

A NEW AGE OF STEEL, COPPER AND ZINC RAINWATER SYSTEMS

Steel rainwater systems have long been used on the continent, especially in Scandinavia, the Baltic States and Germany. Rolled steel, zinc and copper gutters have proven to be a reliable choice for long term performance even in the harshest of climates.

STEEL

Rolled steel gutters in the UK market are still a fairly new phenomenon; Lindab were among the first manufacturers to introduce its systems to the UK market over 20 years ago followed in more recent years by Alumasc. The popularity of steel amongst architects and specifiers has seen this, once unknown, rainwater system become a regular feature of the UK market, with both new build and refurbishment projects turning to steel for a contemporary new look.



Steel is the most affordable and cost effective of the metal rainwater ranges and it makes for a smart, stylish and contemporary rainwater system.

Strength and durability

- Steel is stronger than PVCU and when installed creates a more robust system.
- Steel guttering will resist thermal expansion and contraction providing greater joint integrity – ideal in the UK where the weather variations really test the gutter joints.
- The process of galvanising steel adds a molecular layer of zinc or reinforced zinc compound that is sacrificed to pagination which protects the steel core.
- Products come with manufacturer's guarantees of 10 -15 years although a rainwater system made of steel can be expected to last much longer than that.

Installation

- Steel is lightweight and easy to handle, 3 metre long lengths help quick installation.
- It can be installed by a professional or an experienced DIY'R
- A full range of bracketry is available specifically for the UK market, including fascia brackets, side and top fix rafter brackets and rise and fall brackets.



Style and finish

- A wide choice of up to 11 colours to either discreetly complement the overall colour scheme of the house, or boldly creating accents of colour are available.
- The most popular gutter profile is half round, but some manufacturers also offer a 'box' profile.
- As with the gutter, round downpipes are most commonly available, but some also come in a rectangular profile.

Eco-friendly and sustainable

- The lifetime value of steel is high because the initial cost is low and it lasts such a long time.
- Steel is also 100% recyclable saving landfill space and conserving natural resources.

Maintenance

Regular maintenance of all metal guttering is highly recommended but need not be arduous:

- Clear out hoppers, outlets, angles and gutter lengths regularly to keep these free from debris as you should for any guttering system.
- Regularly inspect for any signs of deterioration. Ensure joints and fixing points are sealed and not leaking and that brackets are secure.
- Clean external visible surfaces regularly to maintain aesthetic appearance. No need to repaint.
- Always place ladders against structures and NOT the rainwater system.

Who does it suit?

Galvanised steel has been used on both contemporary and traditional style buildings. Its modern style adds character to most types of build whether it is a residential property or a commercial or industrial building.



Benefits of galvanised steel

- Lightweight, stylish and strong
- Stable material with only 1.2mm/m*100k thermal expansion
- Easy to install dry-jointed rubber lined gutter union
- Low maintenance system with no need to repaint
- Push-fit stop-ends with EPDM rubber seal
- Steel is a malleable material therefore it will not crack over time
- Fascia brackets: a variety of styles are available
- Environmentally friendly and fully recyclable
- Gutter outlets can be installed at any point along the gutter run for complete design flexibility

COPPER

Copper is a natural product that protects itself by forming a patina that ensures an exceptionally long product life span in excess of 100 years.



Installation

No special skills are required to install copper guttering. Some systems require soldering or riveting; others do not.



Style and finish

Left to age naturally, copper guttering will start to mellow within weeks, changing through various shades of brown and bronze until eventually forming a green / blue Verdigris unique to copper. The time taken for the Verdigris process to start depends on the location of the property, local weather conditions, distance from the sea and other forms of acidic pollution.

It may be a more expensive choice initially, but its beauty, durability and recyclability – reducing environmental impact – makes it a more cost-effective choice as the long-term advantages far outweigh the initial outlay.

Eco-friendly and sustainable

Copper is sustainable; it is 100% recyclable with most mined copper still in use today, reducing its environmental impact. Copper guttering is particularly suited for use in conjunction with a copper roof as a means of rainwater harvesting. It acts as an algaecide and fungicide, keeping growths such as moss and lichen to a minimum, therefore keeping gutters clear.



Also, it mildly disinfects the water, which is great for putting on plants as it has a balanced pH and is free from chemicals such as chlorine. You get more suds when washing the car and it makes car and window washing smear-free (the streaks and dots are limescale).

Who does it suit?

Copper has been used on both contemporary and traditional style buildings. Its distinct appearance; bright, shiny, warm orange gradually dulling to dark brown over seven years and then turning to Verdigris over 20 years, adds a specific architectural and a real 'eco' statement to most types of building.

Maintenance

It is a wonderfully low-maintenance option for guttering systems as it will not require painting or cleaning (if you are happy to allow it to patina with age) other than the removal of debris that may fall into the guttering.

- Check annually to ensure fixing points on brackets remain secure and joints are still sealed
- Do not clean external surfaces abrasively to retain initial shine. The natural Verdigris creates its own protection against UV rays, heat, wind & water and should not be damaged.
- Always place ladders against structures and NOT the rainwater system.

ZINC

Over time, zinc forms a thin layer called a 'patina'. This patina covers the material and protects it from weather elements, such as sun, wind and water but the change is practically invisible. It is immune to the harmful effects of UV rays and has a lifespan of nearly 100 years.



Installation

Lightweight and easy to install. No special skills required.

Style and finish

Choosing zinc as a rainwater solution is a stylish statement for those wanting a different, unique finish that will maintain a striking appearance.

Eco-friendly and sustainable

- There is no shortage of zinc as a resource and in addition it can be 100% recycled at end of life.
- Many customers today want to lower their carbon footprint and reduce their impact on the planet. Zinc offers this choice.

Who does it suit?

Pre-weathered zinc has been used on both contemporary and traditional style buildings. Its distinct appearance; a dark and textured gun-metal grey, adds a specific architectural and eco statement to most types of building. It is ideal if you live in an exposed location or by the coast. Its hard-wearing properties mean zinc will last up to 50 years even in this most testing environment.



Maintenance

Requiring no decoration or cleaning, just the removal of debris that may fall into the guttering, makes it suitable for commercial, civic and residential buildings.

- Check annually to ensure fixing points on brackets remain secure and joints are still sealed
- Do not clean external surfaces abrasively. The pre-weathered zinc has the natural texture of its patina that creates long lasting protection against UV rays, heat, wind & water.
- Always place ladders against structures and not the rainwater system

The Metal Gutter Manufacturers Association (MGMA) represents the leading UK manufacturers of metal gutter systems. The Association seeks to foster and take part in research and all forms of technical development in relation to metal gutters and to encourage the best methods of their production and use within the construction and allied industries.

Metal guttering systems are designed and manufactured to give many years of reliable service and detailed guidance can be found on the MGMA web site at www.mgma.co.uk

MGMA DISCLAIMER

Whilst the information contained in this document is believed to be correct at the time of publication, the Metal Gutter Manufacturers Association Limited and its member companies cannot be held responsible for any errors or inaccuracies and, in particular, the specification for any application must be checked with the individual manufacturer concerned for a given installation.

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