

GAP WaterGuard™ Flashing Tape Frequently Asked Questions

Q– Why are there so many kinds of Flashing tapes?

A– There are basically 4 main types of adhesives for window and door flashing tapes and 3 main types of facers (the top or exposed portion). They each have their advantages and disadvantages. The first key factor in selecting the proper flashing is the adhesive system and there are three main types; bitumen, butyl, acrylic and thermoplastic adhesive.

Bitumen

A rubberized asphaltic (petroleum based) adhesive material that is one of the most common materials in the market (e.g., Grace Vycor). This material is low cost (its key benefit), thick (20-30 mils), “soft” adhesive and has an aggressive “quick stick”. Operating ranges are above 40°F in dry and clean surfaces, can react with some window systems (discoloration) and wall boards, typically emits odors, drip in hot conditions and will lose its tack if not completely pressed in place.

Butyl

A natural base material and is rubbery, tacky, petroleum based adhesive material. This adhesive has a wider operating range (20°F) than bitumen but narrower than acrylics and synthetic rubber. It is non-staining and is a “soft adhesive” and requires less thickness for better adhesive tack. This material is more expensive than bitumen (Polyken/Berry #627-35).

Acrylics

Complex polymer formulations, that their “end-product state” are adhesives with wide temperature ranges and very stable under most environmental conditions. These adhesives are typically expensive and appear to be a “harder” adhesive so they work best on clean, smooth surfaces (e.g., 3M #8067 Flashing).

Thermoplastic adhesive

A modified synthetic rubber material with the widest “service range” (after applied -40°F to 200°F) and “installation range” (-20°F to 125°F). This is a “soft” adhesive with excellent “quick stick” and can be applied to virtually any building wrap or insulation surface without priming. This material is more expensive than bitumen but does not stain, works exceptionally in moist, cold and applies to all exterior building wrap materials. This material does not dry, peel or crack (exceptional long-term adhesion). This adhesive system is used for GAP WaterGuard Flashing Tape.

A– The second key factors for selecting flashing tapes are the facers (top surface). The facer is used to “support” the adhesive system, to offer internal strength to the flashing tape, create UV resistance (in most cases) and to offer other unique characteristic to the tape (e.g., reflectance, high strength, conformability, etc.). There are 3 main types of facers; films, foils and woven plastics.

Films

There are many variations of films used for flashing tapes, ranging for basic/low cost (typically low performance in all areas) to exotic films that have high stretch and conformability. These are typically lower in cost and usually result in thinner products that may cut and tear more easily and have less body creating a more difficult material to install.

Foils

These products are designed to offer high water and gas barriers and may even offer some reflectiveness. Many of these materials are not true foils, but metalized polyesters, acting more similar to the films above. True foils puncture very easily so great care is required not to damage these during installation. These are typically more expensive facers.

