



Repairing Metal Gutters

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Rain can bring life to your lawn and garden, but it can be murder on your house. Gutters take the brunt of the storms so they need to be examined and repaired immediately. If they aren't, you may get extensive water damage to the outside and inside of your house. Clogged, dented or torn gutters can create pools of water on the roof or along the foundation which then leak into your basement.

There are many products that have been developed to prevent gutter clogs. Mesh gutter guards cover the gutter so leaves can't get into it. To prevent debris from going down the downspout, there are downspout strainers. These items help prevent future problems, but there are some problems that you need to take care of now.

Some minor problems, such as holes and cracks, can be fixed simply by filling them with gutter caulk or by using a gutter patching kit. (These are applied to the inside of the gutter.) More serious problems, such as **patching a tear** or **replacing a section of gutter**, involve a little more work and are explained below. However, if you have extensive damage, you need to start over and install new gutters.

Materials Checklist

- Extension ladder (3-ft. above edge of roof for stability)
- Ladder stabilizer
- 2 stakes and wooden blocks
- Wire brush
- Abrasive pad
- Small putty knife
- Roof cement
- Metal flashing (same metal as gutter & big enough to cover bottom/side of gutter)

Patch a Tear in a Metal Gutter

Step 1. Clean the Area

Use the extension ladder with the ladder stabilizer to reach the top of the gutters. Make sure you brace the feet of the ladder before you step on. Clean the damaged area with a wire brush and then go over it with an abrasive pad to smooth. Wash the dust and residue away and let it dry.



Caution: Stabilize the Ladder

Use an adjustable ladder stabilizer that attaches to your ladder and braces on the roof. This helps keep the ladder from slipping and it also allows you to work on the gutters that are directly in front of you. It is also important to brace the feet of the ladder. Put the ladder feet on blocks (to make them level) and then drive stakes into the ground so that they are right behind the ladder feet.

Step 2. Apply Roof Cement

Cover the damaged area, plus a few inches outside, with roof cement using the putty knife. You want the cement to be about 1/8-inch thick.

Step 3. Fix Patch with Roof Cement

Bend the flashing to fit the inside contours of the gutter. You want it to cover the damaged area and one side. Press the patch into the cement. With a little bit of roof cement, go over the edges of the patch. You want to feather the edges of the cement so a dam doesn't form. Do this by using more pressure at the edges of the cement, thereby making it thinner.

Replace a Section of a Gutter, on back

Materials List

- Extension ladder (3-ft. above edge of roof for stability)
- Ladder stabilizer
- 2 stakes and wooden blocks
- 4" long Wood spacer (as wide as gutter)
- Screwdriver or pry bar
- Little spacers (Dependant upon design of gutter)
- Hacksaw
- Gutter
- Wire brush
- Gutter caulk
- Electric Screwdriver
- 6 sheet metal screws

Replace a Section of a Gutter

Step 1. Remove Gutter Hangers

Use the ladder with the ladder stabilizer to reach the gutters. Make sure you brace the feet of the ladder. (See Safety Tip under Patch a Tear in a Metal Gutter.) Take off any gutter hangers that are in or around the damaged area using the screwdriver or pry bar; depending on what type of gutter hangers you have. Put the wood spacer in the gutter while you remove the hangers. This will prevent distortion while you apply pressure.

Step 2. Cut Out Damaged Area

Slip the little spacers between the gutter and the wall. This protects the roof and wall when you are cutting the gutter. Cut out the damaged section of gutter using the hacksaw.

Step 3. Make Gutter Section

Cut the new gutter section so that it is 4 inches longer than the damaged area that you cut out. Turn the gutter upside down and cut, making sure you have a solid base to work from.

Step 4. Position Gutter Section

Use a wire brush and scrub the inside edges of the old gutter. Caulk the ends from the inside, about 2 inches on the sides and bottom of the gutter at each end. Then place the new piece into the old gutter. The new piece should be centered so that the caulk is covered on both ends. Press the new section into the caulk.

Step 5. Re-Hang the Gutters

Screw or rivet the new pieces together using 3 on each side. Caulk over the screws that are exposed on the inside of the gutter. Reattach the gutter hangers.

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