's usefulness in adding textural variety and an air of easy informality to a room.

Wicker everywhere

The wicker look isn't confined to furniture. Rustic-weave visuals are popping up on walls, floors, even ceilings. You can get washable vinyl wallpaper in various thatch patterns, and now there's even a no-wax resilient floor simulating sisal matting.

On the ceiling a rustic-weave design adds visual interest to an often neglected room surface. For example, "Rush Square" ceiling tile by Armstrong features

raised strands running in two directions.

When the tiles are stapled, cemented or clipped in place, they create the overall effect of rush-fiber matting. Yet the tiles are actually made of fire-retardant, washable, acoustical material.

Wicker designs like these for walls, floors and ceilings offer the natural look without the accompanying upkeep problems. And their tasteful, back-to-basics simplicity blends well with both traditional and contemporary decors.

Returning to furniture, experts cite at least three reasons for wicker's regained popularity:

- The value of authentic

(especially pre-1900) wicker pieces as collectibles. Once consigned to attics, second-hand shops and junkyards, originals like the classic circular-back chair with hour-glass base) now fetch fancy prices in antique shops.

• The renewed interest in crafts. The twisting, weaving and shelling of plant strands to form furniture is a time-honored art traced back to ancient Egypt and to the Orient, which exported the first wicker chairs to America in the 18th century.

• The continuing "Naturals" craze, which favors the simple and organic — be it in food or furniture — over the overwrought and synthetic.



RUSTIC-WEAVE DESIGNS, influenced by the renewed popularity of wicker furniture, are showing up even on ceilings. This "Rush Square" tile ceiling by Armstrong has the look of rush-fiber matting. Yet it's actually made of fire-retardant, acoustical material.

Remodeling costs money — How to know if you need it

"Remodeling Fever" is a disorder that affects (or afflicts) nearly any homeowner every so often. You think something should be done with "this old house," but that calls for spending a lot of money.

Do you need it? Do you need a new dormer? A new bathroom or kitchen? An exercise room? How do you decide? It's easy. You interview yourself.

Here are some of the questions to ask yourself in checking the adequacy of the old design, and every "yes" answer cries out for change:

1. Have the children grown? If they will leave the household soon it will ease the strain on bedrooms, den, kitchen and bath.
2. Has there been any change in family size, either departures or additions? After all, grown children sometimes get divorced and return, or return because they lost a job, or a relative might need living quarters. You might need an efficiency apartment in that empty bedroom.
3. Has there been a change in work habits, such as more family members out working, or fewer? This calls for changes in living patterns, possibly a whole new lifestyle, and the house will have to fit it.
4. Has there been a change in affluence? More money usually means more entertaining, putting new demands on kitchen, bathroom and other living quarters.
5. Has there been a change in family living, such as new interest in gourmet cooking, or in his-and-her sharing of kitchen activities, or a new awareness of health and fitness? It could call for redesign of the kitchen, or conversion of an empty bedroom into a spa.
6. Are there things about the house that really bother you, such as a dishwasher door that cramps you at the sink when it is open, or a refrigerator door that swings the wrong way, or traffic cutting across the legs of your kitchen work triangle when you are busy, or things being in the way, or having to take the dishes way over "there" to put them away after washing, or lack of light in kitchen, bath or reading areas, or always bumping your elbows in the too-small bathroom? All of these problems call for some type of remodeling.

How are you going to accomplish it?

You can try to do it yourself, of course, with the help of this section and several good books available at your home center or book store.

Or you can go to a professional remodeling contractor who has a good showroom that shows you both products and ideas.

If you do this, you can opt either for design, purchase and installation, or for design only, or for design and purchase only.

But professional help on the design is worth paying for if your problem is kitchen, bath, room addition, major room change or finishing attic or basement.

Professional design help

for a kitchen or bathroom usually will cost anywhere from \$150 up to 5 percent of the estimated total cost of the job, and it could run much more for other rooms.

If you want to do it yourself, be realistic. Knowing how to do something doesn't mean your fingers can follow orders.

Even ordinary carpentry requires skill and the right tools. Plumbing calls for care and precision at every step and, if you try to do electrical work, you can run into some shocking moments of truth.

Either way, however, once you have made the commitment to remodel, you can look forward to a house that is what you want it to be!

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