

Single Size verse Random Width Natural Slate Installation

One of the first questions that is asked of a customers when looking to buy natural roofing slate is “single size or a random width”. When slate is installed most often times the length of each slate will be the same, yet it is the width of the tiles that can either be consistent or can vary with 3 or more widths.

Single Size Slate Roofing

Single size slate installation is most often found with larger format slate tile, (18”, 20”, 22” or 24”). The look of this roof tends to be more formal with keyways that stand at attention like a formation of soldiers. The architectural style may be more symmetrical with limited dormers or roof plains. Single size roofing may also incorporate cut slates- diamonds, hexagons, or fish scale patterns with several courses of slate. Likewise patterns of coloration also utilize this single size roofing system.



Random Width Slate roofing

Random width roofing may be installed with any length of slate. Smaller slates (12”, 14”, or 16”) from Vermont are most always sold in random width sizes. (An upcharge would occur for the single width smaller Vermont slates.) In a random width installation the slates are installed in no particular order, yet there should always be a 3” horizontal stagger between the keyway in one course and the keyway in the course above. Random width slate roofing is better suited for roofs that may be cut up with dormers, hips, or other roofing details. The random width installation allows for full size tiles to be used on the end of a hip avoiding the use of small slivers of tiles that may not protect as well. The visual appearance of a random width installation tends to be slightly more casual or unpredictable. This format works well with a multi-color slate blend, a graduated length slate installation, or a roof that is incorporating other design details.

Both installation practices are acceptable roofing forms for slate. The integrity of any slate roof is the inherent triple overlapping system that has PROVEN its value as a lasting roofing choice.

