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What is a Flat Roof Extension and Why Do You Need One?

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Flat roof extension: what it is and why you need one

Flat roof extensions have started to make a huge rise in popularity in recent years. This is partially due to the innovations and design progressions that have been made in that area, meaning flat roof options are now both stylish and on trend.

It can also be attributed to the fact that this type of extension is usually the most cost-effective route to getting some much-needed additional space in your home.

What will this guide tell you?

In this guide we take a look at flat roof extensions and why you need one. To do this we highlight exactly what a flat roof extension is and why perceptions on them have changed in the last 40 years.

We also consider why getting one is such a good option and finally take into consideration what you will need to do in order to benefit from a flat roof solution.

This includes understanding planning permission and how to seek it, understanding the aesthetic benefits and planning them into your build and which materials are best for your unique position.

Let's get going!



What is a flat roof extension?

When it comes to flat roof extensions, the name gives away a lot. Unlike traditional building roofs which angle steeply down to collect and deal with water in a guttering system, a flat roof extension simply uses a flat roof (with a slight angle) that can also deal with drainage and water control well.

In the 1960s and 1970s flat roof extensions gained a bad reputation due to many developing leaks and as a general rule not doing their primary job of keeping the inside of the building dry. However, the technology used in this type of roofing is now barely recognisable to that of the 60s and 70s and is arguably just as reliable as any other type of roofing system.

Why do I need one?

If you are planning an extension there are a number of reasons why a flat roof should be your go to option.

Firstly, they are generally **significantly cheaper** than other roofing systems, making them a clear choice for the budget conscious house renovator.

They are also very stylish and on trend with many of the top architects and designers opting for this type of extension. This is partially due to the flexibility they offer but also because they are a key part of a new trend for environmentally friendly homes.



Is there a lot involved with organising a flat roof extension?

Like with all major renovation works that significantly impact the external view of a property, there is a high possibility that you will need to seek planning permission for your new extension. To do this you will need to understand your local planning regulations, which you can get hold of by getting in touch with your local council.

Most councils will now be much more likely to approve extensions if they have some considerable aspects of environmentally friendly materials included in the building plans. This is important when looking at which building materials you will use for the overall extension and in particular, as part of the roof. Using materials such as EPDM for flat roofing will ensure that the roof is of a high quality and allow for environmentally friendly materials to be laid on top, drastically increasing your chances of having your application approved.

You will also want to consider the aesthetics of your extension and how roofing fits into this. Flat roofing has been used with great visual impact in many modern extensions. This is by allowing the builder to create a very simple and understated roof. Small tweaks can give these types of roof an even greater impact such as sitting them on glass and extending them beyond the rooms diameter, allowing them to create a floating roof effect. Equally the use of a parapet, where the wall of the extension is built slightly higher than the roof itself and conceals it all together, giving the extension an overall minimalist look.



Choosing materials

You will also need to consider the materials that can be used on the flat roof based on what is the best option for that you want to achieve. For example, you are still able to build flat roofs out of traditional materials such as felt and shingles.

These do offer a cost-effective type of roofing for extensions. However, it is important to consider that flat roofs had previously gained a bad reputation based on the poor reliability of these types of materials.

For this reason, they are generally not widely used for this type of roofing. Instead, materials such as modified bitumen and EPDM are favoured due to the durability and reliability in keeping a roof leak free over time.

Modified bitumen is a good option due to its hardy nature, meaning it is able to take a large number of knocks without any damage being caused. This is beneficial in areas which are those with trees overhanging the building that may drop heavy branches.

EPDM rubber roofing is also an excellent option for flat roofing for a number of reasons, firstly it is arguably the best value for money in terms of cost and reliability. Equally, as we previously mentioned, it is also a versatile option that allows for green roofing to be laid on top creating a much more environmentally friendly option.



Summing up

In this guide we have covered various aspects of the flat roof extension and why you need one.

This has included giving details of what exactly flat roofing is and why it is climbing so rapidly in popularity.

We have also explained exactly why flat roofing is an excellent option for any extension works you may be considering.

Finally, we highlighted exactly what you need to do in order to benefit from a flat roof extension, from gaining planning permission to taking on aesthetic considerations and picking which material is best to use.

Clearly flat roofing is a great option for budget friendly building development plans, allowing you to build a functional, reliable and aesthetically pleasing extension on your property.

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