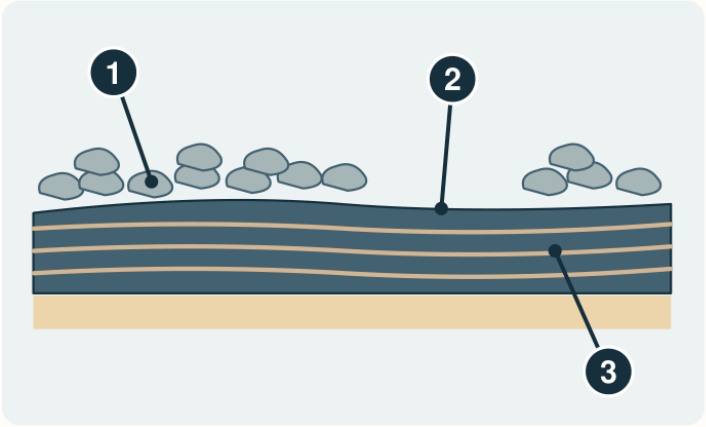
ROOF MAINTENANCE HANDBOOK

Built-up and gravel-surfaced

A built-up roof uses several layers of reinforcing material and bitumen. On a gravel-surfaced roof, aggregate shields those layers from weather. Gravel can hide small splits and also shifts in storms. Confirm the assembly from records, since loose stone can also cover a different kind of roof.

Read the surface of a gravel roof



1. **Gravel surfacing**
   Compare coverage after wind or rooftop work.
2. **Scoured area**
   Exposure can leave bitumen weathering.
3. **Multiple plies**
   A surface photo cannot show which layers are wet.

Section of an illustrative gravel-surfaced built-up roof. Where aggregate has moved, bitumen can be exposed above the multiple waterproofing plies.

Set up your roof record

Identify the roof

Gather the installation and repair dates, roof plan, product names, installer contact and written warranty. If any are missing, ask the roofer to identify the assembly at the first visit.

Choose inspection points

Sketch the building and give each roof section a name. Mark where water exits, where equipment sits and any rooms with a leak history. Take dated starting photos from safe ground or interior locations.

Assign a contact

Write down who checks the building after bad weather, who can authorize repairs and whom to call if water enters. Keep those details with the roof record.

INSPECTION CHECKLIST

What to check

Start from the ground and inside the building. Ask a qualified roofing crew to photograph details that require roof access. Use the same viewing points on each visit.

Identify each roof section

Ask the roofer to mark the reinforced layers, surfacing, drains and past tear-offs on a plan. Keep photos of new work before gravel covers it. A photo of the finished surface alone cannot show which layers were repaired.

Compare gravel coverage

From a safe viewpoint or contractor photos, compare bare corners, perimeter strips and gravel piles with last season. Have the roofer inspect exposed asphalt for splits or weathering before any aggregate is replenished.

Watch the low points

Mark recurring puddles, gravel collected near drains and missing drain strainers on the plan. From the ground, note an overflow outlet discharging or a downspout that stays dry during rain. Request a drainage check if the pattern changes.

Review raised and cracked areas

A ridge that crosses the roof, a split near a deck joint, or a blister that has broken can involve several layers. Track whether it changes. Avoid digging through the gravel or covering the spot with generic roof cement.

Inspect edges from below

After winds, photograph displaced coping, loose metal edges or pieces of roof surfacing on the ground. Rope off the area below loose material and call the building manager or roofer.

Track activity around equipment

Require contractors to use designated access routes and remove loose screws, cut metal and packaging. Request before-and-after photos of roof areas beneath new equipment supports.

Record the change. Take one wide photo to locate the area and one closer view if you can do so safely. Mark the location and date on your plan. Record a dry observation as well as one after rain.

MAINTENANCE CALENDAR

Build a routine

Set recurring dates for spring and fall reviews, then add checks after severe weather, leaks or work by other trades. Follow any inspection and notice intervals in the written warranty.

Spring

Obtain field photos of corners, drains, wall flashings and any previous cracks. Compare bare areas with last year’s plan and schedule priority work before the rainy season.

Fall

Arrange professional cleaning around drain bowls and scuppers. Make sure secondary outlets are accounted for and visible. Keep a record of any place that repeatedly traps gravel or leaves.

After high wind or prolonged rain

Check the ground for fallen material and the interior for new stains. Report an enlarged bare patch or prolonged pond with its location and the time since rainfall ended.

Who handles what?

Homeowner or property owner

Review the building from safe areas. File photos, set a repair budget and approve timely professional inspections. Tell the roofer about recurring leaks and past repairs.

Property manager

Maintain an access log and notify tenants when crews need a room or roof area. Track warranty notice deadlines, work orders and the person responsible for each open issue.

Maintenance staff

Log interior stains and drainage observations. Keep ground-level outlets clear where safely accessible. Document equipment service and ask contractors for before-and-after photos of penetrations and walkways.

Roofing contractor

Verify conditions that require roof access, moisture checks or material testing. Confirm the repair method and compatible products for this roof. Return a marked plan, photos and a written scope.

REPAIR DECISIONS

When something changes

If water is entering now, record the location and time and call the responsible manager or roofer. Keep people clear of water near electrical fixtures, a bulging or sagging ceiling, or loose material. Call emergency services if anyone faces immediate danger.

Wind leaves a bare patch in one corner
Photograph the patch and nearby displaced gravel. Have the roofer check the exposed waterproofing and edge detail, then reinstate the specified protective surfacing.

A room leaks while a nearby roof drain is flowing
Record when the drip starts and stops. Ask the roofer and facilities plumber to distinguish the roof-to-drain seal from leaking pipe joints below. Both can be hidden by the roof and ceiling.

Water collects in a new depression
Keep people away from the affected area. Arrange prompt evaluation of drainage, insulation and deck support. If the ceiling sags or structure appears to move, clear the area below and seek urgent professional assistance.

Ask for these details in writing

• Give the owner the locations where surfacing was moved and the findings beneath it. Re-cover inspected areas with the appropriate protection.

• For failed plies, ask how the repair ties into sound, dry material. Track any core samples and professional restoration of each opening.

• Ask for separate prices for localized repair, drainage correction and removal of wet sections. Record the accepted scope and inspect it after rain.

Technical references

RCABC • Roof Maintenance Guide, sections 2 and 3 www.rcabc.org

ARMA • Effects of Ponding Water on Low-Slope Asphalt Roof Systems www.asphaltroofing.org

Keep the roof-specific warranty, approved details and inspection reports with these references.

PRINTABLE AND FILLABLE LOG

Roof maintenance record

Use one copy for each observation or repair. Save the completed form with the matching photos and roof plan. Reopen the item after the next comparable rain or service visit to confirm the outcome.

Building / address

Roof section / interior room

Recorded by

Date and time

Weather / recent roof work

What changed? Include the exact location and first time observed.

Photo IDs / roof-plan marker / prior related entry

Action taken / person notified / work order or warranty claim number

Person responsible for follow-up

Follow-up due date

Result / repair date / date rechecked / next review