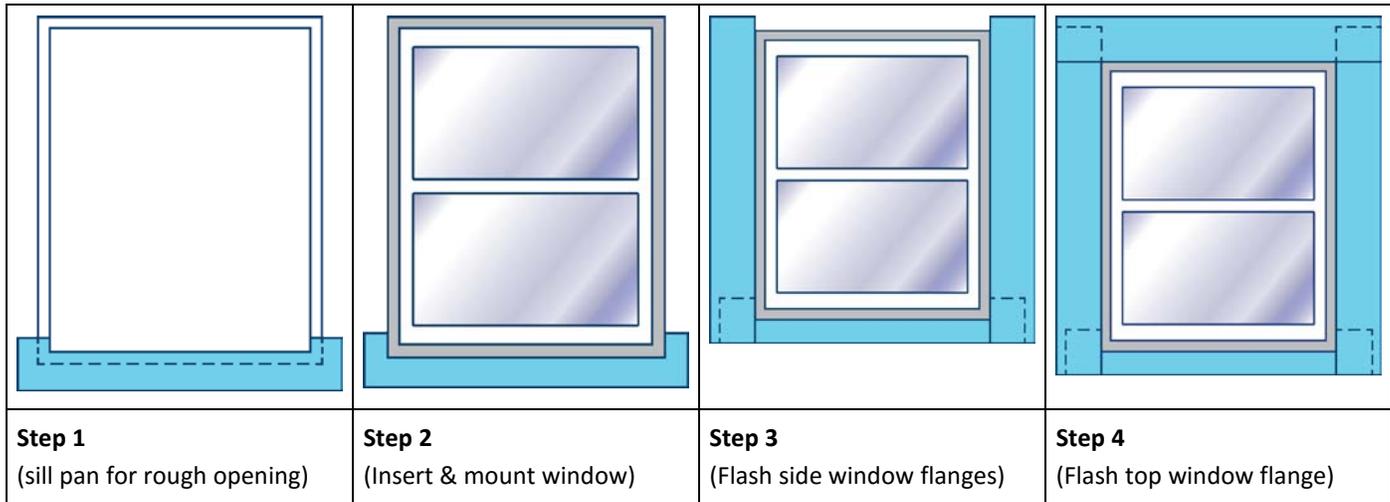
Woven Plastic

These materials are made up to two types; a coated woven (uniform) high strength plastic and a lower performing non-woven material (thousands of non-oriented tiny strands of plastic). These materials have greater strengths than most films at a lower cost. The coated woven (uniform) material is significantly stronger, lower cost and has a greater water protection (or water hold-out). This performs better during the installation with fewer concerns of tearing and cutting, while offering many unique advantages like films (high UV protection, higher barrier properties, easier to work with (more body) and environmentally stable. The coated woven (uniform) high strength plastic facer is used for GAP WaterGuard Flashing Tape.



Q– Is there a specific or approved way to install GAP WaterGuard Flashing Tape?

A– We recommend following the approved, nationally accepted FMA/AAMA 100-12 (Fenestration Manufacturers Association/American Architectural Manufacturers Association) installation methods. This installation method allows 3 approved methods of installation (Method A, B and C). The most commonly used is Method A (house wrap already applied) and shown below (please see the FMA/AAMA 100-12 installation methods for complete illustrations and explanations):



Q– Does GAP WaterGuard Flashing Tape need to be covered immediately after installation?

A– GAP WaterGuard Flashing Tape can withstand UV exposure for up to 6 months allowing for a longer dry-in/close-up time. GAP WaterGuard Flashing Tape also holds up exceptionally against the elements as well as extreme heat and cold (after installed the “service range” is -70°F up to as high as 200°F).

Q– Is GAP WaterGuard Flashing Tape Environmentally Friendly?

A– GAP WaterGuard Flashing Tape is an environmentally conscious product choice, as it offers no VOCs, HFCs or CFCs and is non-toxic and non-allergenic. There are no potential carcinogenic “coal tar” elements in GAP WaterGuard Flashing Tape like some bitumen based materials are derived from. GAP WaterGuard Flashing Tape has an all-poly release liner that can be disposed of as a #2 Recycled material verses the non-recyclable silicon treated paper liners.

Q– Is GAP WaterGuard Flashing Tape available in different sizes?

A– GAP WaterGuard Flashing Tape is available in 4”, 6” and 9” widths, 75’ long rolls to meet the most common wall thicknesses and optimize the proper flashing coverage. There are 8 rolls to a case of 4” and 6” and 4 rolls to a case for 9”.

Q– What is the difference/benefit between self-adhering flashing and mechanical attached (nail-on) flashing?

A– Self-adhering flashing eliminates the potential for water getting under the wrap due to fastening points (nails) and holds firmly to the rough opening. This avoids potential tears and water beneath the window and inside the wall. Today the self-adhered flashings are the approved systems by FMA and AARA. There are some unique applications where wide width “sill pans” are required and only available in mechanically flashed products, but for most all residential windows and doors, self-adhering flashing are used and approved.